



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**  
**COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**THE SCRUTINY CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS MEETING**  
will be held in Committee Room 1, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale  
Wednesday, 1st May, 2019 am 4.15 pm

Contact: J Nicholls (01443 424098)

**AGENDA**

**1. REVIEW - OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY 'FIT FOR THE FUTURE'**

To receive a report from the Director of Democratic Services & Communications in respect of the Council's Scrutiny arrangements.

**(Pages 3 - 30)**

**2. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

To seek the Scrutiny Chairs & Vice Chairs' views and comments on the draft Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19.

**(Pages 31 - 70)**

**3. MEMBERS' TRAINING UPDATE**

To receive a verbal update from the Director of Democratic Services & Communications in respect of Members' training.

**4. SCRUTINY CHAIRS/VICE CHAIRS UPDATES**

To receive an oral update from the Scrutiny Chairs in respect of their Scrutiny Committee Work Programmes going forward:-

- Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
- Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee
- Health & Well-being Scrutiny Committee
- Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

**Circulation:-**

**Councillors:** Councillor M Adams (Chair)  
Councillor J Bonetto  
Councillor S Bradwick  
Councillor S Evans  
Councillor G Holmes  
Councillor W Lewis  
Councillor S. Rees-Owen  
Councillor G Thomas  
Councillor J Williams  
Councillor T Williams  
Councillor R Yeo

**Officers:**

Mr C Hanagan, Service Director, Democratic Services

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018/19

### SCRUTINY CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS MEETING

1<sup>ST</sup> May 2019

Item No. 1
<b>Review – Overview and Scrutiny 'Fit for the Future'</b>

#### REPORT OF:-

#### THE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS

Author: Christian Hanagan

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with observations and proposals in response to the request from committee members to review the Council Scrutiny arrangements, and to update Members on the progress arising from the WAO report in respect of the Council's Scrutiny arrangements 'Fit for the Future'.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Consider the progress to date in delivering upon the actions agreed in response to the Wales Audit Office Report 'Fit for the future'.
- 2.2 Endorse the proposed amendments to scrutiny structures, namely to:
- A) Agree to the observations outlined within the report, in respect of the recent review of current scrutiny arrangements
  - B) Endorse the recommended proposals numbered 1-4 outlined in section 7 of the report.
  - C) Recommend to the Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee that the Terms of reference of each of the scrutiny Committees be reviewed and refined and agreed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its first meeting, following the Council AGM.

D) That subject to agreement to the above, authority is provided to the Proper Officer to update the Council Constitution accordingly to reflect the changes to the Committees Terms of Reference.

2.3 Note the progress to date in respect of the proposals for improvement identified by the Wales Audit Office – Fit for the Future.

2.4 Note the responses set out in section 10 of the report i.e. the national discussion paper '[six themes to help make scrutiny fit for future](#)', issued by the Wales Audit Office in February 2019.

### **3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3.1 Members will be aware that the Council's Scrutiny arrangements have been subject to a number of reports by the WAO since 2014:

- In July 2015 the Council implemented new arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny which took account of the national report issued in May 2014, 'Good Scrutiny? Good Question!'
- In November 2015, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed an Action Plan and a detailed update arising from the publication of 'Good Scrutiny? Good Question!'
- On the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Cabinet and subsequently Audit Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March, received a report in respect of 'Good Governance when determining significant service change'.

3.2 Since these reports have been issued, there have been significant changes in the Scrutiny function which are strengthening the Council's overall governance arrangements. Changes include:

- Increasing use of pre scrutiny,
- More focused work that leads to tangible outcomes for the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf through Scrutiny Working Groups
- Changes to the management arrangements
- Strengthening resourcing of the Scrutiny function.

We are also continuing to implement a number of other planned changes.

3.3 In October 2018 the WAO published its report into the Council's scrutiny arrangements '[Fit for the Future](#)'. The report followed a review conducted between December 2017 and January 2018. Although the report did not reflect the changes already put in place to strengthen the scrutiny arrangements, it was generally positive, reflecting the progress that has been made in the Council's scrutiny arrangements since the previous WAO reports in 2015. However, it also set out the need for strengthened support for scrutiny, including scrutiny capacity and Member training. This report and a subsequent implementation plan was presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2018. Following Members consideration of the report the then Director of Communications & interim Head of Democratic Services was tasked with undertaking a review of the Council's scrutiny structure.

- 3.4 The WAO subsequently published a national 'Discussion paper 'Six themes to help make scrutiny 'Fit for the Future'. The six themes identified within this report were:
- i. Clarifying roles and responsibilities is still necessary in some councils and is a pre-requisite to successful scrutiny
  - ii. Many councils continue to recognise a need to improve public engagement in scrutiny but in many councils this will require a step change in scrutiny practice
  - iii. Councils should reflect on the rigour with which they must prioritise and then plan scrutiny activity to improve impact
  - iv. Responding to current and future challenges may need a different approach to supporting scrutiny committee members
  - v. Evaluating the effectiveness of scrutiny
  - vi. Welsh government and councils should consider the implications of the above themes for councils' and partnership governance arrangements.

These themes have also been utilised when undertaking the review.

#### **4 REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 4.1 Positive changes continue to be progressed in respect of the Council's scrutiny arrangements. Work has already taken place to strengthen scrutiny's ownership of their work programmes. New ways of considering how to best focus committees time will be utilised from the start of the next Municipal Year, looking at a more outcome based approach.
- 4.2 An important change has seen the implementation of more formal arrangements for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of scrutiny committees to consider work programme matters and the development of business in a more formal and co-ordinated way.
- 4.3 The now established engagement between Cabinet and Scrutiny Members is providing more opportunities than ever before for Scrutiny to play an influential role in the significant policy decisions of the Council at an early stage. It would be fair to say that when scrutiny first began performing a pre-scrutiny role, there was limited opportunity for scrutiny to change the direction already set by the Council's Cabinet. With recent improvements in associated processes and communications for pre-scrutiny, the arrangements have matured and developed. This has resulted in the opportunity for early and more regular involvement of scrutiny in key Council decisions, a notable example of this being the involvement of scrutiny at regular stages in the potential plans to modernise the delivery of residential care in the County Borough. Another notable example, has been, the engagement of scrutiny in the Council's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools proposals for the first time. Both these examples have been achieved through the 121 dialogue established as a result of the regular formal meetings between Scrutiny Chairs and the respective Cabinet Members & Director.
- 4.4 The visibility of scrutiny has increased in the last year, both in terms of public profile and the impact its work is having upon decisions. The establishment of a dedicated web site, alongside specific resource within the Council

Communication Team and the introduction of scrutiny blogs are making a positive difference to the public profile of scrutiny. Consideration needs to be given however to further opportunities to increase the profile of scrutiny, particularly in line of the potential offered by digital media, and whether facilitating meetings at non-council venues is adding the value it was intended to deliver. Further work will need to be undertaken to assess the impact this increased media profile is having on the residents of the County Borough, to ensure we are using the correct platforms for communication.

## **5 WHAT IS WORKING?**

- 5.1 The Council's scrutiny arrangements have continued to mature following the establishment of revised arrangements in 2015.
- 5.2 Opportunities for non-executive members to engage in pre scrutiny have progressed further, since the review undertaken by the Wales Audit Office. Pre-scrutiny has been facilitated as part of a number of significant decisions taken forward. In addition to this, there is now the ability for scrutiny to contribute as part of any statutory or non-statutory consultation processes and scrutiny engagement is now embedded into the proposed approach for individual decisions. The ability for all members to add-value through this approach is recognised by both the Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet.
- 5.3 Much of the positive progress has stemmed from better engagement and information sharing. This has been fostered through regular meetings, which are now well established, between Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs and their respective Cabinet Member and Senior Leadership Team Officer. This dialogue is creating more opportunity for scrutiny to have a wider field of vision in terms of future business and priorities to be considered in the short, medium and longer term. The strengthened voice of Democratic Services within the Senior Leadership Team, as a result of recent management structural changes, has also supported this approach.
- 5.4 Ensuring meetings between Committee Chairs and Vice-chairs is placed on a more formal footing, has achieved another important improvement step. However, the schedule of the committee calendar has impacted on the opportunity for this to happen more frequently. The formal reporting and updates in respect of work programme delivery have ensured Scrutiny Chairs are better informed about the wider decision-making work programme and has supported better co-ordination of work flows.

## **6 WHAT AREAS NEED CONSIDERATION?**

- 6.1 While important improvements are supporting a better governance model within the Council, there are still opportunities to support improvement. The Fit for the Future review identified a number of areas of improvements, which the Council has already considered and agreed actions to respond (see appendix 2). In addition the wider national review of scrutiny arrangements undertaken by the Wales Audit Office, has already identified a number of key areas for

improvements, in respect of scrutiny as a whole, proposing a number of key themes and examples of good practice. Having considered these recommendations, good practice which is supported in other local authorities and the feedback received from Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs, there are a number of improvements which could further strengthen the impact and outcomes of scrutiny.

- 6.2 When the new model '[thematic scrutiny](#)' was introduced in 2015, it supported a cross cutting approach to scrutiny outside of the traditional group structures. Since this time however, a number of senior management reviews have taken place, which has reduced the number of service groups. From a scrutiny perspective this has complicated the understanding of the remit of specific committees and the management of Officer and Cabinet Member representation when necessary. It is therefore felt appropriate and timely to give consideration to remit and terms of reference of the current scrutiny structure.
- 6.3 Consistent with the national findings of the Wales Audit Office, it is evident that there is an over reliance on standard information reports. In some circumstances the number of agenda items being considered at each meeting is hindering the ability of Members to undertake meaningful scrutiny and effective challenge. Also the positive impact of scrutiny often relates to specific work on policy development, relating to one specific service matter, considered often on a task and finish basis. This is also evident when scrutiny this year has worked through this mechanism to consider the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 6.4 A heavy scrutiny workload can sometimes hinder the ability for scrutiny to operate as a 'critical friend' to the executive, in the way our current overview and scrutiny arrangements were intended to when introduced back in 2002.
- 6.5 It should be noted in respect of policy development that scrutiny is now playing a lead role in progressing decisions of council agreed through notices of motions from all 75 members. Important policy proposals have resulted from this newly introduced decision- making work flow and therefore further consideration should be given to a framework to progress these decisions.
- 6.6 The positive work recently undertaken on-line, through the development of web and social media content has achieved positive reach and engagement. Compared to the low level of public engagement received by taking scrutiny into the community, further consideration should be given to this approach, as an effective one to enhance public participation.

## **7 POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- 7.1 Based on these areas it is proposed to consider amendments to the following aspects of scrutiny arrangements:

### **7.2 PROPOSAL 1 -TERMS OF REFERENCE OF EACH COMMITTEE**

- 7.2.1 Review the Terms of Reference of each of the scrutiny Committees to ensure they are 'Fit for Purpose'. The current Terms of Reference for the Committee are outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 7.2.2 The Corporate Plan theme 'Economy' to sit under the committee currently called 'Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee' and for corporate governance issues to be taken forward by Overview & Scrutiny.
- 7.2.3 Before developing its work programme for the forth coming Municipal Year, it is proposed that the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** agree the terms of reference for each of the other scrutiny Committees going forward.
- 7.2.4 Allocated specific themes from the Corporate Plan to the respective scrutiny committee, to better relate the work of scrutiny to these ambitions and strengthen accountability for its delivery. Again these themes will be allocated by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the start of each Municipal Year.

### **7.3 PROPOSAL 2 - STREAMLINE WORK PROGRAMMES AND AGENDAS**

- 7.3.1 It is also proposed that based on its strategic role in directing scrutiny, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, be given the ability to direct work flow across the Municipal Year, based not just upon terms of reference, but linkage to the corporate priorities, and the demands of business and work programmes. This model would provide the benefits of models utilised in other local authorities, recognised as adopting good practice, while also continuing to provide a connection for those committees within an associated service area.
- 7.3.2 To develop streamlined and focused Committee Work Programmes to ensure a more outcome based approach is taken forward.
- 7.3.3 Following the scrutiny pilot currently being undertaken to use the 'Good Practice' scrutiny toolkit as appropriate.
- 7.3.4 Develop of a work programme template incorporating an outcome based approach and acknowledging the Well-being of Future Generations goals.
- 7.3.5 Work towards a more 'select committee approach' in terms of accountability operating style.

