

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
REPORT TO :	County Council
DATE:	24th May, 2022
TITLE OF REPORT:	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22
REPORT BY:	Chairs of: 1. Corporate Scrutiny Committee 2. Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	Report on the work of the two scrutiny committees during 2021/22 and provide an overview of the 2022/23 scrutiny work programme
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1. Recommendations

The Council is requested to:

R1 Approve the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2021/22

R2 Note the continued progress made in implementing our local Scrutiny development journey and the impact this is having on practice.

2. Background and context

2.1 This Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report encompasses the work undertaken by the two scrutiny committees between May 2021 and May, 2022.

2.2 The chairs of the two scrutiny committees led on developing the forward work programmes during this period. The scrutiny committees' work programmes are submitted to the monthly Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice-chairs Forum and for approval at each scrutiny committee meeting

2.3 The Council's scrutiny function has been through an improvement journey, as a result of commissioning the Public Centre for Scrutiny to review our local scrutiny arrangements (December, 2017). The improvement programme put in place as a result of the review has come to an end, and a development programme has replaced it within the context of continuous improvement, driving improvements and developments at an appropriate pace which are outlined within the report.

The impact and added value of scrutiny activity is contributing to the Council's corporate priorities through support and challenge.

3. Role of the Scrutiny Champion

3.1 The Scrutiny Champion has an important role in promoting the overview and scrutiny function both within the Council and also with external partners of the Authority. It is not a mandatory or remunerated position. The role is considered key in demonstrating the Authority's commitment to ensuring that Scrutiny maximises the contribution of non-Executive Members to the organisation's overall performance and "corporate health".

- 3.2** On 14th May 2015 the Council resolved that the chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee be appointed as Scrutiny Champion for the period May 2015 to May, 2016 and thereafter that the role of the Champion should alternate between the two scrutiny committee chairs. The Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee should therefore be appointed as the designated Scrutiny Champion for the coming year.

Appendix:
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22

Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report: 2021-22



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1. FOREWORD

Councillor Aled Morris Jones

- **Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee 2021/22**



It is with pleasure that I provide an overview of the work of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee over the last 12 months. The scope of work of the Committee is discussed in this report and it is fair to note that the workload continues to be considerable and varied. A total of 8 meetings were convened during the municipal year, which was despite the ongoing challenges of the Pandemic.

- **Annual budget setting 2022/23** – one of the main responsibilities of the Committee is to contribute to the process of setting the Council's annual budget. This is a crucial part of our corporate governance arrangements, having a far-reaching impact on every service area of the Council as well as the public. The Committee considered both the initial draft budget proposals and also the final draft budget for 2022/23.
- **Quarterly monitoring of performance** – the Committee monitored performance on a quarterly basis throughout 2021/22, using the corporate scorecard which reports on a significant range of indicators across all service areas. The scorecard continues to evolve as an effective tool for Elected Member scrutiny of performance and data of all Council services. It must be recognised that the Pandemic continued to impact on performance against some targets. Members also looked in some detail at the Housing Service data on homelessness in order to seek assurance around service response and provision.
- Our work as a committee has also included monitoring and scrutinising annual reports including the Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services and the Annual Performance Report to name a few, which are a core element of the Committee's work.
- **Covid 19 Pandemic** - the Committee also scrutinised the Council's response to the Pandemic and the County Council's draft Transition Plan.
- **Housing services** – the Local Housing Strategy 2022/27, the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022/52 and the Housing Support Grant Programme Strategy 2022/26 were scrutinised by the Committee during the latter part of the municipal year. Also, the Committee considered the proposed Extra Care Housing provision in Menai Bridge.
- During the past 4 years, the Committee has carried out a review of the schooling provision in various parts of Ynys Môn. However, no information is forthcoming regarding the review of schooling

provision in other parts of the Island despite my several enquiries and the removal of these reviews from the work programme of the Committee without explanation.

- **Towards a Net Zero Plan** – finally, Members scrutinised the draft Towards a Net Zero Plan for 2022/25 prior to its consideration by the Executive and adoption by Full Council in March, 2022. The Committee recommended its approval as a plan giving a clear strategic direction for the Council to deliver its climate management commitments by 2030.

I acknowledge the work done by the Finance Scrutiny Panel and the Social Services Improvement Panel and to close a thank you to all Committee Members and officers who have assisted during 2021/22.

Councillor Aled Morris Jones

(Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee).

Councillor Gwilym O Jones

- **Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee 2021/22**
- **Scrutiny Champion → 2021/22**



I believe that the scrutiny process plays a key role in the corporate governance arrangements of the Council – by holding decision makers to account, challenging in a constructive way and ensuring that the voice of the public and the community is heard as part of the decision making process. Our Public Speaking Protocol in Scrutiny Committees is testimony to the Council's commitment and formalises the process for the public to express their views at Scrutiny Committee meetings.

I would like to thank Members of the Partnership and Regeneration Committee for their contributions and commitment to the work of the Committee which has made an important contribution in terms of fulfilling the Council Plan and in maintaining standards of our public services.

It gives me great pleasure to provide the current Council's final overview of the Committee's work covering the past 12 months. The Committee has made fair, robust recommendations to the Executive on a number of key topics and service areas during this period as well as the work of the Authority's partners:

