

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
29 JULY 2015**

**Agenda Item No. 3**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL  
AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

**Author: Ms.Karyl May, Head of Democratic Services**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To advise the Committee of its new role and responsibilities following the Annual Meeting of Council held on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 and to inform Members of the progress to date of the approach used for each of the Scrutiny Committees in producing their respective Work Programmes for the municipal year 2015/16.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:-

- 2.1 Form a view on the approach taken to date to develop the respective Scrutiny Committee Work Programmes.
- 2.2 Agree to the proposals as set out in paragraph 4.1. (and Appendix 2)

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Members will be aware that in recent years the scrutiny arrangements of local government in Wales has been reviewed by Welsh Government<sup>1</sup> and external regulators<sup>2</sup>. The most recent publication, issued by the Auditor General for Wales in May 2014 'Good Scrutiny? Good Question!', concluded that '*local government scrutiny in Wales is improving but councils need to do more to develop consistently rigorous scrutiny to increase public accountability in decision making*'.

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<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government's Review of local service delivery in 2006

<sup>2</sup> Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) Chief Inspector's Annual Report 2010/11 and Estyn's Annual Report 2009/10

- 3.2 The May 2014 publication went onto report, amongst other things, the need for improved scrutiny arrangements that will play a fully effective role in the good governance of local authorities in Wales and help public services respond to the unprecedented financial challenges that lie ahead whilst seeking to improve outcomes for local people.
- 3.3 In the case of Rhondda Cynon Taf, officers and elected Members were afforded the opportunity to be part of the Auditor General for Wales' review and a number of the recommendations applying to local government in Wales were made. Consequently, the Council amended its scrutiny structure at the Annual Meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 which supported a more thematic approach and outcome focussed arrangement for scrutiny. The revised structure is:-
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
  - Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee
  - Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
  - Health and Well-Being Scrutiny Committee; and
  - Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee (and Crime and Disorder)
- 3.4 In recent weeks the Committees have met to consider their respective Work Programmes. At each meeting a long list of potential topics were compiled and through the consideration of a suggested criteria/matrix (as set out in Appendices 1a – 1d), it is aimed that a shortlist of topics will be agreed at the September round of meetings.
- 3.5 To further assist Members in defining a selection of topics, the Chair of this Committee, County Borough Councillor L.M.Adams attended each meeting and with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation delivered the key principles around scrutiny and set the context for each individual Scrutiny Committee. He emphasised that the Work Programming needed to be **Member Led**, outcome based and in this regard the role of Scrutiny Members, Cabinet Members and Officers was paramount as highlighted below.
- 3.6 Following the first round of Scrutiny Committees, the timetable for progressing this work is shown in the table below:

Month	Activity
July 2015 scrutiny meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List produced of service areas / themes that come within the remit of the Committees (Appendices 1a – 1d) together with a suggested criteria for topic selection;</li> <li>• Scrutiny committees to identify a long list of potential topics and using a criteria, produce a shortlist of proposed topics (for further fact finding work to be undertaken on e.g. mini-scoping exercises, proposed methodologies / approaches to complete reviews).</li> </ul>
Aug – Sept 2015 (more detailed work co-ordinated by Scrutiny Officers and Performance Management officers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake consultation with officers, Cabinet Members and partners (as appropriate);</li> <li>• Carry out more detailed research on shortlisted topics to define proposed scopes and methodologies / approaches;</li> <li>• Proposed timetable of meetings drafted to deliver the programme of scrutiny work.</li> </ul>
Sept 2015 scrutiny committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The up dated information (produced throughout August and September) presented to scrutiny committees for consideration and if deemed appropriate, recommended sign off by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&amp;S).</li> </ul>
Sept / Oct 2015 O&S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended programmes reported to the O&amp;S for consideration and if deemed appropriate, sign off;</li> <li>• Project planning to progress e.g. membership of groups and officer support.</li> </ul>
Reporting progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up dates on reviews to be reported to each scrutiny committee (in line with timescales agreed by each committee).</li> </ul>

#### **4. THE ROLE OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

4.1 As referred to in paragraph 3.4 above, the role of this Committee is as set out below:-

##### ***Specific Responsibilities Allocated to this Committee:***

- To ensure that the work of each of the Committees are `delivering effectively` i.e. `scrutinising the scrutineer`.
- To challenge the work of the Scrutiny Committees.
- To deal with all “Call-ins” (under the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules)
- To co-ordinate the implementation of the recommendations as set out in the Wales Audit Office document - `Good Scrutiny? Good Question`.

- To identify an approach which will evaluate the impact of the work each Committee undertakes – this could develop into self evaluation arrangements for each Committee.
- To produce an on-going Action Plan for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as shown at **Appendix 2**, whereby Members of this Committee are allocated responsibility of monitoring such arrangements
- Following an updated position statement regarding `Fuel Poverty` that the work of the former Overview and Scrutiny Working Group is continued and the findings to be reported to Council.
- LSB Scrutiny Working Group (report to be considered at Agenda Item 4)
- To further develop and publish a public facing Council's Scrutiny Guide which will form part of an inclusive approach to the Council's Scrutiny Arrangements.
- To produce and publish an Annual Scrutiny Report.