### **7.4 PROPOSAL 3 - A FORMAL PROCESS FOR SCRUTINY TO FACILITATE COUNCIL MOTIONS**

- 7.4.1 Development of a formal process when taking forward Notices of Motion when referred from Council.
- 7.4.2 To summons the Mover and Seconder of a Notice of Motion to a scrutiny meeting when a referred Notice of Motion is to be discussed and scrutinised.



7.4.3 This should include the Proposer and Seconder participating in the work for the matter to progress.

## **7.5 PROPOSAL 4 - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT**

7.5.1 To enhance the public engagement section of the website further with up to date / relevant information on the work and to actively encourage residents to get involved.

7.5.2 Keeping Scrutiny meetings within Council facilities, but utilising social media wherever possible to better highlight the work of the committee and to engage with the public.

7.5.3 Formally instruct Officers to implement arrangements for web-casting of meetings (alongside wider chamber and facility enhancements already identified by the Democratic Services Committee.)

## **8 SCRUTINY GOING FORWARD.**

8.1 The proposed proposals to be taken forward are intended as interim improvements. Building upon approaches taken by other local authorities, recognised as good practice, it is proposed further detailed evaluation is undertaken, with Member engagement in this process. Such an evaluation will facilitate in the development of the Council's future Scrutiny Structures going forward, between now and the next Local Government elections, with the aim of further supporting the priorities of the corporate plan and the wellbeing of future generation's goals.

8.2 In the interim the proposals outlined above are proposed to be taken forward, the reasons identified below:

### **Why consider Terms of Reference?**

8.3 It is acknowledged that since the implementation of the current thematic scrutiny structure there have been incidences where some matters do not fit neatly under the current structure. In addition to this, the work load of some of the committees can seem unbalanced.

8.9 To address these anomalies, it is proposed that a review of the Terms of Reference be taken forward to ensure that the matters relating to each Committee are best placed. It is anticipated that this may require some minor changes to be taken forward, although the main themes of the Committees going unchanged.

8.10 To balance the workload of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee it is proposed that the Corporate plan theme 'economy' be taken forward by this Committee, instead of the Public Service Delivery Committee. This theme is

continually developing and would therefore benefit from such scrutiny arrangements.

- 8.11 It has been brought to Officers attention that a number of corporate governance issues are not always scrutinised during the Municipal year. It is therefore suggested that any such issues be considered through the Overview & Scrutiny Committee through its overarching theme.
- 8.12 Agreement of the revised terms of reference for each of the Committees, (as advised above) would be undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and instructions will need to be given to the proper officer to update the Council constitution to reflect these changes accordingly.

### **Why consider Work Programmes amendments?**

- 8.13 Work programmes are an important tool which help to manage a committee's work and assists in making it more effective. As each committee is allocated responsibility for scrutinising a selected number of services in line with their terms of reference, it is necessary for members of the committees to prioritise which areas of a service they wish to scrutinise. Formularisation of a scrutiny work programme also assists with the undertaking of pre-scrutiny and promotes the work of the committee to the public.
- 8.14 The Council should strengthen ownership of forward work programmes and committee agendas. Steps include:
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee's (O&S) consideration of the quarterly Cabinet work programme. This enables O&S to refer matters to other Scrutiny Committees to help them plan their work programmes
  - Regular meetings between Scrutiny Chairs with associated Cabinet Members and Group Directors. These meetings address the cabinet work programme, policy developments and scrutiny priorities and have strengthened Members' overall understanding of the Council's business.
- 8.15 A further proposal to strengthen the Committees work programme is through the utilisation of a new Scrutiny work programme template which would allow the Committee to develop a more outcome and focused based approach to their programme. Often Committee members are asked to consider four of five reports at a Committee meeting, therefore not allowing Members to undertake any worthwhile scrutiny exercise on the information provided. This either results in Members 'noting' reports or taking forward a working group to better scrutinise the subject area. While notwithstanding the important and proven good work of the Committees scrutiny working groups, it is evident that with ever increasing workloads and demands on Members time, sometimes Members are not able to commit to undertaking such additional work. Therefore allowing the Committee itself to undertake the same work of a working group during a Committee meeting setting would allow the Committee itself to bring forward focused outcomes. Achieving such a way of working would be through Member ownership and a focussed work programme, with Members acknowledging that key themes only to be scrutinised and the reality

that some areas under a Committees Terms of Reference not being scrutinised within the Municipal Year.

- 8.16 Creation of a template using other Authorities examples of best practice and also incorporating aspects of the Future Generations 5 ways of working would assist in the development of focussed work programmes going forward.

#### **Why progress the Scrutiny Toolkit?**

- 8.17 In July 2019, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the proposal to pilot the Future Generations Scrutiny Toolkit. Since that time the toolkit has been published and is available for all Authorities to utilise. In respect of RCT it was agreed that a working group be formed to consider the Notice of Motion in respect of Low Carbon vehicle and to utilise the framework when conducting this work. It was proposed that the Members of the group act as 'Champions' in their respective Committees in taking forward the new approach to scrutiny through the lens of the well-being and future generations Act.
- 8.18 It is proposed that following the working group review an evaluation of the work and of the scrutiny toolkit be undertaken to see if the toolkit could be applied through all the scrutiny committees.

#### **Why consider amending the process for Notice of Motion (NOM)?**

- 8.19 Under the Council Procedure Rules each group of the Council have an allocated number of NOMs that they can take forward to Council over a Municipal Year. Often the outcome of the NOMs is a referral to the relevant scrutiny committee for further consideration.
- 8.20 An excellent example of this can be seen through the work of the Children & young People Scrutiny Committee and the NOM in relation to period poverty. (Through the work of the working group, the Council have taken forward an approach in respect of the provision of sanitary products at schools, which has now been emanated across many Authorities in Wales and England). Also in recent months the NOM in respect of voluntary Snow Wardens was taken forward by a scrutiny working group resulting in the Know your neighbour campaign.
- 8.21 There have been however occasions where items have been referred to scrutiny and the true intentions of the NOM have been lost or are unclear to Members. In such circumstances it would assist scrutiny committees if the Proposer and Secunder of the NOM be summoned to attend a meeting on the subject to provide clarity on its intentions and proposed outcomes.

#### **Why consider amendments to Public Engagement and involvement processes?**

- 8.22 The Scrutiny public engagement protocol was agreed at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in December and is available on the Council website. The protocol has been utilised at the recent Call In meeting of the Overview and

Scrutiny Committee when 3 members of the public addressed the committee on the C21st School proposal in relation to Pontypridd.

- 8.23 We are conscious that further needs to be done to promote the work of scrutiny and the previous process of taking scrutiny out into the Community has seen no beneficial impact in respect of public engagement. It is therefore proposed that the Committees continue to hold meeting in appropriate Council based location, depending on their subject matter. It may be beneficial for some committees to undertake meetings at Leisure Centres or the Lido if there is a relevant agenda item to be discussed on the location.
- 8.24 Going forward to promote further public engagement, further use is made of social media to promote the work of the Committee. It is proposed that the development of web-casting in advance of any statutory obligations pending should be progressed.

### **The future role of non-allocated members**

- 8.25 Since the local elections the number of non-allocated members have increased. When allocated committee membership, non-allocated members are not recognised for the purposes of political balance.
- 8.26 It is proposed that greater opportunity should be given for non-allocated members to formally participate in scrutiny, and engaged in the wider democratic arrangements
- 8.27 Chairs and Vice-Chairs together with the Director of Democratic Services should seek, on a more formal footing, to consider how non-allocated Independent members may be engaged in the work of scrutiny. This could be achieved through an expressions of interest from non-allocated members to participate in specific matters of business identified within work programmes.

## **9 WALES AUDIT OFFICE REPORT - 'FIT FOR THE FUTURE' PROGRESS UPDATE**

- 9.1 In October 2018, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the report of the WAO – 'Fit for the Future'. The report concluded that the Council:
- i. has increased the role of overview and scrutiny in its improvement and governance arrangements, but could strengthen support for the scrutiny function;
  - ii. has improved overview and scrutiny practice, but activity is not always well-planned; and
  - iii. is beginning to evaluate the effectiveness of its overview and scrutiny function, but needs to do further work to demonstrate the impact of scrutiny.

- 9.2 The report also set out five Proposals for Improvement and for the benefit of Members a proposed action plan to address these proposals was provided to Members at the October Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- 9.3 To illustrate the actions taken forward in respect of the proposals, the action plan presented has been further updated to illustrate the work undertaken and areas where further work needs to be addressed. The Action Plan is attached as Appendix 2 to the report.
- 9.4 It is anticipated that the opportunities outlined within this report in respect of the proposed amendments will further strengthen the Council's response to the WAO proposals.

## **10 WAO 'DISCUSSION PAPER: SIX THEMES TO HELP MAKE SCRUTINY 'FIT FOR THE FUTURE'.**

- 10.1 Since the production of the WAO Fit For the Future report, a further discussion paper has been published by the WAO 'Discussion Paper: Six themes to help make scrutiny 'Fit for the Future'.
- 10.2 This discussion paper looked at the key themes arising from the WAO work and has presented a checklist that councils can use to consider the efficiency and effectiveness of their arrangements.
- 10.3 Below details of the six themes with a corresponding response in respect of the Councils position is provided:

### **1. Clarifying roles and responsibilities is still necessary on some council and is a pre-requisite to successful scrutiny**

Since the decision taken by Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2018. Cabinet Members have attended Scrutiny Committee meetings to provide a report and update on their portfolios. In addition to this Cabinet Members are also invited to scrutiny Committees as and when appropriate to provide an update on specific agenda items to assist in the scrutiny challenge. This approach is to be further built upon over the Municipal Year with specific guidance relating to Cabinet Member attendance at scrutiny being addressed within the Council constitution. At the Members induction following the Local Government Elections, Members were provided with comprehensive training in respect of the various roles of the Council including Cabinet and Scrutiny Members roles.

### **2. Many Councils continue to recognise a need to improve public engagement in scrutiny but in many councils this will require a step change in scrutiny practice**

The development of the 'Public Speaking at a scrutiny committee' meeting protocol has already been successful, with the guidance note being available on the scrutiny pages of the Council website for the public to utilise. This protocol has been utilised at a recent Call In meeting, with 3 public speakers addressing the Committee on the agenda item. The scrutiny pages on the Council website have also been further promoted with a banner on the Council front page, to allow further easier access to the Scrutiny web content for the benefit of Members and the general public. The scrutiny pages contain detailed information about the role of Scrutiny, projects that have been introduced as a result of Scrutiny intervention and a 'Scrutiny Chairs' Blog' which currently contains contributions from three Scrutiny Chairs. Implementation of additional pages '**Engage with the Council**' which provide options by which residents can engage in the Council's decision making processes, are imminent. Although the Committees have trialled undertaking meetings out in the community this has not provided any further engagement with the public. It is therefore proposed that further is done to engage with residents through social media and the Council website in addition to the provision of webcasting facilities being made available.

**3. Councils should reflect on the rigour with which they prioritise and then plan scrutiny activity to improve its impact**

The proposals identified within this report will look to address this theme, by reviewing the Terms of Reference of each of the Committees and ensuring a fit for purpose Work Programme template is taking forward. Following other local authorities, who have been identified as 'good practice' templates, taking forward a more streamlined and outcome based approach to the Committees work programme will satisfy the requirements of this theme.

**4. Responding to current and future challenges may need a different approach to supporting scrutiny committee members**

Members of the Democratic Services Committee endorsed the opinion of the Interim Head of Democratic Services in respect of the provision of support in the newly formed Council Business Unit, which supports all members in undertaking their roles. The successful appointment of the Graduate Scrutiny research officer to the unit also provides further support to Members, to undertake independent research on behalf of Members. Members and officers are proactive with training requirements and as and when necessary training has been provided – i.e financial training for members of the F&P Committee and training on the Well-being of future generations Act to the Scrutiny Toolkit Members. The provision of e-learning is being developed by the Democratic Services Committee through a Members portal as outlined in Appendix 2.

**5. Evaluating the effectiveness of scrutiny**

The Scrutiny Annual Report has taken forward an outcomes appraisal of the work covered in the Municipal Year, demonstrating the impact that scrutiny has had on the residents of the County Borough. This approach will further be strengthened upon going forward in future Annual Reports.