- **Anglesey and Gwynedd Public Services Board (PSB)** - The Committee leads on scrutinising the work of the Board which is a partnership between Gwynedd and Anglesey. This includes scrutinising the work of realising the Board's Wellbeing Plan, its governance arrangements and Annual Report. There were examples of good quality scrutiny with Members questioning how the Board addresses any slippage in individual work streams. The Committee also commented on the draft wellbeing assessments for Anglesey (2023 and beyond) as part of the Board's statutory consultation process.
- **North Wales Economic Ambition Board** – the Committee scrutinised the quarterly monitoring reports and raised appropriate questions regarding progress against ongoing projects e.g. what mitigation measures are in place to address any slippages and how the risk of overspending on projects is being managed. This is the designated Committee for scrutinising the work of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board – a crucial role in order to ensure the best possible economic benefits for North Wales and in particular Anglesey.
- **Schools' Performance** – The Schools' Progress Review Panel scrutinised the statutory partnership that exists between the Council and GwE and specifically the support provided to the primary sector on Anglesey as well as the quality assurance arrangements for schools. The contribution of the Schools' Progress Review Panel remains crucial in this area and at the end of this year visits were resumed, albeit virtually (due to Covid restrictions) e.g. a virtual visit to the Language Centres at Moelfre and Holyhead. The Panel also looked in detail at the arrangements for elective home education and the implications of the Additional Learning Needs Act locally through the experience of practitioners from two schools.
- **Other Partnerships** – The Committee has scrutinised a number of reports in order to hold partners to account as well as to ensure the best outcomes for the public. These reports included the North Wales Partnership Board Annual Report, the Community Safety Partnership Annual Report and the

Equality Annual Report. Again this year, as a result of the pandemic, it was not possible for a number of our key partners to appear before the Committee in particular the Health Board and the emergency services who continued to provide a frontline response to the Pandemic.

I would like to thank the members of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and members of the Schools' Progress Review Panel for working effectively as a team over the past 5 years. All members have successfully adapted to ensure that the scrutiny function was able to continue virtually throughout the Pandemic and I believe that this work and good practice should continue moving forward ensuring that the new Council will scrutinise in an innovative way, by maximising the time of its officers and Elected Members. Lastly, I would like to sincerely thank officers from the Scrutiny Team for their leadership, support and willingness to assist at all times.

Councillor Gwilym O Jones
(Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Champion)

Covid-19 Pandemic Specific Context

1.1 It is true to say that the Pandemic has had a far reaching impact on people's lives, our communities and the manner in which the Council provides its services. This period (**managing the emergency response to the Pandemic and subsequent recovery**) has been an extremely challenging time for the Council and all other public sector organisations across Wales as we continue to face the challenges of the Covid-19 emergency. This has meant that the Council has had to change its way of working as a result of the global health emergency.

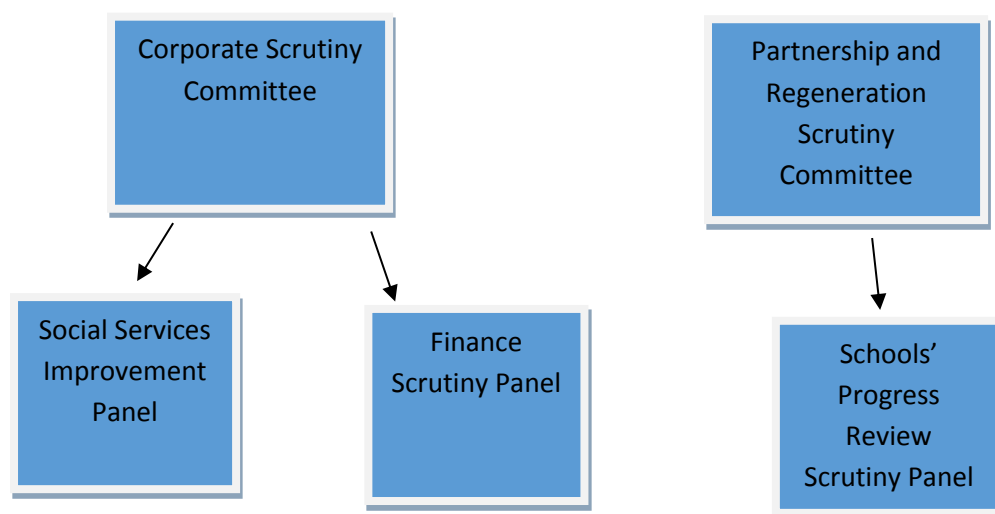
1.2 In accordance with statutory requirements¹ we continue to convene our meetings virtually and since May, 2021, our public committee meetings have been livestreamed via YouTube. Arrangements are in place to modernise and upgrade our current webcasting and microphone systems in the Council Chamber and committee room and put in place a hybrid solution to facilitate multi location meetings. It is anticipated that this hybrid solution will be fully operational by June, 2022. These arrangements will ensure that the Council is fully compliant with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

1.3 Both Scrutiny Committees have met regularly and resumed the priority scrutiny work during 2021/22. The Corporate Scrutiny Committee has successfully scrutinised, ensuring that the Council achieves its corporate objectives and also objectives for its services. The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee has scrutinised partnerships and has complied fully with all statutory requirements. However, some partners that were scheduled have been postponed as a result of the Pandemic and the Committee's work programme has been prioritised to accommodate pressure facing our partners but also local requirements.

2 OUR LOCAL STRUCTURE

Scrutiny committees form part of the way in which local government in Wales operates. Their prime role is to hold the decision-makers to account, drive improvement, act as the voice of the community and play a role in policy development and review. A summary of the national policy context is outlined in **APPENDIX 1**.

2.1 Our local structure comprises of 2 scrutiny committees and three panels:



¹ The Coronavirus Act 2020 and subsequent Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020. Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

The remit and membership of our scrutiny committees are summarised in **APPENDIX 2**.

