



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20TH MARCH 2024

PRE- SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the feedback and comments of the items that were pre-scrutinised by the Council's thematic Scrutiny Committee's following its last Committee cycle.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the comments and observations of the Scrutiny Committees following pre-scrutiny of the items listed within section 5 of the report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need for Members to be aware of the comments and observations of the Council's Scrutiny Committees prior to their consideration of the items listed within the Cabinet agenda for the 20th March 2024.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In response to the [Local Government & Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#), where there is now a requirement for greater consideration of Cabinet decisions in Scrutiny, the Council's Scrutiny Committees place a greater emphasis on identifying items for pre-scrutiny to support and improve the decision making process
- 4.2 Members are reminded that the purpose of pre- scrutiny activity is to provide the key "critical friend" challenge and influence the decisions before they are made to contribute to policy and service improvement.
- 4.3 The Council's Scrutiny Committees continue to have the opportunity to scrutinise and comment on a number of reports in advance of Cabinet's consideration to bring a different perspective to the decisions being made and enabling Cabinet decisions to

be more informed. Effective scrutiny helps support the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the Council's services.

5. ITEMS CONSIDERED FOR PRE-SCRUTINY

5.1 Outlined below are the items that have been pre-scrutinised in line with each Committees Terms of reference for Cabinet consideration:

Committee	Report	Comments
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2030	<p>A letter to the Cabinet providing the feedback of the Committee is attached as appendix A to the report.</p> <p>In summary, the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Members welcomed the proposed vision statements and acknowledged the importance of remaining to be ambitious and setting an aspiration vision for the County Borough; • Members were pleased to see the continued focus upon school attendance and cited the importance place standards and attainment will play increase opportunities for young people and reducing poverty into the future; • The need for more explicit reference to Child Poverty within the Plan as well as a need to build aspiration for communities and young people in particular; • Concerns were raised in respect of the use of hyperlinks throughout the Plan and it was felt that these should only be used where necessary to ensure the plan is accessible and easy for the public to read and understand; • Concerns were raised in respect of the lack of employment opportunities available, in particular apprenticeships available outside of the public sector; and it was urged that the availability of apprenticeships and broader skills development is reviewed to ensure that placements are available to inspire people to train and secure skilled work after college; • Scrutiny Members would like to see reference to high skilled work and also supporting people into rewarding career paths and not just jobs; • The Committee sought stronger wording throughout the Plan to highlight the importance of the public taking responsibility for disposing of their rubbish and taking personal responsibility for the wider environment; and recommended that there needs to be more education around the dangers and health impacts of litter; and • Scrutiny Members would like to see more emphasis on the Council's partnership

		working, particularly with the Local Health Board and the existing health initiatives, such as Healthy Weight Wales etc to demonstrate how the Authority is working to address these concerns.
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	DRAFT ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2022 - 23	<p>A letter to the Cabinet providing the feedback of the Committee is attached as appendix B to the report.</p> <p>In summary, the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and class could be discriminated against - is there scope to look at this in the future? • Query in respect of the data to the Perma project not reading correctly, as post project data did not suggest improved outcomes for pupils, although positive outcomes had been achieved. • In respect of the Equality monitoring data around national identity and ethnicity it was recommended that more commentary and summary around ethnicity, particularly including information around how the Council is widening recruitment practices to ensure we are an attractive employer to the global majority should be included.
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	DRAFT STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2028	<p>A letter to the Cabinet providing the feedback of the Committee is attached as appendix B to the report.</p> <p>In summary, the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Members welcomed the Plan and were pleased that the Authority were taking the matter seriously. Members recommended that Scrutiny revisit this item in the future to measure its effectiveness and implementation and the rollout of training for staff. • Members challenged whether the objectives within the draft plan addressed the comments and challenges received as part of the consultation • It was queried how training to staff will be taken forward throughout the Council.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

7.1 Details of the Scrutiny involvement and consultation are highlighted within section 5 of the report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 None

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 none

10. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

10.1 The work of all Councillors, through pre-scrutiny of Cabinet decisions is fundamental to the work of the Council and subsequently the delivery of the Corporate Plan

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 It is recognised that scrutiny is a vital component of good governance and improves Councils' decision making, service provision and cost effectiveness.

11.2 The undertaking of pre-scrutiny by the relevant Scrutiny Committee will strengthen accountability and assist Cabinet Members in taking any future decisions on these matters.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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COMMUNICATION**

Item: PRE – SCRUTINY FEEDBACK

Background Papers