Further work on the evaluation of the impact of scrutiny still needs to be strengthened by the Council and the proposals identified in this report to address Committee work programmes and scrutiny reviews during Committee meetings will assist in taking this forward.

## **11 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from this report and no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed necessary for the purposes of this report.

## **12 CONSULTATION**

- 12.1 The considerations and comments of Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs have been sought in respect of the report and will be orally reported at the Overview & Scrutiny meeting. It is proposed that following consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee the report be presented to the Corporate Governance & Constitution committee to support any necessary amendments before being presented to the Council's AGM.

## **13 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

## **14 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 14.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report, although amendments to the Councils constitution will need to be taken forward as appropriate.

## **15 LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 15.1 The proposals to address the WAO report proposals includes arrangements to strengthen the Council's consideration and scrutiny of its work, through 'the lens of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act'. These arrangements will be embedded into the business of the Council as set out in the Policy Statement agreed by Cabinet on 2 November 2016.

15.2 The proposals outlined within the report will work to ensure a sustainable and robust scrutiny structure is in place which will effectively challenge policy decisions taken forward.

## **16 CONCLUSION**

16.1 The Council is continuing its work to strengthen its scrutiny arrangements and these enhancement support the council in responding to the findings arising from the recent WAO report and will further strengthen governance and accountability arrangements.



**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*To co-ordinate the work of the four thematic scrutiny committees and ensure that the work of each of these committees is effective. The Committee is responsible for approving the work programmes developed by the four themed scrutiny committees to ensure deliverable, co-ordinated and outcome focused programmes of work. To fulfil the overview and scrutiny role in relation to "all Council" cross cutting themes which cut across the terms of reference of the four thematic scrutiny committees. The Committee is also responsible for dealing with all 'Call-ins' (under the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules).*

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*The overview & scrutiny role in connection with scrutinising all education provision from 3 - 19 years and Children's Services.*

**HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*The overview & scrutiny role in connection with scrutinising services which support the Health & Wellbeing of our communities. The Committee considers adult social services as well as other factors which contribute to the health & wellbeing of the County Borough such as Leisure Services, Housing and Public Health & Wellbeing.*

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*The overview and scrutiny role in connection with scrutinising public service delivery across a range of Council services. The Committee considers areas which contribute to prosperity and also community safety issues. It is the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee (pursuant to Section 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006).*

**FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*This Committee is responsible for scrutinising financial and operational performance; treasury management arrangements; the annual revenue budget consultation process; statutory performance reporting requirements and monitoring the implementation of medium term financial planning decisions.*

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<b>What are we trying to achieve, the outcome</b>	Strengthened governance through improved Scrutiny work planning, project delivery, evaluation and involvement of residents.
<b>Why we need to do it:</b>	A follow up review of the Council’s scrutiny arrangements has identified further opportunities to enhance the impact of scrutiny on the Council’s Services for the people and communities in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

<b>Proposals for improvement The Council should</b>	<b>Council’s Response</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Action to Date</b>
WAO FFF 1 review whether specific training could better prepare overview and scrutiny members to respond to current and future challenges. This could include training on Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.	<p>AGREED</p> <p>The training needs of Members have been reviewed through a Personal Development Review process as part of the Council’s ongoing commitment to Member development.</p> <p>Training needs in respect of Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Cardiff Regional City Deal, among other things have already been identified as part of this process.</p> <p><b>Well-being of Future Generations Act-</b> Following initial training in respect of Well-being of Future Generations Act at Member induction, a Scrutiny Working Group has been established to develop RCT scrutiny arrangements that can be</p>	<p>A new approach to providing training that will strengthen arrangements for Member development will be presented to Democratic Services Committee for consideration on 25 October.</p> <p>Working Group meetings have scheduled between October and January.</p>	<p>Arrangements to be put in place by the start of the new municipal year</p> <p>October 2018 and January 2019</p>	<p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p> <p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Democratic Services Committee</a> have endorsed the approach to develop a ‘Members Portal’ which will allow provision for E-Learning to be taken forward. As this approach will take time to develop and embed training sessions will continue to be run in the Council Chamber for the benefit of all Members and bespoke training will be provided as identified through the</p>

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
	<p>incorporated into existing processes. This will include consideration of a draft Scrutiny Framework which is being developed by the office of the Future Generations Commissioner.</p> <p>It is anticipated that Members of the Working Group will act as WFG 'Champions' within their respective Committees to support any changes to the scrutiny arrangements arising from the findings of the working group.</p> <p><b>Cardiff City Region City Deal-</b> scrutiny arrangements have been established, with Bridgend Council taking forward the lead. We are working closely with colleagues in Bridgend to ensure that Members of the Board representing the council are provided with sufficient training and support to allow them to undertake their scrutiny role in this area.</p> <p>The Council is responsive to Members requests for training and changing legislation, with forthcoming training to be provided in respect of GDPR, which we will share with our Community and Town</p>	<p>CCRCD Training is being discussed at the first meeting of the City Deal Joint Scrutiny which is taking place on the 15.10.18</p>	<p>Following the Joint Scrutiny Committees first meeting in October</p> <p>November 2018.</p>	<p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p> <p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p>	<p>continuation of Members PDRs. Any training needs identified by Scrutiny Committees will also be supported – During January 2019, all Members were invited to the Financial training session that was provided prior to F&amp;P Committee. Sessions have also been undertaken in respect of GDPR, Equality and Diversity in addition to planning related training.</p> <p>Well-being of Future Generations Act – meetings of the scrutiny working group are continuing to take place in respect of the scrutiny of the LCV NOM. Prior to the</p>

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
	Council colleagues to ensure all elected representatives for RCT are supported.	Subject to the agreement of Democratic Services Committee GDPR Training to take place prior to full Council on the 28.11.18			<p>formal commencement of the scrutiny review</p> <p>Members of the working group were provided with training on the Act and undertaking scrutiny through the lens of the Act. It is proposed that this training will be provided to all Members during the Municipal Year</p> <p>The CCRD working group have received training before meetings as well as undertaking related site visits to assist Members in their review and challenge.</p>
WAO FFF 2 review the level and type of scrutiny support required to enable the scrutiny function to	AGREED The Council is constantly reviewing capacity and support arrangements. Most recently at the <a href="#">Democratic Services Committee</a> in July, 2018 it was	Further detail that will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhance officer support available to</li> </ul>	Democratic Services Committee	<b>Christian Hanagan</b>	Members of the <a href="#">Democratic Services Committee</a> endorsed the opinion of the Interim Head of Democratic Services in respect of the

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
respond to current and future challenges	<p>agreed that Christian Hanagan be designated the interim Head of Democratic Services (HODS) following the retirement of Karyl May. The Committee further agreed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create a Council Business Unit that will support the Executive and Non-Executive Members;</li> <li>• make the Member support functions more resilient; and</li> <li>• reinvest any efficiency savings arising to increase the capacity of the Business Unit to support the Scrutiny Committees in undertaking their duties.</li> </ul>	<p>non-executive members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide assistance for members to better prepare for scrutiny and</li> <li>• improved support for the Council's scrutiny functions,</li> </ul> <p>will be included in the statutory 'Sufficiency of Resources' report which will be presented to the Democratic Services Committee on 25 October 2018.</p>	25 October 2018.		<p>provision of support in the newly formed Council Business Unit. Through the use of the <a href="#">Members Survey</a> which was conducted in accordance with s6(2) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure provision was made in the survey to ask Members if they were happy with the level of support provided to them by the Council Business Unit, as well as additional information about the provision of facilities and training to assist Members in undertaking their roles. This feedback will be made available to the Democratic Services Committee at their next meeting for discussion and action if necessary, although early indications show a 97% approval rate for the support provided</p>

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
					from the responses received.
WAO FFF 3 ensure that members have the opportunity to adequately prepare for scrutiny activity by having access to information in advance of scrutiny committee meetings.	<p><b>AGREED</b> - Through the new Council Business Unit, the Council will ensure that Members have sufficient access to information and Officer reports in the specified time-lines as set out in the Council's constitution. Also, that that any presentations from Officers supplement Officer reports and recommendations and are not stand alone items.</p> <p>The recent development of the Cabinet/Scrutiny Engagement sessions with Scrutiny Chairs and Cabinet portfolio holders will continue to enhance this approach, with timely discussions of forward work programmes and opportunities for Scrutiny committees. Greater transparency of the detailed Cabinet work programme will also assist Scrutiny Members to establish items for pre-scrutiny and associated timelines.</p>	See above	Following the Democratic Services Committee October 2018	<b>Christian Hanagan</b>	As the Interim Head of Democratic Services plays an active part in the Senior Leadership Team meetings, officers are now aware of the importance of producing Members with sufficient access to information and officer reports as set out in the Council Constitution. Scrutiny Officers ensure that any power point presentations supplement the reports going forward. It is important that this practice continues, especially if Members agree to the proposal outlined with the report that Members are to carry out 'Working Group' type reviews in Committee meeting settings, therefore ensuring Members have

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
					<p>sufficient information to undertake such scrutiny will be essential.</p> <p>The Cabinet/Scrutiny Engagement sessions with Scrutiny Chairs and Cabinet portfolio holders has proved to be successful, providing more opportunities than ever before for Scrutiny to play an influential role in the key policy decisions of the Council at an early stage and this approach will continue to be built upon.</p> <p>A notable example of this way of working has been the involvement of scrutiny at regular stages in the potential plans to <a href="#">modernise the delivery of residential care</a> in the County Borough. Another notable example, has been, the engagement of scrutiny in the <a href="#">Council's 21st Century</a></p>



Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
					<p><a href="#">Schools</a> proposals for the first time. Both these examples have been achieved through the 121 dialogue established as a result of the regular formal meetings between scrutiny chairs and the respective Cabinet Members &amp; Director.</p>
<p>WAO FFF 4 a) strengthen committee ownership of forward work programmes and committee agendas; and</p>	<p><b>AGREED</b> - The Council continues to strengthen ownership of forward work programmes and committee agendas. Steps include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny Committee's (O&amp;S) consideration of the quarterly Cabinet work programme. This enables O&amp;S to refer matters to other Scrutiny Committees to help them plan their work programmes</li> <li>• Regular meetings between Scrutiny Chairs with associated Cabinet Members and Group Directors. These meetings address the cabinet work programme, policy developments and scrutiny priorities and have strengthened Members'</li> </ul>				<p>Cabinet published its work programme on 21st June 2018 for the 2018/19 municipal year and refreshed this on three occasions: 20th September 2018, 18th December 2018, 19th March 2019; with the document being reviewed and considered by Overview &amp; Scrutiny.</p> <p>A link to the Council Work Programme is also provided at every Council meeting to allow for any appropriate</p>

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
<p>b) clarify and promote arrangements for adding items to forward work programmes for members and the public.</p>	<p>overall understanding of the Council's business.</p> <p>At its meeting on <a href="#">27 June</a> the Council agreed a <a href="#">Council Work Programme</a> which will help to make the business of the Council more transparent and although we know have more to do we've have started to make changes. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meetings of Scrutiny Committees being held in locations within communities across RCT. The aim of this is to encourage greater public engagement in the development of work programmes and attendance and involvement at Committee meetings. However, it is too early to evaluate the extent to which this has been achieved.</li> <li><a href="#">dedicated pages for Scrutiny</a> have been included on the Council's Website. These pages contain detailed information about the role of Scrutiny, projects that have been introduced as a result of Scrutiny intervention and a 'Scrutiny Chairs'</li> </ul>	<p>Review the effectiveness and impact of holding Scrutiny Committee meeting in locations across RCT.</p> <p>Continue to develop dedicated Scrutiny pages.</p>	<p>May 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2018</p>	<p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p> <p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p> <p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p>	<p>updates to Members to ensure transparency.</p> <p>Committee Work Programmes are an important tool for Members to assist them in viewing items that are coming forward to Committees and for other Committees to utilise to prevent duplication of work and assist with pre-scrutiny. Work Programmes also assist members of the public to engage in the democratic process of the Council and all work programmes are available on a standalone page on the <a href="#">Council website</a> as well as the scrutiny work programmes being available through the <a href="#">scrutiny pages of the website</a>. It is noted that some work programmes have been more weighted in terms of</p>