3 LOCAL SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

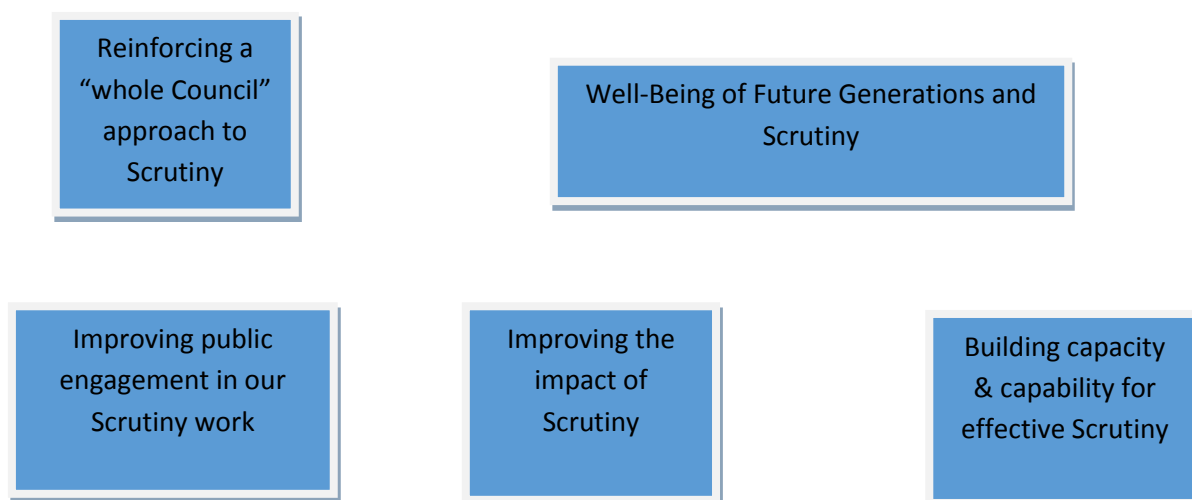
3.1 The Council's scrutiny function has been through a significant improvement journey, as a result of commissioning the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to review our local scrutiny arrangements². The improvement programme put in place as a result of the review has now been replaced by a development programme within a culture of continuous improvement. The review provided a strong foundation to develop the scrutiny role within the Council and supports a robust and effective process for making decisions and continues to evolve in a positive manner. These strong foundations are now the basis for the development programme which drives improvements and developments at an appropriate pace.

3.2 Key Improvement Themes

Within Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, our improvement programme prioritised key themes (which are summarised below), in order to provide a robust framework to:

- Clarify the role and contribution of Scrutiny in the governance arrangements of the Council
- Identify the actions required in the short and medium term in order to further improve Scrutiny within the context of the Pandemic and beyond.

SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY: KEY THEMES



² December, 2017 by the then Centre for Public Scrutiny

4. ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SCRUTINY

4.1 MEASURING OUTPUTS

A number of significant **outputs** were achieved by Scrutiny during the last municipal year which go some way in assisting us to assess the impact that the function has had locally:

4.1.1 Committee meetings – a total of 14 scrutiny committee meetings were convened during 2021/22:

Committee	Number of Committees convened
Corporate Scrutiny Committee	8
Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee	6

There are also robust arrangements in place to ensure feedback at meetings of the Executive by scrutiny committee chairs on matters that have been considered by both committees.

4.1.2 Scrutiny Panel meetings – there have been regular meetings of all 3 scrutiny panels over the past 12 months:

Panel	Number of meetings convened
Social Services Improvement Panel	6
Finance Scrutiny Panel	8
Schools' Progress Review Panel	7

These panels have been embedded into practice by:

- ✚ Putting in place robust governance arrangements to support each panel.
- ✚ Ensuring a clear focus / remit and work programme for each panel.
- ✚ Putting in place a reporting / escalation process ensuring that the work of scrutiny panels is reported quarterly to the two Parent Committees, with Chairs of the Panels proposing recommendations on plans or proposed decisions.
- ✚ Ensure an appropriate pace for the work of the panels which is in line with corporate priorities and also complete detailed scrutiny on the Council's all important subjects.

4.1.3 Forward work programmes – there is a well-established practice of forward work programming in place to underpin the work of both scrutiny committees. These programmes are an important tool in assisting scrutiny committee members to prioritise their work and have been discussed with the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Service. Both committees review the content of their forward work programmes on a regular basis in order to ensure that they remain relevant and keep abreast with local priorities. Our local forward planning arrangements ensure greater focus on:

- i. Strategic aspects
- ii. Citizen / other stakeholder engagement and outcomes
- iii. Priorities of the 2017/2022 Council Plan and corporate transformation programmes
- iv. Risks
- v. Work of audit, inspection and regulation
- vi. Matters on the forward work programme of the Executive.

4.1.4 Chairs and Vice-chairs Forum – is well established and continues to meet regularly. The Forum is considered an important vehicle to oversee the scrutiny committee work programmes and jointly negotiate priorities with the Scrutiny Committees' Chairs and Vice-chairs. It also takes lead responsibility for developing and continuously improving the overview and scrutiny function in the Council. The role of the Forum has also evolved to include conversations between the Executive (Leader), Chairs/Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny and the Senior Leadership Team (Chief Executive) to ensure better alignment between work programmes.




4.1.5 Development, training and support for Members –

- ✓ a large part of the corporate Members' training & development programme has been on hold as a result of the Pandemic with training inputs focusing on upskilling Members in terms of technology and ensuring that all are able to participate effectively in virtual meetings (**alternative / innovative models of Member scrutiny**)
- ✓ convening monthly briefing sessions to share information / raise awareness regarding key issues eg Place Shaping, Towards a Net Zero Plan and Local Housing Strategy. Also, as a forum for Member self-evaluation / reflection on the performance of Scrutiny.






4.1.6 Scrutiny across a broader base – a broader approach to Member scrutiny has been further developed and consolidated during 2021/22 by:

- i. Effective forward planning to ensure alignment between topics discussed at Member briefing sessions, scrutiny panels and full scrutiny committee meetings.
- ii. Ensuring clarity of role for Members on corporate programme boards and ensuring robust, timely high level reporting to scrutiny committees, escalating slippage as required.
- iii. Developing a breadth of topics discussed at Member briefing sessions in support of Scrutiny and ensuring information available to Members on strategic and transformation topics.

4.1.7 “Closing the Scrutiny loop” – by having in place robust arrangements to:

- i. Report on progress or escalate issues from:
 -  Scrutiny panels to parent committees
 -  Scrutiny committees to the Executive
 -  Corporate programme boards to scrutiny committees.
- ii. Enable and encourage self-analysis and reflection by Scrutiny Members in order to identify strengths and areas for further development / focus.