### ***General Responsibility of All the Scrutiny Committees***

- To have a collective and individual responsibility for ensuring that scrutiny is Member led. This includes:
  - Determining its own work programme and deciding on what evidence to seek to fulfil its scrutiny role;
  - Asking relevant and timely questions at meetings;
  - Participating in activities that the Committee has agreed to pursue outside of its formal meetings.
- To determine whether a Cabinet Member should be invited to a scrutiny meeting to explain and answer questions around decisions taken and performance.
- To review any referrals from the Audit Committee, as appropriate and to take the necessary action.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The Council amended its approach to Scrutiny at the Annual Meeting in May, 2015 and since this time has started to further develop its arrangements in this area.
- 5.2 To ensure the programme of work is co-ordinated, a draft Action Plan has been compiled for consideration, and if deemed appropriate, adoption by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –  
INFORMATION TO CONSIDER AS PART OF DRAFTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16**

Service area / theme	Possible topic		Is it line with a corporate priority?	How well is the service performing?	Does it represent a high financial risk?	Is it identified as a strategic risk?	Is scrutiny likely to impact in service improvements or other measurable benefits?	Will the outcome involve additional expenditure and is it likely that such resources will become available?	Is the scrutiny activity timely – will changes be possible at this stage?	Include as a shortlisted topic?
	Topic area	High level scope			Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Waste Services										
Streetcare										
Highways										
Economic Development										
Cultural Services										
Museum										
Tourism										
Parks										
Countryside										
Communities First										
Customer Care										
Community Safety										
Crime and Disorder										
Corporate Functions										
Estates										
Finance										
Human Resources										
Legal										
Procurement										

HEALTH AND WELL BEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –

INFORMATION TO CONSIDER AS PART OF DRAFTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16

Service area / theme	Possible topic		Is it in line with a corporate priority?	How well is the service performing?	Does it represent a high financial risk?	Is it identified as a strategic risk?	Is scrutiny likely to impact in service improvements or other measurable benefits?	Will the outcome involve additional expenditure and is it likely that such resources will become available?	Is the scrutiny activity timely – will changes be possible at this stage?	Include as a shortlisted topic?
	Topic area	High level scope			Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
<b><u>Adult locality services and short term intervention</u></b>										
Locality Services – including assessment of older people and adults with mental health, learning disability, physical or sensory disability										
Commissioned services – including externally provided residential care, homecare, SLAs with the voluntary sector, Direct Payments and Supported Living Schemes										
Short term intervention services – including reablement and intermediate care										
Direct care services – including in house Council services (residential, home care, day centres)										

HEALTH AND WELL BEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –

INFORMATION TO CONSIDER AS PART OF DRAFTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16

Service area / theme	Possible topic		Is it line with a corporate priority?	How well is the service performing?	Does it represent a high financial risk?	Is it identified as a strategic risk?	Is scrutiny likely to impact in service improvements or other measurable benefits?	Will the outcome involve additional expenditure and is it likely that such resources will become available?	Is the scrutiny activity timely – will changes be possible at this stage?	Include as a shortlisted topic?
	Topic area	High level scope			Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
<b>Private Housing</b> – including Housing Advice Centre, Vision Products and coordination / management of Housing Renovation Grants (capital)										
<b>Safeguarding</b>										
<b>Regional implementation arrangements for the Social Services and Well Being Act</b>										
<b>Public health and protection</b> – including										
Trading standards										
Food and Health & Safety										
Licensing										
Pollution and Public Health										
Animal and Pest Control										
Housing strategy and standards										
Bereavement services										
Registration Services										
<b>Leisure Services</b>										

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –

INFORMATION TO CONSIDER AS PART OF DRAFTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16

Service area / theme	Possible topic		Is it line with a corporate priority?	How well is the service performing?	Does it represent a high financial risk?	Is it identified as a strategic risk?	Is scrutiny likely to impact in service improvements or other measurable benefits?	Will the outcome involve additional expenditure and is it likely that such resources will become available?	Is the scrutiny activity timely – will changes be possible at this stage?	Include as a shortlisted topic?
	Topic area	High level scope			Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Schools										
Schools achievement / effectiveness										
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools (School transformation, School planning and Asset Mgt – PFI)										
Catering										
Music Service										
Early Years										
Welsh Language										
Special Educational Needs										
Engagement and Participation										
Looked After Children's Services – including fostering and residential										
Youth Offending Service										