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
	<p>Blog' which currently contains contributions from two Scrutiny Chairs. Implementation of additional pages '<b>Engage with the Council</b>' which provide options by which residents can engage in the Council's decision making processes, are imminent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work to ensure the format of work programmes is fit for purpose and user friendly for both Members and residents.</li> <li>• arrangements to ensure that meetings of Chairs and Vice-chairs of Scrutiny receive regular updates on Council business being developed by the Senior Leadership Team and the Executive for consideration so that they can better reflect the priorities being discussed.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure the implementation of the 'Engage with the Council' Web pages.</p> <p>Continue work to introduce user friendly Scrutiny work programmes.</p> <p>Put in place arrangements to provide Chair and Vice meetings with more detailed information to inform their discussions about Council priorities.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>By the Council AGM 2019.</p>	<p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p> <p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p>	<p>the number of reports being presented at individual committees and whilst aiming to deliver more qualitative information, in some cases this has resulted in work programmes covering too broad a range of topics. As outlined in the report, the proposal to review each of the Committees Terms of Reference and utilising a new Work Programme Template which will incorporate other forms of good practice identified by other Authorities and incorporating elements of the Well-being and Future Generations Act will assist the Council in taking forward this proposal.</p> <p>The scrutiny pages on the Council website have been further promoted with a</p>

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
					<p><a href="#">banner</a> on the Council front page, to allow further easier access to the Scrutiny web content for the benefit of Members and the general public. The 'Public Speaking at a scrutiny committee' meeting protocol has now been established and the <a href="#">guidance note</a> is available on scrutiny pages for the public to utilise. This has been utilised at a recent <a href="#">Call In meeting</a>, with 3 public speakers addressing the Committee on the agenda item.</p> <p>The Scrutiny chair and Vice Chair meetings are convened as and when appropriate following discussion with the Chair of the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee. The Interim Head of Democratic Services ensures that an</p>

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
					<p>agenda for each meeting is available for Members consideration with the appropriate reports to accompany each agenda item.</p> <p>Evaluation of the venues for scrutiny committees meetings has suggested that there has been no added benefit to taking the committees out into the community in respect of the interest of the public. It is therefore proposed within the report that the Committee meetings continue within the Council Committee meetings settings and further is taken forward in respect of the social media presence and the options for webcasting.</p>
WAO FFF 5 improve the arrangements in place to	<b>AGREED</b> – Steps have already been taken to better evaluate the impact of Scrutiny,				The <a href="#">Scrutiny Annual Report</a> has taken forward an outcomes appraisal of the

Proposals for improvement The Council should	Council's Response	Next Steps	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Action to Date
evaluate the impact of scrutiny.	<p>which has been reflected in the <a href="#">Annual Scrutiny Report 2017/18</a>.</p> <p>A number of policies have been developed by Scrutiny Work groups and subsequently supported and taken forward and endorsed by Cabinet. An example of this is the work to improve the provision of sanitary products to female learners in schools arising from recommendations from Children and Young People Scrutiny Working Group which received cross party support by <a href="#">Council in February 2018</a> with a implementation plan being agreed by <a href="#">Cabinet in April 2018</a>.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to develop its performance arrangements for Scrutiny so that they can better facilitate improved evaluation of scrutiny. This will include robust action planning to support the delivery of agreed recommendations with appropriate monitoring arrangements in place.</p>	<p>Develop and introduce strengthened performance arrangement to enable Scrutiny committees to better evaluate their impact</p>	<p>By the Council AGM 2019.</p>	<p><b>Christian Hanagan</b></p>	<p>work covered in the Municipal Year, demonstrating the impact that scrutiny has had on the residents of the County Borough. This approach which will further be strengthened upon going forward in future Annual Reports.</p> <p>Further work on the evaluation of the impact of scrutiny still needs to be strengthened by the Council and the proposals identified in the report to address Committee work programmes and scrutiny reviews during Committee meetings will assist in taking this forward.</p>



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018 - 2019**

**SCRUTINY CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS MEETING**

**1<sup>st</sup> MAY 2019**

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR of DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND  
COMMUNICATIONS**

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to present to the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs the draft Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs:

- 2.1 Review the draft report at Appendix 1 and confirm the content of their individual Annual Reports for the 2018/19 Municipal Year; and
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1, endorse the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19 (and subsequent amendments as requested by Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019).

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To ensure the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committees have delivered against their respective forward Work Programmes and incorporated any additional work as referred to them during the 2018/19 Municipal Year as appropriate and in line with their respective terms of reference.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Annual report was presented to members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019. At the meeting Members were asked to consider whether it represented a fair and balanced summary of the work undertaken by all the Council's Scrutiny Committees during the Municipal Year 2018/19.

4.2 Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee subsequently endorsed the report and its presentation to the Annual General meeting (AGM) of the Council subject to the inclusion of the following:-

- Inclusion of the Special Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Call-In) held on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019; and
- Reference to the involvement of the Education Co-opted Members in the Council's Scrutiny process;

4.3 For ease of reference these items have been included at pages 18 and 21 of the report respectively.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

5.1 It is appropriate that the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs have the opportunity to review their individual annual reports to assess whether they represent an accurate reflection of the scrutiny activities during 2018/19 before it is presented to Full Council.

#### **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from this report and no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed necessary for the purposes of this report.

#### **7. CONSULTATION**

7.1 The views of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were sought at its meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 where members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee endorsed the report subject to the inclusion of two points, as referenced above.

7.2 Further consultation is sought from the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs of the respective Scrutiny Committees to confirm the content of their individual Scrutiny annual reports before presentation to the Council AGM.

#### **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **9. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**



9.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report supports the arrangements to strengthen the Council's consideration and scrutiny of its work, through 'the lens of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act'. these arrangements will be embedded into the business of the Council as set out in the Policy Statement agreed by Cabinet on 2 November 2016.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**as amended by**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

**SCRUTINY CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS**

**DRAFT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT**

**1<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2019**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &  
COMMUNICATIONS**



**L. M. Adams**  
**Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee**



**S. Rees-Owen**  
**Chair of Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee**



**R. Yeo**  
**Chair of Health & Well-Being Scrutiny Committee**



**S. Bradwick**  
**Chair of Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee**



**J. Williams**  
**Chair of Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee**

## FOREWORD

As Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee it gives me great pleasure to introduce the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report for 2018/19.

This report will demonstrate what we have achieved over the past year, the priorities for each of the themed Scrutiny Committees and whether they have delivered the outcomes for their individual key areas of work. Last year I reported on the improvements we made to strengthen ownership of the Scrutiny forward work programmes and the steps we started to take to engage with our residents and wholly inform them of our processes. This year, I believe we have worked harder to promote public engagement in Scrutiny and we have delivered the following:-

- A dedicated [Scrutiny](#) webpage (which includes detailed information in respect of the role of Scrutiny, Scrutiny Work Programmes, Scrutiny related news articles and a 'Scrutiny Chairs' Blog' which adds a personal touch to the Scrutiny work undertaken by the Scrutiny Chairs themselves); and
- A [Public Speaking Protocol](#) which sets out clear and concise advice on what our residents can expect should they wish to become involved and speak at any of our Scrutiny Committees;

Other areas where we continue to develop include a more formal reporting mechanism in place for the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs which enables us all to receive updates, share information and exchange ideas. Regular meetings continue to take place between the Scrutiny Chairs, Vice Chairs and their respective Cabinet Members to ensure the two way communication continues to drive policy developments across Council services. We still try and reach out to our residents by taking Scrutiny out and about and have continued to hold Scrutiny meetings in venues other than in the Council Chamber such as Abercynon Sports Centre and Bryn Pica site. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this in the future and consider if this is the most effective mechanism to improve participation.

During 2017/18 the Wales Audit Office undertook a national review of scrutiny with fieldwork in all local authority areas. The purpose of the review was to explore how 'fit for the future' our scrutiny arrangements are and how well placed we are to respond to future challenges. I was encouraged that the Wales Audit Office found Scrutiny within RCT to have strengthened but I am by no means willing to rest on our laurels as some of the areas that need improvement include;

- strengthening support for the Scrutiny function;
- better planning of Scrutiny activity; and
- improvements to demonstrate the impact of scrutiny.

We have put together an action plan which responds to the improvements required in these areas and that together with the original WAO report can be found [here](#).

We have worked hard to improve and maintain our collaboration with key partners over the last year and this can be measured by our involvement and active engagement in the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (in total 10 local authorities who scrutinise the developments of the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal) and the Cwm Taf Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee (with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to undertake scrutiny of the Cwm Taf Public Service Board (PSB). RCT will lead on this work in 2019/2020). We also have a joint scrutiny working group arrangement in place to scrutinise the school improvement function in the Central South Wales Consortium which has strengthened our regional working in this area.

Following initial training in respect of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as part of the Member induction in 2017, I am privileged to have the opportunity to Chair a Scrutiny Working Group which has been established to develop the Scrutiny arrangements in RCT whilst undertaking a review the development of infrastructure to support low carbon vehicles in RCT. This exciting piece of work, which is still in its infancy will, I believe demonstrate important role the Council's Scrutiny have to play in ensuring the Council approach the future through the lenses of this act . This work is referenced in greater detail in the Overview & Scrutiny Committee section (Pages XXX).

I believe any comparison between my first years as Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and now will demonstrate that we have made improvements in terms of content, workload and impact, however we need to work harder next year to implement the changes that the Wales Audit office have suggested we make. An integral part of these improvements and our capacity to deliver further change has been supported by the changes in Officer support through the Council Business Unit which have been implemented over the last twelve months.

I would like to reflect my thanks to my Vice Chair, Councillor Sheryl Evans as well as the other Chairs and Vice Chairs who have contributed fully and positively once again this year.

**County Borough Councillor L M Adams**  
**Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

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## Executive Summary

As the full Annual Report is detailed the following summary is intended to be accessible to a wider audience and aims to enable readers to better understand the impact that the Council's Scrutiny Committees have contributed to during 2018/19, and also where improvements are needed.

### 1. Scrutiny Reviews Completed/Ongoing

Table 1 sets out completed reviews undertaken by Scrutiny Committees and recommendations made, (the implementation of which will be monitored in 2019/20) and those reviews undertaken in this Municipal Year with reported outcomes in 2019/20

Area Reviewed & by which Committee	Reason for Review	Output from the Review	Performance/Outcome Information
<b>Voluntary Snow Warden Scheme</b> – Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	Concern that more needed to be done to support the Council's Emergency Planning responsibilities by the introduction of a Voluntary Snow Wardens scheme.	In total four recommendations were agreed by Cabinet – Click <a href="#">here</a> to view the response in full together with the recommendations	The launch of the 'Your Neighbours Need You' campaign, on the Council website to support the wider work of the Council to prepare for the potential of severe weather during the winter period. Click <a href="#">here</a> to view the full campaign.
<b>Electoral Arrangements by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales</b> – Overview & Scrutiny Committee	To ensure that the views of local members and stakeholders were comprehensively recorded and communicated to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales.	The Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommended to Full Council that the proposals be subject to a period of stakeholder engagement to properly reflect the views of local Members and stakeholders prior to further consideration by Full Council.	A final Council proposal to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales was submitted by 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2018. Click <a href="#">here</a> to view the final proposals.
<b>Elderly Mental &amp; Infirm (EMI) Beds</b> Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	The lack of EMI nursing care home beds (both respite and long term care provision) and impact the loss of older people with dementia hospital beds	Two recommendations submitted to Cabinet in February 2019 for its consideration which will be responded to in the next Municipal Year.	Scrutiny wanted to ensure that the actions and recommendations in the Cwm Taf Market Position Statement are being delivered in particular those aimed at the more specialised provision and need for more provision

	and closure of wards at Ysbyty George Thomas in Treorchy had on EMI nursing care home provision availability and choice.	Click <a href="#">here</a> to view the final report	linked to complex care i.e. dementia and nursing dementia. Scrutiny acknowledged that this work reflects the medium to long term nature of the programme of the work in this area and as such, supports the requirement for continued Scrutiny oversight to help ensure the necessary improvements are made.
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### Current and Ongoing Reviews with reported outcomes in 2019/20