4.1.8 Scrutiny & Wellbeing of Future Generations – developing the role of Scrutiny by:

-  Ensuring Members focus on the 5 ways of working to frame questions
-  Developing a revised scrutiny report template, placing wellbeing of future generations at its core
-  Raising awareness and providing information in Member briefing and development sessions
-  Reviewing progress made in developing the role of scrutiny against best practice
-  Putting in place a framework to scrutinise the Public Services Board and key partnerships.

4.1.9 Citizen engagement in Scrutiny – through a policy statement as the foundation for engagement with citizens through Member scrutiny and putting steps in place to ensure that the voice of citizens is heard in decision making locally eg our Public Speaking Protocol in Scrutiny Committees is a key element of our corporate governance arrangements.

4.2 MEASURING OUTCOMES

Capturing and assessing the impact of Scrutiny is a challenge to achieve as the **outcomes** of overview and scrutiny activities are not always tangible and often do not easily lend themselves to being measured in a systematic way. Furthermore, it is not easy to measure the effectiveness of the overview and scrutiny function's ability to influence decision makers through discussion and debate. There are however some examples where the input of scrutiny has added value and / or influenced the way in which proposals have been implemented by the Council.

General Scrutiny Outcomes

4.2.1 Forward work programmes – scrutiny work programmes are rolling programmes focusing on the quality of scrutiny with fewer items in order to add value. Our arrangements also ensure alignment of Scrutiny Committees' work programmes with the Executive and Senior Leadership Team work programmes.

Outcome: rolling work programme for scrutiny committees aligned to corporate priorities.

4.2.2 Development, training and support for Members – ensuring that Elected Members involved in Scrutiny have the right skills and competencies to undertake the work is a key element of the Council's scrutiny arrangements. A Member Development and Training Plan has been in place during the current Administration which included matters such as chairing meetings, making decisions for the benefit of future generations (Future Generations Act 2015), with an 'Introduction to Scrutiny' e-module available for all elected members. However, as previously mentioned, parts of the programme have been put on hold for the time being as a result of the Pandemic and this year's training has focused on developing Members' IT skills in order for them to participate virtually in Council meetings. The monthly Members briefing sessions are informal development sessions and a means of receiving information which also assists Member scrutiny work.

Outcome: Members involved in the Scrutiny process have the right skills and competencies and have access to the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their role effectively (***better decisions***).

- 4.2.3 Self evaluation: Measuring the impact of scrutiny** - evaluating the impact of the continuous improvement journey and the key themes outlined as part of this journey - Reinforcing a whole Council approach to Scrutiny; Wellbeing of Future Generations and Scrutiny; Improving the impact of scrutiny; Increasing scrutiny's capacity and capabilities; Improving engagement with the public in our scrutiny work. As part of our local assessment of progress, it was noted that Members' level of understanding of the complexities of various Council services had increased significantly over the past 5 years.

Outcome: Scrutiny Members that are well informed, making robust recommendations (***better decisions***).

Financial Scrutiny

- 4.2.4 2022/23 budget setting process** – a more strategic and outcome based approach to budget setting based on best practice has been fully embedded into local practice. The Corporate Scrutiny Committee considered and scrutinised both the initial and final draft budget proposals, submitting recommendations to the Executive on budget proposals for the year to come. The Finance Scrutiny Panel played a key role in this process too through scrutinising the detail of the revenue and capital budget proposals. It also gave detailed consideration to the Executive's investment proposals for addressing service issues and risks as well as the main conclusions of the Authority's public consultation on the draft budget proposals. The input and recommendations from Scrutiny Members influenced the Council's final decision. Also, the Finance Scrutiny Panel undertook scrutiny work on setting the council tax in a way that protects the Council's services and ensures provision for risks that are difficult to measure, and which is affordable for the public. In summary, The Panel and the Committee added value to the decision making process.

Outcome: a more systematic approach to financial scrutiny, as an essential building block of sound financial management and governance.

- 4.2.5 Monitoring Capital and Revenue Budgets** - The Finance Scrutiny Panel scrutinised and monitored performance of the council's capital and revenue budgets on a quarterly basis giving particular attention to the ongoing impacts of Covid-19 and any financial pressures. During Summer 2021, detailed consideration was given to budget performance and pressures in both Adults' and Children's Services.

- 4.2.6 Council Tax for Second Homes** – the Finance Panel also scrutinised the impact of the Council Tax on second homes and made proposals on this matter in response to a Welsh Government consultation in the Autumn, 2021.

Outcomes:


- A more strategic approach to financial scrutiny making a robust and important contribution to the Authority's financial management and governance arrangements.
- Implementation of some positive mitigation measures in response to significant budget pressures within specific services.

Scrutiny of Social Services

- 4.2.7 Social Services Improvement Scrutiny Panel** – The Panel scrutinised in detail progress of the improvement plans for both Children’s and Adults’ Services eg key data, progress and early impact of Community Resource Teams. This work also saw Members receiving training and awareness raising sessions to enrich their knowledge of Social Services and the associated challenges eg Social Services frontdoor, Gwynedd & Ynys Môn Youth Justice Service – thus assisting them to scrutinise this vital service area and as a result further developing their Scrutiny skills. Laming visits were put on hold because of the ongoing Pandemic with Visits being re-convened virtually from March, 2021. Scrutinising performance of Social Services was also a substantial part of the Panel’s work programme. During its last meeting³, Members measured the impact of the improvement journey on local performance against the national key performance indicators framework since 2017/18.
- 4.2.8 Social Services Response to Covid-19: Challenges for Care Homes** - a presentation was received on the Social Services continued response and arrangements during the Pandemic and also the lessons learned with a particular focus given by the Panel to the challenges facing care homes, seeking assurance that robust forward planning was in place. The Service response was scrutinised in depth.
- 4.2.9 Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)** – The Panel participated in a quality assurance exercise by CIW in June, 2021 which required Members to discuss and evidence its scrutiny and holding to account functions. This inspection work concluded that the Panel continues to make an important and notable contribution to the Social Services improvement journey by ensuring that key priorities / work streams are scrutinised and decision makers held to account.
- 4.2.10 Early Intervention for Children & Young People** – Members were presented with detailed information on the Youth Service provision during Covid and its impact as an early intervention / preventative service for children and young people. The Panel also scrutinised the narrative underpinning the local NEETs data seeking assurance that interventions continue to be robust.
- 4.2.11 Extracare Housing Developments** – at its last meeting⁴, the Panel gave detailed consideration to the current Extracare Housing developments on the Island – with a specific focus on the unique care model and provision at both developments. Lessons learned were scrutinised as a backdrop to the proposed development in Menai Bridge.