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –**

**INFORMATION TO CONSIDER AS PART OF DRAFTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16**

Service area / theme	Possible topic		Is it line with a corporate priority?	How well is the service performing?	Does it represent a high financial risk?	Is it identified as a strategic risk?	Is scrutiny likely to impact in service improvements or other measurable benefits?	Will the outcome involve additional expenditure and is it likely that such resources will become available?	Is the scrutiny activity timely – will changes be possible at this stage?	Include as a shortlisted topic?
	Topic area	High level scope			Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Assessment and care planning – including social worker teams										
Safeguarding – including child protection reviewing officers										
Early intervention and prevention services – including nurseries and Flying Start										
Disabled children – including Residential home										
Community and family support services – including Glyncornel and Miskin project										
Fframwaith										

**FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –**

**INFORMATION TO CONSIDER AS PART OF DRAFTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16**

Service area / theme	Possible topic		Is it line with a corporate priority?	How well is the service performing?	Does it represent a high financial risk?	Is it identified as a strategic risk?	Is scrutiny likely to impact in service improvements or other measurable benefits?	Will the outcome involve additional expenditure and is it likely that such resources will become available?	Is the scrutiny activity timely – will changes be possible at this stage?	Include as a shortlisted topic?
	Topic area	High level scope			Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Quarterly Performance Reports / Exception Reports (financial and operational performance)										
Treasury Management										
Revenue budget consultation process										
Statutory performance reporting requirements e.g. the Corporate Performance Report										
Monitoring the implementation of medium term service planning decisions approved by the Executive										

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FIRST DRAFT ACTION PLAN OF 2015/16 WORK PROGRAMME

ACTION REF. No.	PROPOSED ACTIONS	COMPLETION DATE	UP DATE REPORTED TO	RESPONSIBLE ELECTED MEMBER / OFFICER	EXPLANATION WHERE PROGRESS NOT ON TARGET
1	<u>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</u>				
1A	Review Terms of Reference for each Scrutiny Committee and:				
	> Recommend where up dates are needed, if deemed appropriate	Sep-15	Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee (and to O&S for information)	TO BE DETERMINED (TBD)	
	> Draft functional areas for each Scrutiny Committee (for consideration to append to Terms of Reference)	Sep-15	as above	TBD	
1B	Draft roles and responsibilities for Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Members and officers to provide further clarity and expectation of the part that each will be required to play in the Council's scrutiny arrangements	Oct-15	as above	TBD	
2	<u>WORK PROGRAMMING</u>				
2A	Individual Scrutiny Committees to agree work programmes (and these then reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review)	Sep-15	Individual Scrutiny Committees / Overview & Scrutiny Committee	TBD	

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FIRST DRAFT ACTION PLAN OF 2015/16 WORK PROGRAMME

ACTION REF. No.	PROPOSED ACTIONS	COMPLETION DATE	UP DATE REPORTED TO	RESPONSIBLE ELECTED MEMBER / OFFICER	EXPLANATION WHERE PROGRESS NOT ON TARGET
2B	Agreed work programmes reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (and feedback provided either via Chairs and Vice Chairs or through the October round of scrutiny committee meetings)	Sep 15 / Oct 15	Overview and Scrutiny Committee / Individual Service Scrutiny Committees	TBD	
2C	Based on the feedback received from the July round of scrutiny committees, prepare a final draft 'criteria' that the Council's Scrutiny Committees will apply in determining topics to include on work programmes from hereon	Dec-15	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	TBD	
3	<u>IMPROVED AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS</u>				
3A	The output from the actions set out in sections 1 and 2 to be brought together to update the current public facing Scrutiny Guide	Feb-16	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	TBD	
3B	The updated guide reported to individual Scrutiny Committees and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review, up date and where deemed appropriate sign off (to enable the guide to be in place by April 2016)	Apr-16	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Individual Service Scrutiny Committees for information)	TBD	
4	<u>EVALUATION OF SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS</u>				

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FIRST DRAFT ACTION PLAN OF 2015/16 WORK PROGRAMME

ACTION REF. No.	PROPOSED ACTIONS	COMPLETION DATE	UP DATE REPORTED TO	RESPONSIBLE ELECTED MEMBER / OFFICER	EXPLANATION WHERE PROGRESS NOT ON TARGET
4A	Research undertaken of good practice in evaluating scrutiny arrangements and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Members to determine a preferred approach(es)	Nov-15	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	TBD	
4B	A completed 'scrutiny topic' selected as a pilot to trial an approach to evaluation and the results reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (including Chairs and Vice Chairs of each Scrutiny Committee)	Mar-16	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	TBD	
4C	Based on the pilot evaluation process, a simple approach to evaluation produced and reported to each Scrutiny Committee to utilise as part of assessing the impact their work has made during 2015/16	Apr-16	Individual Scrutiny Committees	TBD	
4D	Production of a Scrutiny Annual Report that sets out the impact that the respect Scrutiny Committees work have had during 2015/16 (recognising that this year is a transitional year). Report to be presented to the Council's Annual Meeting in May by the Chair of the O&S Committee.	Apr-16	Overview and Scrutiny and Individual Scrutiny Committees	TBD	