Area Reviewed & by which Committee	Reason for Review	Key Areas of Current Work	Performance/Outcome Information
<b>Recycling in Communal Areas</b> -Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	A <a href="#">Scrutiny</a> Working Group established to identify where improvements to the recycling rates in areas of low recycling participation in communal areas can be made.	Two key areas of work were identified:-  Enforcement and Communal recycling through the perspective of the role of the Social Housing Landlords.	It is anticipated that, when completed, improvements to collection methods and bulky waste can be achieved in communal areas so that the Council's results in recyclable material can be improved.
<b>Register of Food Businesses in RCT</b> – Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee	The item was referred to the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee by Full Council for its consideration.  Click <a href="#">here</a> to view the detail of the Notice of Motion 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	The first meeting of the Scrutiny Working Group will take place in April 2019 and will review the current food register and how the Council supports and promotes local food production companies through collaboration with local food businesses.	The Scrutiny Working Group will inform the development of the existing food register by working with local food businesses to identify any further development for improvement. It will report its recommendations to Cabinet when the work has concluded.
<b>Scrutiny Toolkit Working Group –Development of</b>	The Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny has been created to	Consider the Council's Scrutiny requirements for the Well-being of Future	The Working Group will apply the Sustainable Development principle of the Act through the five



<p><b>Infrastructure to support low carbon vehicles</b> – Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>support decision-making in the context of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.”</p> <p>Notice of Motion – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 – Click <a href="#">here</a> to view the detail of the Notice of Motion.</p>	<p>Generations Act and consider the development of the infrastructure to support Low Carbon Vehicles that will improve the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural well-being of the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf.</p>	<p>ways of working, namely, Integration, Collaboration, Long term thinking, Involvement and Prevention.</p>
<p><b>Fixed Penalty Notices for Non-School Attendance – Children &amp; Young People</b> Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>Improving school attendance is a priority for the Council and its schools and Scrutiny will undertake its review of the current use of Fixed Penalty Notices to assess its effectiveness.</p>	<p>Scrutiny will consider how the Council currently uses Fixed Penalty Notices and whether it is a contributing factor for any increases in school attendance.</p>	<p>The first meeting of this working group will be held over the coming weeks with recommendations reported in the next Municipal Year.</p>

**2. Pre Scrutiny** is the process by which Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee become involved with decisions at a stage before the decision is formally taken. This approach proves beneficial as it involves Non-Executive Members at the pre decision stage and adds value to reports through wider consultation.

The following table sets out all the Pre Scrutiny work and Consultations undertaken by all the Scrutiny Committees, which has been undertaken in 2018/19 and evidences how we have influenced the decisions:-

<b>Consultation/Pre-Scrutiny</b>	<b>Reason for the Consultation/Pre Scrutiny</b>	<b>Added Value/Impact</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>OVERVIEW &amp; SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>			
<b><u>Consultation</u></b> Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD)- Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee	The creation of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee is required to be considered by each of the constituent authorities' appropriate Scrutiny Committee, before being endorsed by full Council.	Scrutiny agreed the creation of a Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the work of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) in collaboration with the other nine constituent authorities. It also endorsed the creation of the Joint Scrutiny Committee.	The report and Minutes formally agreeing the proposal to agree the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .
<b><u>Consultation</u></b> Modernisation of Residential Care & Day Care for Older People.	The Overview & Scrutiny Committee was involved in the Council's formal consultation process.	The Overview & Scrutiny Committee will undertake Pre Scrutiny on the consultation feedback  Included the matter on its future work programme as a priority;  Call on the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to jointly assess the matter.	The Modernisation of Residential Care & Day Care for Older People report can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>
<b><u>Consultation</u></b>	Opportunity for Members of the	Scrutiny took a pivotal role in shaping the	The adopted protocol can be

Public Engagement Protocol	Overview & Scrutiny Committee to influence and formally adopt the Protocol advising members of the public how to engage in the Council's Scrutiny process.	evolving Protocol through constructive input which has been published on the Scrutiny dedicated web page to increase public participation and engagement.	accessed on the dedicated Scrutiny web page <a href="#">here</a>
<b>FINANCE &amp; PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>Pre Scrutiny</b> Draft Corporate Performance Report (CPR) 2018/19. A copy of the draft Corporate Performance Report can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> ;	In line with its Terms of Reference the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee is requested to analyse and review the draft Corporate Performance Report.	Scrutiny made a number of valuable observations as part of the pre scrutiny exercise and where possible those have been captured in the updated Corporate Performance Report 2018/19.	Feedback included in the updated report to:- Cabinet -17 <sup>th</sup> July 2018 <a href="#">here</a> Council – 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
<b>Pre Scrutiny</b> 2019/20 Revenue Budget Strategy- a copy of the 2019/20 report can be accessed <a href="#">here</a>	In line with its Terms of Reference the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee is requested to review the 2019/20 Revenue Budget Strategy.	Scrutiny worked hard to challenge the Council's 2019/20 Revenue Budget Strategy and expressed its views to Cabinet in respect of budget strategy proposals.	Feedback included in the updated report to Cabinet – 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2019 <a href="#">here</a>
<b>Consultation</b> 2019/20 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation Can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>	The Finance & Performance Terms of Reference includes the annual Revenue Budget Consultation process.	Scrutiny provided feedback to Cabinet along with other consultees so that Cabinet can agree a proposed Budget Strategy 2019/20	Feedback to Cabinet included in the updated report to Cabinet – 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2019 <a href="#">here</a>
<b>PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES &amp; PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>Pre Scrutiny</b> Out & About Two– The Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for RCT 2019-2019	Scrutiny shaped the Improvement Plan which would inform this important document going forward.	Scrutiny endorsed the ROWIP to Cabinet and requested that all links on social media relating to interactive maps are bilingual.	Scrutiny <a href="#">endorsed</a> the adoption of the ROWIP for RCT 2019-2029.
<b>Consultation</b>			

South Wales Police National review of Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT) meetings.	Sitting in its role as the Council's Crime & Disorder Committee, Scrutiny was consulted on the role of <a href="#">PACT</a> to assess its effectiveness.	Following the consultation process a comprehensive report will be delivered to the Crime & Disorder Committee in the next Municipal Year.	Next year Scrutiny will assess the outcome of the National review and continue its focus on the impact of the changes made to these community meetings.
<b><u>Consultation</u></b> Assess the impact of the Council's Planning & Development Committee	Scrutiny assessed the effectiveness of the current arrangements in place for the Council's Planning & Development Committee.	Some of the Scrutiny <a href="#">recommendations</a> included:- Training for all Members on the planning process with an invitation to the Director of Wales Planning Inspectorate.	The Planning Inspectorate delivered training on his role on <b>24<sup>th</sup> January 2019</b> ; Pre Consultation training was delivered on <b>18<sup>th</sup> October 2018</b> ; 'Plot Shop' Initiative training was received on <b>8<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b> .
<b><u>PRE SCRUTINY TO BOTH THE HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND CHILDREN &amp; YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b>			
Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2017/2018	The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board has a statutory responsibility to publish an Annual Report on 31st July each year, to demonstrate its effectiveness in exercising its functions in the preceding financial year.	Both Scrutiny Committees endorsed the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2017/2018 although a number of requests for follow-up information and reports came out of this review so that Scrutiny can continue to monitor and challenge the work of the Board.	The final Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2017/2018 can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>
Draft Director Of Social Services Annual Report 2017/18	Part 8 of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act a Code of Practice requires the Director of Social Services to produce an annual report. The report is presented to both	Following a challenging session the Director of Social Services Annual Report 2017/18 was agreed by both Scrutiny Committees.	The final report was considered by Cabinet <a href="#">here</a>

	Committees for a pre scrutiny exercise.		
Representations & Complaints Procedures Annual Report	It is a requirement of the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations Procedure 2014 that the Local Authority produce an annual report and that the report is considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.	Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee & Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Acknowledged the work undertaken by the Social Services Complaints Team and implementation of the service model going forward.	The final report can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>			
<b><u>Pre Scrutiny</u></b> Rhondda Cynon Taf Homelessness Strategy 2018-22	To examine the suitability of the draft Homelessness Strategy for 2018-2022	Agreed that the strategic objectives and actions proposed in the strategy are implemented with a commitment to further review in the coming year.	The final report can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>
<b><u>Pre Scrutiny</u></b> 2014 Additional Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) New Additional Licensing Scheme for HMOs from April 2019, in accordance with the provisions of the Housing Act 2004.	To assess the effectiveness of the 2014 Additional Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and, subject to those findings, to scrutinise the proposal to declare a New Additional Licensing Scheme for HMOs from April 2019, in accordance with the provisions of the Housing Act 2004	Scrutiny agreed that licensing conditions should be placed on all HMO licences granted by the Council under both the Mandatory Licensing Scheme and the proposed new Additional Licensing Scheme from April 2019.	The report can be accessed <a href="#">here</a> .
<b><u>Consultation</u></b> Community Day Centres	Scrutiny played its part in the Council's formal consultation process with service users and local	Scrutiny provided robust feedback to ensure that the current service provision is cost	The report can be accessed <a href="#">here</a> .

	communities on the future of the remaining four Community Day centres.	effective and is meeting the Council's commitment to deliver the best possible services.	
<b>Consultation</b> Draft Toilet Strategy	Scrutiny informed the development of the Council's local Toilet Strategy which had been the focus of a consultation process with providers and residents around their needs.	Scrutiny fed into the consultation process with the aim of improving access and provision of toilet facilities county wide.	The consultation report can be accessed <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>CHILDREN &amp; YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>Consultation</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation Proposal	Opportunity to engage in the formal consultation process in respect of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme – Proposals to improve Education in Pontypridd and in the Cynon Valley.	Scrutiny provided significant contributions to the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation proposal which enabled the Committee to contribute to the service change at an early stage.	The 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme Proposals to improve Education Provision in the Cynon Valley can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>
<b>Consultation</b> Accommodation Strategy for Young People 16+	The draft strategy outlines how Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council will in the future approach supporting young people 16+ years of age who will leave care and need accommodation and support.	Scrutiny endorsed the draft accommodation strategy for Young People aged 16+ years of age Leaving Care and will monitor the implementation and delivery of the Strategy.	The draft Accommodation Strategy for Young people aged 16+ years can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Pre Scrutiny</b> School Attendance Strategy 2018-2021	Scrutiny highlighted the need to raise awareness of good school attendance and improve the current rates across Rhondda Cynon Taf.	Scrutiny recommended :- The establishment of Truancy Watch and Truancy Free Zones initiatives and getting School Governors	The final report can be viewed <a href="#">here</a> .

		involved early on in any future school attendance discussions.	
<b>Pre Scrutiny</b> Play Sufficiency Assessment 2019/2020	Scrutiny wanted the opportunity to approve the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) and action plan before its submission to Welsh Government by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019.	Scrutiny contributed to and endorsed the PSA and action plan and agreed for it to be submitted to Welsh Government	The Play Sufficiency Assessment 2019/2020 can be accessed <a href="#">here</a> .

3. Scrutiny also provided constructive challenge and positive criticism in the following areas to help the process of driving improvements across the Council.