This work stream has resulted in the following positive outcomes:

Outcomes:

-  A team of Members who have developed a high level of knowledge about the complexities and the challenges facing Social Services and also a level of expertise in the service area.

³ Meeting of the Social Services Improvement Panel convened on 15/02/2022

⁴ Meeting of the Social Services Improvement Panel convened on 15/02/2022

- ✚ Creating conditions that are conducive to effective Scrutiny e.g. there has been a tangible improvement in the level and depth of questioning by the Panel that is challenging and promotes continuous improvement.
 - ✚ Scrutiny activity that is well planned, efficient and objective and based on evidence from a range of sources including Laming Visits and speaking to service users - which provides a clear insight into the standard of provision in order to scrutinise effectively in this area.
 - ✚ Better understanding by Elected Members of the complexities and risks in Social Services in order to be able to effectively scrutinise, hold to account and identify priorities in moving forward as a result of the range of sources that are available to them.
 - ✚ A broad overview of the performance of Social Services – both financial performance and performance against Improvement Plans.
- (better decisions, better outcomes)**

Scrutiny of Education

- 4.2.12 Monitoring School Performance** – Scrutiny has played an active part in monitoring and encouraging continuous improvement in both schools and the Council's Learning Service over the past 5 years. Despite this, work streams have continued to be affected by the impact of the Pandemic and it was necessary to cancel meetings of the Panel towards the end of the last academic year. The Panel forward work programme did however diversify over the past 12 months to compensate for this and also as a result of the national decision around publishing of outcomes and comparative data. The Authority will need to revisit the terms of reference of the Panel in readiness for the new Administration – adapting its areas of work and the manner within which it operates, scrutinises and holds to account. There is scope for the Panel to undertake its work virtually to the future.
- 4.2.13 Additional Learning Needs Act: Local Provision** – virtually, Members scrutinised local service provision of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Additional Learning Needs & Inclusion Partnership through the lens of 2 practitioners from two schools. The Panel sought assurance that provision was robust, timely and tailored to meet the individual needs of learners.
- 4.2.14 Educational Developments on the Isle of Anglesey over Recent Years** – the Panel completed a pause & review exercise early in 2021/22 providing an opportunity to reflect and evaluate the areas scrutinised to date. This exercise concluded that the Panel had succeeded in completing some in-depth scrutiny work across a broad range of topic areas despite challenges posed by Covid. It was also noted that no schools were now categorised by Estyn as requiring significant improvement. This gave the Panel assurance regarding the adequacy / quality of the education provision on the Island.
- 4.2.15 Elective Home Education** - at the request of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), the Schools' Progress Review Panel gave detailed consideration to the Local Education Authority's responsibilities in monitoring children on Anglesey who are educated at home. Members scrutinised

developments over the last year - led by the Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Additional Learning Needs & Inclusion Service. It was noted that considerable time had been invested in creating positive engagement with parents as a basis for future support and assistance by the Service. The Panel noted that there was a need to ensure ongoing monitoring to the future.

4.2.16 Forward Work programme – the Panel convened 2 sessions giving detailed consideration to its work programme with a view to ensuring focus and priority to its scrutiny input until the end of the current Administration. Members prioritised the following areas for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year:

- ❖ Welsh Language
- ❖ GwE and the Curriculum for Wales
- ❖ Voice of the Learner.

4.2.17 Welsh Language Work stream: Welsh Language Centre – lead Panel

Members attended a virtual visit to both primary sector language centres (Moelfre, Cybi) and received information on key data and outcomes of this provision. The Panel requested further information on any proposed developments to extend the Secondary sector provision and also any provision that could be made available to support parents in providing opportunities to practice / speak the language outside school hours.

4.2.18 GwE Work stream: Support to the Primary Sector – in January⁵, the Panel received a comprehensive presentation on the quality assurance / support provided by GwE to primary schools on the Island. This enabled the Panel to seek assurance regarding the quality of the educational provision. Members also received information about specific support available to schools in responding to challenges associated with the Pandemic. Preparations for the Curriculum for Wales (which comes into force September, 2022) were also considered. Members questioned the degree to which collaboration between schools was having an impact on quality of educational provision and also how prepared Anglesey schools were for the Curriculum for Wales.

4.2.19 Voice of the Learner Work stream – the last meeting of the Panel⁶ received feedback from the lead Panel Members on the following virtual visits, hearing the voice of the learner:

- Holyhead catchment School Council
- Llangefni catchment School Council
- Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones, Amlwch School Council
- Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern – pupils
- Ysgol David Hughes, Menai Bridge – head pupils

⁵ Meeting of the Schools' Progress Review Panel convened on 20/01/2022

⁶ Meeting of the Schools' Progress Review Panel convened on 17/02/2022

The Panel concluded that this work stream was a powerful means of hearing the voice of the learner and practice that needed to be further developed and replicated to the future.

Outcomes:

- Whilst responsibility for school performance ultimately lies with the Head teacher and School Governing Body, constructive scrutiny by the Panel and Parent Committee during this period contributed to the continuous improvement of education on the Island.
- Panel Members have sound knowledge of context, schools' complexities and risks as a basis to effectively scrutinise performance.
- Areas requiring further focus in the next Forward Work Programme have been identified (eg reviewing the Panel terms of reference, learner voice etc).