#### **Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee**

- Street Care Enforcement in RCT
- Taff Vale Redevelopment
- Improving Recycling in RCT
- Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) - Dog Control
- Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2017/2018
- Maladministration Complaints to the Public Ombudsman for Wales 2017/2018
- Transformation of the Mobile Library Service in RCT
- Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's)
- Statutory Process for the removal of Caravans and other Obstructions from the Highway
- Civil Parking Enforcement

#### **Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee (Crime & Disorder)**

- DIVERT 18-25 Project
- Wales Integrated Serious & Dangerous Offender Management (WISDOM) Project
- Cwm Taf Community Safety Delivery Plan 2018-2021
- Anti-Social Behaviour in Partnership

#### **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

- Local Authority Arrangements to Safeguard Children and Adults at Risk
- RCT's Digital Work Programme
- Information Management (to include General Data Protection Review (GDPR))
- Fire Risk Assessment - A Review of Procedures for Council Owned/Occupied Buildings
- Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report
- Annual Report of the Leader of the Council

### **Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

- Development & Delivery of 3G Pitches throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Empty Homes Strategy 2018-2021
- Stay Well at Home Service
- Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
- Evaluating the Impact of Transferring the Kennelling Facility to Hope Rescue
- Delayed Transfers Of Care
- Mental Health Awareness

### **Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee (Education)**

- Outcomes of Children Looked After in RCT 2016/17
- Fixed Penalty Notice Review for Regular Non School Attendance
- Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
- Monitoring of all the Key Stages
- Additional Learning Needs & Education Tribunal (ALN ET)
- SEREN Hub
- Outcomes for Children Accessing Education Other than at School (EOTAS) 2017/2018
- Impact of the Work of the Central South Consortium Business Plan on RCT

### **Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services)**

- RCT Children Looked After Quality Assurance Panel Work Plan 2018/19
- Corporate Parenting Annual Report
- Regional Adoption Annual Report
- Resilient Families Service in RCT
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
- Placements of RCT Children Looked After
- School Based Counselling Service 2017/18
- RCT Young Carer's Service

### **Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee**

- Council Corporate & Service Self-Assessment
- Treasury Management Strategy Report 2019/20
- Mid-Year Treasury Management Activity Report
- Capital Strategy Report 2019/20
- Community Meal Central Production
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Review of 2018/19 Performance Indicator Targets
- Corporate Asset Management Plan 2018/19



**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

		
<b>L. M. Adams - Chair</b>	<b>S. Evans - Vice Chair</b>	
		
<b>H. Boggis</b>	<b>J. Bonetto</b>	<b>J. Brencher</b>
		
<b>G. Caple</b>	<b>A. Cox</b>	<b>E. George</b>
		
<b>M. Griffiths</b>	<b>J. Harries</b>	<b>P. Jarman</b>
		
<b>D. Macey</b>	<b>S. Morgans</b>	<b>E. Stephens</b>
		

	<b>L. Walker</b>	

### **Terms of Reference**

*To co-ordinate the work of the four thematic scrutiny committees and ensure that the work of each of these committees is effective. The Committee is responsible for approving the work programmes developed by the four themed scrutiny committees to ensure deliverable, co-ordinated and outcome focused programmes of work. To fulfil the overview and scrutiny role in relation to “all Council” cross cutting themes which cut across the terms of reference of the four thematic scrutiny committees. The Committee is also responsible for dealing with all ‘Call-ins’ (under the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules).*

Since the 2017 Local Government Election, changes have taken place to the Political Balance of the Council which resulted in the current membership of all the Council’s Scrutiny Committees increasing from 11 to 15 seats. County Borough Councillor J. James was a Member of this Committee up until 28th November, 2018 when further changes in the Political Balance were made as a result of the reduction in membership of the Plaid Cymru and Conservative political groups. County Borough Councillor J. James was replaced by County Borough Councillor M. Griffiths following these changes.

The earlier part of this report demonstrates how varied and extensive the work of the Council’s Scrutiny function has been this year so with that in mind I would like to reference only a few key areas of work that have been undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

### **‘Fit for the Future’**

During the latter part of last year, the Wales Audit Office (WAO) conducted a ‘light touch’ Scrutiny review which would focus on how ‘fit for the future’ the scrutiny functions are within the Welsh Councils. This included, how we are all responding to current challenges such as scrutiny of the Public Services Board. They also followed up on the thematic review that was undertaken in 2016/17 – “Good Governance Arrangements for Determining Significant Service Changes”. In order to inform their work, the Wales Audit Office based their methodology on document reviews, interviews of a selection of Cabinet and Scrutiny Members and key Officers as well as observing some Scrutiny Committee meetings. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018 the results of the review were reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committee and we were asked to evaluate the action plan which set out the Council’s response to the proposals for improvement.

This is what the Wales Audit Office said we need to do more of:-

- *Strengthen support for the Scrutiny function;*
- *Better planning of Scrutiny activity; and*
- *Demonstrate the impact of scrutiny.*

These are some of the arrangements we have put in place:-

- *Created a new ‘Council Business Unit’ which combines the support previously offered independently by Democratic & Member Services and the Executive and Regulatory Business Unit;*
- *Employed a Graduate Scrutiny Officer to undertake specific scrutiny research;*
- *Continue to develop and promote the Scrutiny /Cabinet engagement sessions and Cabinet attendance at our Scrutiny Committees by invitation (to date we have received 6 Cabinet Members and their reports outlining their individual portfolios);*
- *Continue our refreshed approach to Scrutiny work programming and engagement with the Cabinet work programme to identify areas for pre scrutiny at every opportunity; and*

- *Drive evidence of the impact of scrutiny forward through the policy development from recommendations implemented from the Scrutiny Working Groups;*

**Public Engagement** - We are still looking at innovative ways to improve public engagement in our Scrutiny arrangement, it continues to challenge us but the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is very involved in identifying where progress still needs to be made. We have developed a public speaking protocol which will enable members of the public to be able to attend our scrutiny meetings should they wish, with guidelines and support on how to join us. This has now been published on the dedicated Scrutiny web pages which will make it accessible and easier to find as the banner to this page can be seen on the web landing page (the first thing we all see when we access the Council's website). We have included 'Scrutiny Chairs 'blog' written by our Scrutiny Chairs which bring a human touch to our scrutiny activity. We were encouraged by the number of visits to these pages over a 12 month period but we will continue to monitor this activity so we can track progress. In the future, we propose to also include information about our scrutiny working groups which form an integral part of the scrutiny work programmes. By focussing on maintaining and refreshing our Scrutiny web pages we will look to improve our residents' participation and their understanding of our Scrutiny process and further develop the platform from which we can continue to promote the work of our scrutiny function.

The importance of evaluation – members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee have already acknowledged the need for effective evaluation mechanisms so that we can reflect on the value of our Scrutiny activities, what has worked, and what lesson we can learn as this will provide clarity about the impact of and outcomes from our work. We discussed the best way of doing this and decided that following up any recommendations to have been implemented by the Executive could be done in the form of an annual report to the respective Scrutiny Committee, which will evidence progress made and will measure whether the outcomes have impacted on the lives of our residents. We will continue to monitor this next year.

These initial responses have established the groundwork for our local scrutiny improvement journey, which is of course ongoing. We have instructed the Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services to report to us with his findings on the current scrutiny arrangements so that we can remain proactive with our responses to the WAO. We asked that any new arrangements are reported to us in April 2019 and are in place by the Council's AGM 2019.

### **Well-being of Future Generations Act - Framework for Scrutiny**

I mentioned in my foreword that the Scrutiny Framework developed by the Future Generations Commissioner will shape the way we conduct Scrutiny in the years ahead. At its meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to work alongside the Future Generations Commissioner's Office to pilot a new Scrutiny toolkit. The latest Scrutiny template issued by the Commissioner was in late [February](#) 2019. The Scrutiny Working Group established to undertake this piece of work is made up of a cross section of Scrutiny Members so that they can test the Commissioner's approach, establish a potential RCT scrutiny model for WFG and that upon completion of the work they will return to their respective Scrutiny Committees and lead the way as champions in their field. It is also anticipated that my Scrutiny co-Chairs and Vice Chairs will undertake the training in the future so they can ensure that our approach to scrutiny is as focussed on outcomes as it should be.

At its inaugural meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019, the Scrutiny working group members were provided with information on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 not only to test their understanding of the Act, but to support them in their preparations to consider and test the principles of the Act by considering the development of low carbon vehicle (LCV) infrastructure across RCT (derived originally from a Notice of Motion at Full Council on the [28 February 2018](#) and subsequently referred to Scrutiny for review).

The Group's agreed purpose is to consider the development of the infrastructure to support Low Carbon Vehicles that will improve the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural well-being of the people and communities of Rhondda Cynon Taf. In its considerations the Scrutiny Working Group is applying the Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny, in particular, the Sustainable Development principle of the Act through the five ways of working, i.e. Integration, Collaboration, Long term thinking, Involvement and Prevention.

As part of its considerations, the Group will analyse and evaluate the development of infrastructure for LCVs throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf which will inform the development of the Council's own fleet efficiency through the adoption of LCV technologies. This approach is enabling the Group to establish a wider view of the challenges and opportunities that LCVs will offer for the people that live, work and visit RCT.

I am excited by this piece of work and anticipate that the recommendations will draw on best practice and evaluations whilst considering the needs of the residents and workforce within RCT by demonstrating that we are working more sustainably towards the seven national Well-being goals.

### **Fire Safety Arrangements for Social Housing, Supported Housing, Houses in Multiple Occupation and Council Owned Buildings.**

The tragedy of the Grenfell Tower disaster was a stark reminder of the paramount importance of the safety of our staff and residents and the need to ensure that our buildings meet requisite safety standards. Following the disaster this Local Authority undertook an audit in respect of Fire Safety Arrangements for Social Housing, Supported Housing, Houses in Multiple Occupation and Council Owned Buildings and it was decided that in view of the cross cutting issues the matter be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In early 2018 this Committee conducted an in depth inquiry into this matter and as a result of our interventions a number of important practices have been implemented, such as:-

- The re-establishment of a Fire Safety Working Group to identify key corporate health and safety priorities;
- The provision of specific instructions to reinforce 'Responsible Persons' `site level` duties;
- A review of the list of 'Responsible Persons' for each property; and
- The health & safety team to continue to undertake a rolling programme of fire safety audits which are prioritised on a risk basis.

We also requested to be kept updated with progress reports at regular intervals so we could identify where progress is still needed.

At our meeting in December 2018 discussion focused on the evacuation/fire procedures practiced in residential care homes and schools across the County Borough. Members reported on the need for an additional check to be implemented to ensure that all staff with responsibility for overseeing fire/health & safety procedures understand the processes and responsibilities. Members recommended that an e-learning course with tests to complete is available as an additional level of assurance. We will continue to receive regular progress reports with a view to strengthening the arrangements going forward.

### **Call-In**

In accordance with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, this Committee is responsible for dealing with all Call-Ins. A special meeting of the Committee was held on [3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019](#) to deal with two valid Call-In's which were submitted in respect of a decision taken by the Cabinet relating to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools proposals.

The reason for the Call-In's concerned a number of issues such as the consultation methodology which had been undertaken with relevant stakeholders and interested parties,

Welsh Medium Education and concerns that the Cabinet failed to adequately discharge its duties under the provision of the Welfare of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The meeting was attended by the Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong learning as well as the Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services and Welsh Language. We also welcomed three public speakers to our committee who were able to voice their views and concerns to Committee (this was testament to our newly published public participation guide which had been formally been agreed by members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and published to the dedicated Scrutiny webpage). Following much discussion and debate of the issues relating to the proposals to reorganise Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Sixth Form provision in the greater Pontypridd area it was resolved that both Call-In's were unsuccessful i.e. not referred back to the Cabinet for reconsideration.

### **Conclusion**

I hope we have demonstrated a refreshed approach to work programming this year, addressing how O&S prioritises work in line with member and council objectives and demonstrated how we are responding to the proposals for improvement to our Scrutiny arrangements. I believe we have provided objectivity, logicity, constructive challenge and produced many thoughtful and balanced recommendations that deliver change but we will continue to work hard to improve further on these next year.

I would like to acknowledge my Vice Chair, County Borough Councillor S. Evans who has supported me in my role as Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Between us we regularly attend meetings of the other four themed Scrutiny Committees to show support for our Scrutiny Chairs. I am grateful to members of the various scrutiny panels for their hard work and contributions throughout the year. I am also grateful to all the local groups, national organisations and individuals who have attended, made presentations and provided evidence at scrutiny meetings, and to Council officers and Cabinet Members for their attendance.



**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**



**S.Rees-Owen-Chair**



**W.Lewis -Vice-Chair**

		
<b>H. Boggis</b>	<b>J. Brencher</b>	<b>A. Calvert</b>
		
<b>J. Davies</b>	<b>A. Davies-Jones</b>	<b>S. Evans</b>
		
<b>H. Fychan</b>	<b>M. Griffiths</b>	<b>J. Harries</b>
		
<b>G. Jones</b>	<b>M. Powell</b>	<b>S. Powell</b>
		
	<b>G. Stacey</b>	

## **Terms of Reference**

*The overview & scrutiny role in connection with scrutinising all education provision from 3 - 19 years and Children's Services.*

It is with great pleasure that I report on another productive year as Scrutiny Chair for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee along with my Vice Chair Councillor Wendy Lewis who has supported me through a very busy year.

We welcomed County Borough Councillor Alexander Davies-Jones to our Committee following changes to the Political Balance in November 2018 in place of County Borough Councillor Lewis Hooper. We would also like to thank Councillor Hooper for all his hard work whilst being a part of the Committee.

Once again, we have had a very busy year considering both Educational and Children's Services matters, where we consider all the key elements, required to support and safeguard the children and young people of Rhondda Cynon Taf in helping them to reach their potential. I feel along with my fellow Committee Members that we have had a very productive 12 months considering topics of great importance which have and will produce valuable recommendations and outcomes for both this Municipal Year and next.

It would be remiss of me not to mention and thank the Education Co-opted Members who are a valuable part of this Scrutiny Committee. These representatives are not elected members of the Council, and are appointed because of their level of knowledge and experience and they make a very useful contribution to discussions and help make the correct decisions in relation to important matters.

The following topics will provide an overview of the work the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Modernisation**

I am pleased that as a Committee we have had the opportunity to contribute and comment on a number 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools proposals which are being considered by the Council. As Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, I am pleased to announce that we are one of the first Scrutiny Committees to take part in this type of process and will have the opportunity in the future to contribute to any further consultations.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018, we welcomed the opportunity to engage in the formal consultation process in respect of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Programmes – Proposals to Improve Education in the Greater Pontypridd Area and Proposals to Improve Education in Cynon Valley. The Director of Education and Inclusion along with Education Officers took Members through the formal Consultation Process where we put forward our view and comments which fed into the main Consultation Document that was presented to Cabinet on the following dates:

- Cynon Valley Proposal 24<sup>th</sup> January Cabinet Meeting.
- Greater Pontypridd Proposal 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

We have also taken the opportunity to look at the recent developments that were part of the Band A process of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Provision. A group of Members from our Committee have recently visited four of the new schools that had been developed through the Band A Process. The schools are as follows:

- Ysgol Nant Gwyn,
- Porth Community School,
- Tonyrefail Community School, and
- Cwmaman Primary School

Whilst visiting the above schools we were pleased to see the brand new facilities that were on offer to the Children and Young People of the County Borough. We also had the opportunity to speak to Head teachers, Staff and pupils and get their views on the new provisions. Feedback from our visit was positive however, it was brought to our attention that the transition process to the three to sixteen schools needed greater support. As a Committee, we have agreed to carry out a piece of work in twelve months' time to see how the Band A proposal is progressing.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Head Teachers for allowing us to visit their schools and look forward to having them attend a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in the future to talk about their experiences and consider future data.

We will continue to monitor the progress of these schools along with any other proposals that are brought to our attention for the greater good of our children and young people.

### **Sanitary Provision in Schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf.**

During the Municipal year 2017/18 Members of the Children and Young People Committee formed a working group to deal with the Notice of Motion which was presented to Council in July 2017. The Notice of Motion stated:

“ That this Council will research the availability of free sanitary products, such as tampons and towels, in all Secondary Schools in the County Borough as an acknowledgement that they are as essential as toilet paper for the personal hygiene of female pupils”.

As a Committee, we were happy to see that full Council supported the move in February 2018 which required all schools in RCT with pupils aged nine and above to provide free sanitary products for female learners to access independently. Cabinet gave final approval at its April Meeting, which saw a six-month trial commencing in the autumn term.

The Committee requested a report from officers six months on to see what progress had been made against the recommendations. The scheme appears to have been implemented across most schools within Rhondda Cynon Taf. The vast majority of responses from schools were positive, which suggests that the local authority's lead on this was well received and needed.

We considered the report in great detail and agreed that the Working Group will undertake a further review of the scheme in another six months and for this to be brought back to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in preparation for Cabinet's consideration of additional funding from April 2020 upon the cessation of the Welsh Government Grant.



There were so many other reports and topics within education which we have considered over the course of the last year but the above topics have highlight the work we have undertaken to contribute to a better future for our children and young people's education. We will continue to scrutinise the service as best we can in the future to ensure the best results possible.

Within the remit of the Children's Services portfolio of our Committee, we have continued to address the challenges from the last Municipal year along with new and relevant subjects.

### **Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS )**

As a Committee, we were concerned with the wellbeing of our younger members of the Community and so we felt that we needed to consider what support was available to improve the mental health of children and young people across the County Borough. In October 2018, we invited the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to the Committee where we had robust discussion. Members felt passionately there needed to be more collaboration between Health, Children's Services, Education and Third Party Organisations to ensure waiting times are lowered, the needs of this vulnerable cohort are taken seriously and actions are put in place to address the issues of great concern. We fully intend to monitor this area to safeguard the health and wellbeing of our young people.

### **Accommodation for 16+years of age Leaving Care**

After receiving a report from the Service Director of Children's Services and the Head of the Youth Offending Service in respect of accommodation for vulnerable children in RCT, we agreed that there was a need for the Committee to have input into the Accommodation Strategy. In January this year the draft report was brought before Committee so we were able to form part of the final Strategy that was presented to Cabinet. As a Committee, we will continue to monitor the progress of the Accommodation Strategy for 16+ as the level of complexity that some children within the system have in respect of their physical and mental health needs. The transition from childhood to adulthood needs to be as smooth and easy as possible, and as a Committee going forward we will receive updating reports to ensure the Mental Health and Wellbeing of our youth across the authority is a priority.

### **Conclusion**

Once again worked closely with the relevant officers on very important subjects and I am confident that our work has made a difference. With many big changes facing both education and children's services over the coming months I believe we have contributed in a positive way and will continue to scrutinise education and children's services to ensure that the outcomes for the children of Rhondda Cynon Taf are the very best they can be.

**HEALTH & WELL-BEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

			
<b>R. Yeo-Chair</b>		<b>G. Holmes-Vice Chair</b>	
			
<b>A. Chapman</b>	<b>J. Davies</b>	<b>L. De Vet</b>	
			
<b>M. Forey</b>	<b>P. Howe</b>	<b>L. Jones</b>	
			
<b>L. Jones</b>	<b>D. Owen-Jones</b>	<b>A. Roberts</b>	
			
<b>G. Stacey</b>	<b>M. Tegg</b>	<b>J. Williams</b>	
			
	<b>C. Willis</b>		

## **Terms of Reference**

*The overview & scrutiny role in connection with scrutinising services which support the Health & Wellbeing of our communities. The Committee considers adult social services as well as other factors which contribute to the health & wellbeing of the County Borough such as Leisure Services, Housing and Public Health & Wellbeing.*

Once again it has been a very busy year for Members and before presenting the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19 , I would like to place on record my thanks to County Borough Councillor Glynne Holmes for all his work as Vice Chair of this Committee.

I feel that as a Committee we have become more robust in tackling what are very important issues for the health and wellbeing of many members of our society. As a Committee, we continue to closely monitor the services that provide support for our Adult and Elderly Population. We have scrutinised the following areas i.e.:

- Early Intervention and Prevention;
- Home Care Services;
- Delayed Transfers of Care (DTCOC);
- Stay Well at Home Service; and
- Extra Care Housing Provision.

I am pleased to announce that at the beginning of this municipal year the Vice Chair and myself attended a one-to-one engagement session with County Borough Councillor Rhys Lewis, Deputy Cabinet Member for Prosperity and Wellbeing so that we could discuss the many topics under the umbrella of the Public Health and Protection Service that could be addressed by our Committee.

We visited the new 3 G Pitch provision in Abercynon, which enabled us to see how the large investment in the leisure services would help both the physical and mental health and wellbeing of members of our Communities across the County Borough. We held our first meeting of the year in the Alby Davies Suite at Abrecynon Sport Centre so as to encourage public participation in our Scrutiny process. We have consider a great deal of topics over the year and I feel the following will show all the hard work the Committee has contributed in improve outcomes for our communities within RCT.

### **EMI Nursing Bed Provision**

During the Municipal Year 2017/18 Members of this Committee formed a Working Group to consider the availability of EMI nursing bed provision across Rhondda Cynon Taf. The review continued into this Municipal Year where Members of the Working group met with independent providers who contributed to the discussion of the availability of these very important facilities. Following the review undertaken, the Working Group formulated recommendations for monitoring and improving the availability for these very vulnerable members of society.

I am pleased to announce that the report and the recommendations of our EMI nursing Provision Working Group were presented to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and all the recommendations were agreed in principle:

- That Scrutiny continued to monitor delayed transfers of care performance and in particular, issues relating to the availability of EMI nursing care home provision.
- That Cabinet ensure the recommendations in the Cwm Taf Market Position Statement are being delivered in particular those aimed at the more specialist provision and need for more provision linked to complex care i.e. dementia and dementia nursing.

I would like to thank all the Members of the Working Group for all their hard work along with the Officers for a succession of very informative meetings.

### **Stay Well at Home Service**

As a Committee, we have received a great deal of information since the Spring of 2017 in respect of collaborative work that has been carried out between Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Cwm Taf Health Board in the development of the Stay Well at Home Service. As this is such a huge step forward in supporting independent living for everyone for as long as possible, we felt this topic should be monitored very closely .

I am pleased to report that this new model of care is working extremely well and that the Service has received high recognition in the form of the Social Care Accolades 2018 where they were highly commended. In the NHS Wales Awards 2018, the Service was recognised for working seamlessly across organisations and became the overall winner of the best project. Along with my fellow Members, I would like to congratulate the Service for their hard work.

We were informed at our Meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in February 2019 of the proposed Phase 2 of the Stay Well at Home Service (Stay Well at Home Single Point of Access and Rapid Response). As a Committee, we look forward to receiving a report after confirmation of funding from the Welsh Government. We will continue to monitor the progress of the service across the County Borough.

### **Community Day Centre Consultation Report**

We had the opportunity to take part in the Community Day Centre Consultation process. Members acknowledged that the Community day centres provide facilities for residents over 50 years of age to access a hot meal each weekday and participate in a range of activities. However, as a Committee we also recognised the need for change and being part of this consultation allowed us to put our views forward.

We agreed that the current service is unsustainable and we acknowledged that there is a need to work in collaboration with communities and third sector organisations to deliver a more integrated service delivery for the benefit of residents across the County Borough.

Our comments will feed into the formal consultation that will be put before Cabinet and we are looking forward to receiving information in respect of the new Community Hubs along with new and exciting services, which will provide a better public service and create economies of scale in terms of staff and building costs. Making better, more cost effective use of our community

assets and reinvesting resources in new fit for purpose buildings, will enable services to be sustainable in the long term.

### **Conclusion**

This year has been an incredibly busy year for the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee but a fulfilling one. We have undertaken a range of pre-scrutiny and consultation work as evidenced in this report and we have challenged some of the Council's most important public facing issues.

I am extremely grateful to my fellow Members for their support and dedication throughout the year and also to the very hardworking Officers of this Council who have helped us make a great contribution to scrutiny in 2018/19.

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

		
<b>S. Bradwick - Chair</b>	<b>T. Williams - Vice-Chair</b>	
		
<b>A. Chapman</b>	<b>M. Fidler Jones</b>	<b>A. S. Fox</b>
		
<b>E. George</b>	<b>D. Grehan</b>	<b>G. Hughes</b>
		
<b>W. Owen</b>	<b>D. Owen-Jones</b>	<b>S. Pickering</b>
		
<b>G. Stacey</b>	<b>E. Stephens</b>	<b>W. Treeby</b>
		



## **Terms of Reference**

*'The overview and scrutiny role in connection with scrutinising public service delivery across a range of Council services. The Committee considers areas which contribute to prosperity and also community safety issues. It is the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee (pursuant to Section 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006).'*

We welcomed Councillor A. S. Fox to our Committee following changes to the Political Balance in November 2018 in place of Councillor M. Diamond.

I feel once again that it has been a busy and varied year for the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee but a very enjoyable and productive 12 months. It is difficult to choose just a few areas that I consider worthy of greater detail here as there have been so many important pieces of work that we have undertaken but the following represent those areas where recommendations and outcomes can be measured during the next municipal year.