Scrutiny of Partnerships

4.2.20 Working in collaboration with key partners

Scrutinising the Council's partnership working with other public sector organisations is vital with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) 2015 Act reinforcing a need to further strengthen scrutiny of partnerships. Although the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee has resumed scrutiny work on key partnerships and complied with statutory requirements, some scheduled partners have naturally been postponed as a result of the Pandemic. The Committee's work programme has therefore had to be re-prioritised to complement local priorities and also protect partners directly impacted by the Pandemic.

The Committee scrutinised a number of our partners' annual reports for 2020/21 including - Community Safety Partnership Annual Report, Regional Partnership Board Annual Report (Part 9: Health and Social Services), North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Public Services Board Gwynedd & Ynys Môn and the Regional Emergency Planning Service. This is a key aspect of the Committee's work in order to ensure that the Council's partners and partnerships deliver for the benefit of Anglesey's residents.

In moving forward, both statutory matters and partnerships where there has been slippage due to Covid-19 (Health Board and Blue Light Services) need to be included on the forward work programme.

Outcomes:

- Ensure that partners are working together to meet statutory obligations in terms of collaboration. The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is assured that partners are working effectively on the Island and that service provision is of high quality and meet the needs of the local population.

- During this period Members of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee have enhanced their knowledge and will be in a stronger position to provide effective scrutiny in moving forward.
- The Committee's forward work programme has matured and Members have developed a knowledge base about the Council's partnership work. Also, scrutiny questioning on partnership working has developed as another means of ensuring that partnership work contributes towards achieving the Council Plan and provides first class services to Anglesey's people.

4.2.21 Scrutiny of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Public Services Board

Anglesey and Gwynedd Public Services Board was established in 2016⁷. As the designated scrutiny committee responsible for holding the Public Services Board to account, the Partnership & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee focused on the following areas in 2021/22:

- Review of the PSB governance arrangements
- Acting as statutory consultee on the draft wellbeing assessments for the Isle of Anglesey
- Monitoring progress on the PSB's implementation of the current Wellbeing Plan and also engagement in the PSB planning cycle.

Outcomes:

- Scrutinising the governance structure and delivery arrangements of the PSB. The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is assured that governance arrangements comply with statutory requirements and no changes are currently required.
- The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the pace of implementing work streams underpinning the Wellbeing Plan and received confirmation of the key risks and associated mitigation measures. It also scrutinised the practical steps taken by the Board in order to integrate its priorities into plans and strategies of partner public bodies.

4.3 MEASURING THE IMPACT OF OUR DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY:

The table below summarises the impact of some of our key development areas during 2021/22:

IMPACT OF OUR SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

Priority Area	How	Outcome
Scrutiny Vision	<p>We have ensured a whole Council approach to scrutiny.</p> <p>The Council has a Scrutiny Champion to ensure a supportive environment for scrutiny to succeed.</p>	<p>Evidence → increase in Member confidence; better scrutiny in committees; questioning strategy; quality of Member contributions in panel work and maturity of questioning strategies; feeling of</p>

⁷ In accordance with the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Priority Area	How	Outcome
	Strong foundations laid by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs to improve outcomes for the public, better decisions and governance.	Team Scrutiny amongst most Members. (better decisions, better outcomes)
Scrutiny forward work programmes	<p>Further developed our arrangements and have put more emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic aspects • Public engagement • The priorities of the Council Plan (2017/22) and corporate transformation programmes • risks • audit, investigation and regulation work • Items on the Executive's work programme • Have developed a covering report for the work programme which is presented in every Scrutiny Committee. • Programme alignment conversations with the Leader and Chief Executive at the Scrutiny Chairs/Vice- Chairs Forum. • Monthly discussion between the Leader, Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager. • Regular alignment conversations → scrutiny officers and heads of service. 	<p>Rolling work programmes concentrating on less items in order to add value and concentrate on the quality of scrutiny.</p> <p>Alignment – have ensured effective forward planning in order to ensure alignment between topics discussed in Members briefing sessions, scrutiny panels, and scrutiny committee meetings. Alignment between work programmes across the Council.</p> <p>Well planned, effective and objective scrutiny.</p> <p>(better decisions)</p>
More innovative methods of Scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Panels' Contribution- the Panels have been a means of scrutinising specific services and matters in more detail and report to the Scrutiny Committees in order to inform decisions. This has included reviewing and developing the work programmes of the Panels. • Self-evaluation- The three panels undertake regular self-evaluations and report on progress to the two parent Committees in order to measure successes and to identify priorities in moving forward. • Scrutiny outside of Committees- the monthly briefing sessions are a way of scrutinising key areas outside of formal meetings, which assists the Members to undertake informed scrutiny in the Scrutiny Panels and Committees. 	<p>More innovative methods of undertaking scrutiny work (SAC proposal for improvement), leading to better results and more impact.</p> <p>(better decisions, better outcomes).</p>

Priority Area	How	Outcome
Scrutiny Template	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The template includes clear scrutiny questions, ensures compliance with the requirements of the Well-being Act and is having an impact on the depth of the questioning in the meetings. 	<p>Clarity of Scrutiny role → concise objectives, clear scrutiny questions, compliance with the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.</p> <p>(better decisions)</p>
Member development, training and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A scrutiny development programme has been developed. Monthly briefing sessions are held which correspond to various items on the Committee work programmes. 	<p>(Better outcomes, better decisions)</p>
Public Engagement	<p>The Scrutiny Committee meetings are promoted on the Council's social media pages.</p> <p>A revised Public Speaking Protocol in Scrutiny Committee is now operational.</p> <p>Ensured the voice of the public as part of the Schools Modernisation Programme.</p>	<p>(Better outcomes, better decisions, better engagement)</p>
Public Services Board (PSB)	<p>A programme was put in place in order to address recommendations made by Wales Audit on Public Services Boards.</p> <p>Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board Programme Manager has worked closely with the Council's scrutiny function – agreed scrutiny timelines which align with Board meetings and areas to be scrutinised (delivery of the Wellbeing Plan, the Annual Report and governance arrangements).</p> <p>The PSB share information and minutes to ensure that the scrutiny committee has the necessary information to scrutinise effectively.</p>	<p>Effective scrutiny of the work of the Public Services Board, an increase in Members' confidence and understanding as a result of receiving regular reports on progress against work streams.</p> <p>Compliance with national guidance.</p> <p>(better engagement)</p>