## **Voluntary Snow Wardens**

Let me start with a matter which was referred to us from Full Council on the 19th September 2018 as part of a [Notice of Motion](#), 'Consideration of Voluntary Snow Wardens'. The Working Group we established to properly consider the matter determined that whilst we agreed with the principal of voluntary snow wardens, in reality there were many wider issues to consider such as maintaining a register of wardens who would require training and support. We recognised that the work needed to be progressed swiftly so that any decisions could be included as part of the Council's wider severe winter weather preparations.

We formulated four recommendations, all of which were accepted by Cabinet, one of which led to a county wide campaign entitled '**Your neighbours need you**'. For the Working Group this embodied the ethos of the snow warden by encouraging communities to work together during periods of severe winter weather and to support a greater community resilience. The campaign included practical and helpful advice on how the spirit of volunteering can be promoted during periods of heavy snowfall.

The Working Group also:-

- Acknowledged that Elected Member involvement is crucial in linking with local communities;
- Agreed that a dedicated Elected Member hotline, which can be accessed by all Elected Members for support, advice and up-to-date information on the local situation during periods of extreme weather, should be promoted
- Supported the Council's purchase of two 4x4 snow ploughs that would also ensure that we are even better prepared when the snow next hits.

The campaign was published on the Council's website and to the dedicated Scrutiny web pages for all our residents to read and embrace in the future.

This Scrutiny Committee covers such a wide remit and so it is essential we choose our topics carefully and those that really matter to our residents. Recycling has always been at the forefront of our Work Programme, since I have been Chair of this Committee. It represents an emotive topic for our communities but the local authority has a statutory

recycling target to meet (70% target for recycling by 2024/25) and failure to meet this target will result in significant fines for every percentage not achieved.

### **Recycling in Communal Areas**

During the earlier part of the municipal year we received a presentation outlining the opportunities and challenges that the recycling teams encounter at communal bin collection points (BCP's) across the County Borough. These are designated areas agreed by Waste Services where a number of properties leave their recycling and refuse. We decided that improvements to the waste collection arrangements at these points could further increase the overall municipal recycling rates and increase community satisfaction (where residents are satisfied with the service, there may be more engagement and a higher performance on participation). We focussed our work on two areas, communal recycling through the perspective of the social landlords and the enforcement powers available to the Council.

To give these areas due regard we split the Working Group into two sub groups with a view to devising a long term waste strategy for these areas of concern including a review of all problematic bin collection points. We have received a positive response from the Social Housing Landlords who are working closely with us to achieve an increased amount of food and waste recycled in communal areas and I am pleased to report that we have agreed that an engagement event will take place with our partners and residents in an area with poor participation levels. We will undertake door knocking and letter dropping to promote recycling in the designated area and identify if there are any barriers to recycling efficiently. The event will also be utilised to distribute free nappy waste bags and food bins. We will take the opportunity to engage with our residents in the area to ask them how we can make their recycling arrangements more accessible so that we can ensure they are satisfied with our services.

We are also investigating ways in which our Planning Department can collaborate with Waste Services on future planning developments so that the Council can better access some currently hard to reach communal areas with their Waste lorries and provision within the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for to bin collection points within communal areas. These simple changes may bring about some significant improvements to the way the Council manages its waste collections.

As I write this report, work to identify best practise and provide suggestions on ways for the local authority to improve the operation of recycling schemes from within communal areas is ongoing. We want to ensure that all opportunities to work with social housing landlords and other stakeholders are explored. Our outcomes from this review will be reported in the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20 and shared on our dedicated Scrutiny web pages.

### **Assess the Impact of the Planning & Development Committee**

At the beginning of the year we assessed the effectiveness of the Council's Planning and Development Committee as it had been many years since we had undertaken significant work in this area. During 2014/15 and as a result of a Scrutiny review, the decision was taken to move away from an all 75 Elected Member Planning Committee to the smaller Committee we have today. Other areas for concern included the then high number of Elected Member overturns of officer recommendations, speaking rights, voting procedures and public experience.

We held an extensive discussion with key officers and determined that the following recommendations should be implemented:-



- Appropriate training be given to all Members of the Council to facilitate their understanding of the planning process;
- Progress in relation to the Planning and Development Committee be tracked via an Annual Report to be presented to the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee;
- The 'Code of Good Practice' is reviewed and revised as appropriate; and
- The Director of Wales Planning Inspectorate is invited to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

I am very pleased to report that since our meeting:-

The Planning Inspectorate delivered training on his role to all Elected Members on **24<sup>th</sup> January 2019**; Pre Consultation training was delivered to all Elected members on **18<sup>th</sup> October 2018**; and the 'Plot Shop' Initiative training was received on **8<sup>th</sup> November 2018** (Plot Shop is an initiative which will help sell plots of land to those wishing to build their own home – whether from scratch or through customised design).

We will ask for the aforementioned annual report to come to the this Scrutiny Committee next year so we can evaluate progress of the Planning & Development Committee and continue our focus on the Code of Good Practice to see whether the revisions are in line with our challenges.

### **Crime & Disorder Committee**

The Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee is the Council's designated Crime & Disorder Committee (under sections 19 & 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006) and is required to hold at least one meeting per year although I quickly identified the importance of this Committee and asked that we hold at least two every year.

That decision has proved to be of value as this year we have had full agendas to both our meetings in October 2018 and February 2019, some of which are set out as follows:-

- We looked at two very influential projects, DIVERT and WISDOM, the former has prevented re-offending by working with young first time offenders aged 18-25 through the 'DIVERT' programme - 96% of attendees did not re-offend within six months of attending the programme;
- We worked closely with the Superintendent of South Wales Police as they undertook a national review of the Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT) meetings and we identified areas which required further consideration and should be included in the consultation the outcomes of which we will analyse next year ;
- We have continued to play a part in the development of the Cwm Taf Community Safety Delivery Plan 2018-2021 and now we will continue to review the status of the Delivery Plan and each sub action to monitor progress against its red, amber and green targets; and
- We explored how the Community Safety Partnership, which involves the Local Authority, South Wales Police and many other agencies including Housing Associations, deals with Anti-Social Behaviour in a joint approach to reduce Crime. We found there is a strong commitment, between all the partners in Rhondda Cynon Taf, to deal effectively with perpetrators of Anti-Social Behaviour and provide support to victims of Anti-Social Behaviour.

There are many areas which we will continue to monitor in the next municipal year and I look forward to another challenging and fulfilling work programme in respect of the Crime & Disorder Committee.

As Chair, I am pleased to say that this Scrutiny Committee continues its ambition to be proactive, adding value in its ability to make a positive contribution to work throughout the County Borough.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Vice-Chair, County Borough Councillor Tina Williams for her support as well as all the Scrutiny members and officers for their important commitment and contribution over the past year. I would also like to mention the Scrutiny team who have supported me and my Committee throughout the past year.

**FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

		
<b>J. Williams –Chair</b>		<b>G. Thomas -Vice-Chair</b>
		
<b>S. Bradwick</b>	<b>G. Caple</b>	<b>J. Cullwick</b>
		
<b>G. R. Davies</b>	<b>A. Davies-Jones</b>	<b>J. Elliott</b>
		
<b>A. S. Fox</b>	<b>G. Holmes</b>	<b>W. Lewis</b>
		
<b>M. Powell</b>	<b>S. Rees-Owen</b>	<b>T. Williams</b>
		

### **Terms of Reference**

*'This Committee is responsible for scrutinising financial and operational performance; treasury management arrangements; the annual revenue budget consultation process; statutory performance reporting requirements and monitoring the implementation of medium term financial planning decisions.'*

As from the Council's Annual Meeting held on the 23rd May, 2018, County Borough Councillor M. Powell was the Chair of this Committee up to the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee held on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018 when I took the Chair. This was as a result of the Alliance Group losing its entitlement to the Scrutiny Chair position it previously had and the Plaid Cymru group gaining an additional Scrutiny Chair position. Councillor M. Diamond was also replaced by Councillor A. S. Fox as a result of changes to the political balance.

Before presenting key areas of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal year 2018/19 I would like to place on record my thanks to County Borough Councillor M. Powell for playing an integral part in taking forward the Work Programme for the first four meetings of the Municipal Year 2018/19. It was fitting therefore that he has remained on the Committee as a valuable member of Scrutiny. I am new to the Chair but have been a member of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee since the Council's AGM in May 2018. I was thrilled to be asked to chair this Committee as I appreciate the importance of monitoring the council's corporate performance against its annual targets and the quarterly financial monitoring function.

### **Sickness Absence**

We quickly identified an additional item for our Work Programme at the beginning of the year, in respect of Sickness Absence. The item referred to the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on the 18th April, 2018 when it was reported that £130,000 had been identified to support the ongoing work to minimise the impact that sickness absence has on service delivery across the County Borough through initiatives such as the establishment of a dedicated Absence Management Team. We were keen to learn more about the Council's strategy which is intent on supporting individuals to stay in work and to identify and manage illnesses through a wide range of support packages.

We provided challenge on the information we received and Members required further action in respect of the following areas:-

- The lack of comparable data with other Welsh local authorities with regard to sickness absence to enable us to assess where progress was needed ;
- The lack of clarity regarding the underlying factors for the increase in sickness absence in particular service areas; and
- A breakdown of the actual costs and financial impact of the sickness levels on the Council for the years analysed.

Our concerns were addressed and we were provided with the relevant information which enabled us to follow up our earlier enquiry with satisfactory outcomes and evidence of reduced sickness absence. We have committed to further reviewing this important issue during the next municipal year by means of the Council's Quarterly Performance reports as well as specific reports to us as appropriate to ensure that all is being done to support our workforce and sustain reduced absence levels.

## **Council Performance Reports**

In line with this Committee's Terms of Reference we have undertaken regular challenge of the Council's budget proposals and expenditure and scrutiny of Council performance every quarter. These quarterly reports contain a wealth of information such as revenue and capital budget performance, organisational health information including staff turnover, sickness and Council strategic risks, Corporate Plan priority action plan updates and details of other national measures and target setting. With this in mind, it is crucial that we understand and ask questions of the Finance Officers to be able to carry out the most effective and robust review and challenge on elements of the Council's budget and performance.

In line with our terms of reference we have undertaken pre scrutiny of the draft Corporate Performance Report (CPR) 2018/19 and the 2019/20 Revenue Budget Strategy and made recommendations to Cabinet as a result of this work. We commented that the CPR's '*ambitions for 2018/19 are understandable and will enable progress and impact to be measured and scrutinised*'.

We provided feedback on the annual Revenue Budget Consultation process. To meet this requirement we receive, on an annual basis, an overview of the current budget position for the forthcoming year and at the same time we are requested to provide feedback on a number of areas as part of the consultation process. We also undertook detailed review of the Council's performance Indicators for 2018/19 to assess whether they are on target, the process aims to help the Committee discharge this responsibility and also be fully informed when scrutinising the Council's performance during the year.

## **Register of Food Businesses in RCT**

A [Notice of Motion](#) to Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> October was subsequently referred to us in respect of the register of food businesses in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The Notice of Motion requires us to look at ways in which all local food producers in RCT are encouraged and supported and how the marketing and consumption of local produce can be effectively promoted.

We have since established a Scrutiny Working Group, and as I write this the inaugural meeting has been set for the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 to agree the Terms of Reference and consider the extent to which the current statutory Food Business Register supports the local economy. The Council has a statutory duty to maintain its current register of food businesses. The existing database is available as a public register and significant resources are required to maintain the integrity of this register as it directly informs the Council's food law enforcement activity

There are a number of areas we will consider, in accordance with the terms of reference of the Working Group, such as reviewing how the food register is being provided to food businesses in Rhondda Cynon Taf and we fully intend to identify any gaps in provision to ensure that we as a Council are doing our best for the local food businesses. Our recommendations will be reported back to the Finance & Scrutiny Committee and then to the Executive for its consideration and we look forward to delivering solid and tangible outcomes. These recommendations will be reported in the next Scrutiny Overview & Scrutiny Annual report during the next Municipal Year.

We continue to respond to the varied Scrutiny Work Programme for Finance & Performance Scrutiny with robust challenge to the council's budget proposals. It is sometimes not the easiest of topics to address and credit must be given to the Finance Officers within the authority for providing clarity when it is required.

I would like to thank my Vice Chair, Councillor G. Thomas who has been supportive of me in

my new role and all the members of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee who have been involved in a huge amount of work over the past year and we look forward to monitoring the future activities in the forthcoming year.