5 LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022/23

5.1 The Authority will continue on the next stage of its development journey and the following key areas will be prioritised for action over the next year:

KEY SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Theme	How	Desired Outcome ⁸
Vision	Fully mainstream our Scrutiny vision and ensure that every Elected Member and Officer of the New Administration have a robust understanding of scrutiny's purpose and value within the Council's governance.	<i>Better outcomes</i>
Member Development and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence a training and development training programme to support and develop Scrutiny Members – focus on role & function of scrutiny; effective chairing skills; effective questioning skills for Scrutiny Members; E-learning. Convene short, regular briefing/ development / review sessions with Scrutiny Members. 	<i>Better decisions</i>
Scrutiny Panels	<p>Support the work of the panels through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the forward work programmes of the 3 Panel align with the new Council's corporate priorities Developing an evolving focus to the work of the Panels Ensuring that the Panels complete self-evaluation exercises at least once a year. Hold a review of the Scrutiny Panels' effectiveness as part of the Council's governance structure. 	<i>Better decisions</i>
Citizen Engagement in our Scrutiny work	Continue to mainstream the Protocol for Public Speaking and raise the public's awareness of its existence, in order to ensure greater public participation by providing a clear structure for the public to request to speak in Committees.	<i>Better engagement</i>

⁸ Outcomes and Characteristics for Effective Local Government Overview and Scrutiny – Good Scrutiny? Good Question! Wales Audit Office, 2014

Theme	How	Desired Outcome ⁸
Wellbeing of Future Generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support chairs in developing the role of scrutiny whilst meeting the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. To fully embed a robust questioning strategy using the Well-being of Future Generations Act to ensure that key scrutiny questions are included in every committee report and are asked in the Panel and Committee meetings. Review our arrangements in order to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. 	<i>Better outcomes</i>
Public Services Board and partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to scrutinise the work of the Public Services Board in delivering the Wellbeing Plan, Board governance arrangements and the effectiveness of partnerships in accordance with national guidance. Continue to invite key partners to come before the Committees in order to scrutinise their work on the Island. 	<i>Better engagement</i>
Innovative models of Member Scrutiny	As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, consider more innovative and effective ways of scrutiny, taking full advantage of technology to this end.	<i>Better decisions, better outcomes, better engagement</i>
Alignment and Ownership of Scrutiny Work Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the scrutiny panels' and committees' work programmes monthly to align with the process of updating the Executive's forward work programme. Ensure a discussion about the forward work programme in every meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs Forum/ committee/ panel, and ensure Members input in forming the work programmes in order to ensure ownership. Make use of national / regional good practice to steer local work programmes 	<i>Better results, better outcomes</i>

Theme	How	Desired Outcome ⁸
Self-assessment of our local Scrutiny arrangements	<p>Members to continue to complete self-assessments which includes identifying recommendations to improve the current scrutiny arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as part of the process of preparing the Scrutiny Annual Report. • to assess the outcomes and impact of our scrutiny panels. 	<i>Better outcomes</i>
Raising awareness/sharing information	<p>Revise information regarding the Council's scrutiny arrangements on the Council's website and amend in order to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that Elected Members can succeed in their role 2. Enable the voice of individuals and stakeholders to have a prominent place in the scrutiny Process 3. Raise awareness of the Public Speaking Protocol. 	<i>Better decisions, better outcomes, better engagement</i>
Closing the Scrutiny Circle and alignment with the Transformation Board	<p>Accountability through reporting on progress of the Panels' work quarterly and continue to formalise the process of reporting to Scrutiny Committees through Panels' Chairs as a matter of course.</p>	<i>Better decisions, better outcomes, better engagement</i>
Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021	<p>Arrange specific briefing sessions for scrutiny Members on implications of the Act on the Council's scrutiny function:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring that information is available to scrutiny committees. 2. Consider the implications of the Act by making it mandatory for authorities to appoint joint scrutiny Committees. 	<i>Better decisions, better outcomes</i>

6. CONTACT SCRUTINY

6.1 To find out more about scrutiny in Anglesey or to give your views please contact:

Scrutiny Unit,
Isle of Anglesey County Council,

Council Offices.
Llangefni.
Anglesey.
LL777TW

Anwen Davies	Scrutiny Manager (leading on supporting the Corporate Scrutiny Committee)	(01248) 752578 AnwenDavies@ynysmon.gov.uk
Sioned Rowe	Scrutiny Officer (leading on supporting the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee)	(01248) 752039 SionedRowe@ynysmon.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report: 2021/22

APPENDICES

WHAT IS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY? National policy context

National context:

Scrutiny committees form part of the way in which local government in Wales operates. As well as establishing a decision making executive, the Local Government Act 2000 requires one or more scrutiny committees. Their primary role is to hold decision-makers to account, drive improvement, act as the voice of the community and play a role in policy development and review.

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS)⁹ advocates four key principles in support of effective Member scrutiny:

- i. Provide “critical friend” challenge to executive policy makers and other decision makers
- ii. Enable the voice and concerns of the public and its communities to be heard
- iii. Be carried out by “independent minded governors” who lead and own the scrutiny process
- iv. Is evidence based and drives improvement in public services.

⁹ Good Scrutiny Guide, Centre for Governance and Scrutiny 2004

REMIT AND MEMBERSHIP OF OUR SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The overview and scrutiny function at the Isle of Anglesey County Council continues to be delivered through a structure comprising of two parent scrutiny committees - Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Remit:











- The focus of work of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee is to provide assurance regarding the performance and delivery of all services; ensure the council achieves its corporate and service objectives (as outlined in the Corporate Plan, Annual Budget, Budget and Policy Framework, Performance Management Framework, Corporate Policies or their successor plans and policies); and to support and make recommendations for continuous improvement.
- Members of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee endeavour to hold preparation meetings in advance of committee meetings in order to prepare and focus discussion at the formal meetings of the committee. This is regarded as good practice and it is intended to ensure these arrangements are in place for 2022/23.

Membership

- The Corporate Scrutiny Committee is chaired by Councillor Aled Morris Jones and supported by Vice Chair Councillor Dylan Rees. Ten Elected Members sit on the committee¹⁰ with provision for 4 co-opted members:

¹⁰ Councillor membership of the Scrutiny Committees reflect the political balance of the Council

Membership of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee

	Name	Ward	Political Party/Group		Name	Ward	Political Party/Group
	Cllr Aled Morris Jones (Chair)	Twrcelyn	Anglesey Independents		Cllr Dylan Rees (Vice-chair)	Canolbarth Môn	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Gary Pritchard	Seiriol	Plaid Cymru		Cllr John Griffith	Talybolion	Plad Cymru
	Cllr Alun Roberts	Seiriol	Plaid Cymru		Cllr Nicola Roberts	Canolbarth Môn	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Richard Griffiths	Twrcelyn	The Independent Group		Cllr Richard O Jones	Twrcelyn	The Independent Group
	Cllr J Arwel Roberts	Ynys Gybi	Wales Labour Party		Cllr Bryan Owen	Bro Aberffraw	Anglesey Independents

Member of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee during part of 2021/22.

Cllr Margaret Roberts



PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE











Remit:

- The primary focus of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is to ensure that the interests of the citizens of the Island are promoted, and that best use is made of Council resources, in line with the Council's priorities, that demonstrate added value from working with partners. The remit of the committee includes regional and national arrangements as well as local arrangements.
- The committee is also the nominated Crime and Disorder Committee dealing with crime and disorder matters, as required under Section 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. It is also the designated committee for scrutinising the work of the Ynys Môn and Gwynedd Public Services Board.
- The Committee has introduced a practice of holding briefing meetings with members prior to each formal scrutiny committee meeting. This is regarded as good practice and it is intended to continue with these arrangements in 2022/23.

Membership:

- The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee was chaired by Councillor Gwilym Jones and supported by Vice Chair Councillor Glyn Haynes. Ten members also sit on this committee with provision for 4 co-opted members:

Membership of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

	Name	Ward	Political Party/Group		Name	Ward	Political Party/Group
	Cllr Gwilym O Jones (Chair)	Llifon	The Independent Group		Cllr Glyn Haynes (Vice- chair)	Caergybi	Labour Party
	Cllr Dafydd Roberts	Bro Rhosyr	The Independent Group		Cllr Vaughan Hughes	Lligwy	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Alun Roberts	Seiriol	Plaid Cymru		Cllr Margaret Roberts	Lligwy	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Nicola Roberts	Canolbarth Môn	Plaid Cymru		Cllr Trefor Lloyd Hughes	Ynys Gybi	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Kenneth P Hughes	Talybolion	Anglesey Independents		Cllr Robert Llewelyn Jones	Caergybi	Anglesey Independents

Our scrutiny committees can undertake their work in one of the following ways:

- Consider a topic during a formal meeting
- Consider a topic in more detail by establishing a scrutiny outcome panel OR
- Conduct informal sessions on a particular area of policy.

Again during 2021/22, the scrutiny committees were aware of the need to seek to focus their work on outcomes and within the Audit Wales framework of characteristics and outcomes for effective local government overview and scrutiny¹¹:

- Better outcomes
- Better decisions
- Better engagement

Call-in of decisions: Scrutiny committees can “call-in” a decision taken by either the Executive, Portfolio Holder or an officer to whom the Executive has been delegated with a specific decision making power. The scrutiny committees only exercise a “call-in” when there is good reason to do so (through a Test of Significance), and during 2021/22 this was not exercised.

¹¹ Good Scrutiny? Good Question!, Wales Audit Office, 2014

APPENDIX 3

A vision for delivering effective scrutiny in Isle of Anglesey County Council

Vision

Scrutiny in Anglesey aims to secure better outcomes for citizens and communities and add to the effectiveness of the Council by helping make public services more transparent, inclusive, accountable and cost effective.

Guiding Principles for Scrutiny in Anglesey

- Scrutiny is characterised by an atmosphere of mutual trust, co-operation and shared responsibility for achieving the best outcomes for local communities.
- Non-Executive Members are non-political in carrying out their support and challenge roles.
- Scrutiny activity directly broadens the evidence base upon which decisions and programmes of transformational change are predicated by providing a view on how proposals are likely to resonate with local communities.
- Non-Executive Members help ensure that a strategic, long term approach is taken when major service reconfiguration is being considered by providing constructive challenge in testing assumptions, examining risks and challenging how resources are prioritised.

Our Values

Overview and Scrutiny in Anglesey....

- Is 'forward and outward' and proactive rather than 'inwards and reactive'.
- Has a clearly defined and valued role in the council's improvement and governance arrangements.
- Is non-political, methodologically sound and incorporates a wide range of evidence and perspectives including those from strategic partners, regulators and the public.
- Is led by councillors who have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their role effectively.
- Receives effective support from the council's senior leadership team who ensures that information provided to overview and scrutiny is of high quality and is provided in a timely and consistent manner.
- Takes into account concerns expressed at ward level in a non-parochial way when managing its forward work programme.
- Is well planned, chaired effectively and makes best use of the resources available to it.

- Is recognised by the executive and senior leadership team as an important council mechanism for community engagement, and facilitates greater citizen involvement in governance.
- Builds trust and positive relationships with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders.