

# Isle of Anglesey County Council

## Scrutiny Report

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Corporate Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>17th September, 2025</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>1. Scrutiny Members on Panels – Nominations based on Political Balance</b> <b>2. Welsh Language and Equality Steering Group – Nomination</b>
<b>Scrutiny Chair:</b>	<b>Cllr Jeff Evans</b>

### 1. Who will be the portfolio holder presenting / leading the report?

<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Role</b>
Not applicable	
<b>Service Officer (Supporting)</b>	<b>Role</b>
Anwen Davies	Scrutiny Manager

### 2. Why the Scrutiny Committee is being asked to consider the matter

- Nomination of Scrutiny Members to serve on Scrutiny Panels / working groups has been a matter for the Scrutiny Committees to agree
- Group Leaders recently agreed to amend the membership of Scrutiny Panels to be subject to political balance principles and rules<sup>1</sup>.

### 3. Role of the Scrutiny Committee and recommendations

- ☐ For assurance  
☐ For recommendation to the Executive  
☐ For information  
☒ For agreement

#### Recommendation(s):

The Committee is requested to:

**R1** agree a revised process for membership of the 3 Scrutiny Panels based on the current political balance of the Council

**R2** agree the terms of reference for each of the 3 Scrutiny Panels (as detailed in the appendices to this report)

**R3** both Scrutiny Committees to nominate 1 Member to serve on the Welsh Language and Equality Steering Group.

<sup>1</sup> The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the main principles governing political balance of local authorities

**4. How does the recommendation(s) contribute to the objectives of the Council's Plan?**

Ensure effective governance arrangements underpinning a robust decision-making process.

**5. Key scrutiny themes**

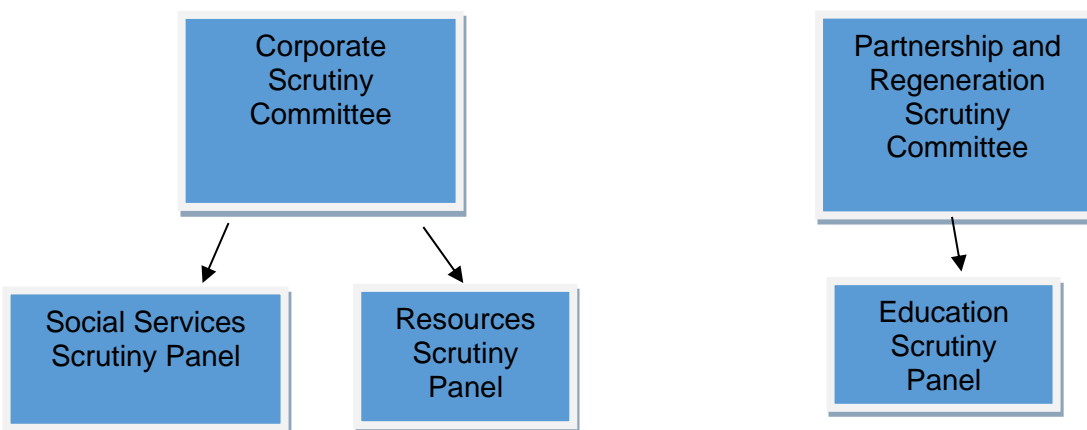
Not applicable

**6. Key points / summary**

**1. SCRUTINY PANELS – NOMINATIONS BASED ON POLITICAL BALANCE**

1.1 Scrutiny Committees form part of the way in which local government in Wales operates. Their prime 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.

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



1.3 The scrutiny panels have been established to undertake work streams on behalf of the parent scrutiny committees and are work groups without decision-making powers.

1.4 Group Leaders recently<sup>2</sup> agreed that the membership of these scrutiny panels should be amended to reflect the political balance of the Council. Below are details of the current membership of each scrutiny panel and the membership based on the political balance formula for the Council:

**Key:**

**Political Groups**

PC - Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales

GA - Y Grŵp Annibynnol (The Independent Group)

AM - Annibynwyr Môn (Anglesey Independents)

LIC - Llafur Cymru / Welsh Labour

<sup>2</sup> Meeting of Group Leaders convened on 1st May, 2025

### RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL

Current Membership		Membership based on Political Balance Rules
Member	Political Group	
Cllr Geraint ap Bebb	PC	3 – PC
Cllr Dylan Rees	PC	
Cllr Ken Taylor	PC	
Cllr Ieuan Williams	GA	1 - GA
Cllr Keith Roberts	LIC	1 - LIC
Vacant seat	AM	1 – AM

### SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Current Membership		Membership based on Political Balance Rules
Member	Political Group	
Cllr Euryrn Morris	PC	4 – PC
Cllr Llio Angharad Owen	PC	
Cllr Jackie Lewis	PC	1 - GA
Cllr Sonia Williams	PC	1 - LIC
Cllr John Ifan Jones	PC	2 – AM
Cllr Ieuan Williams	GA	
Cllr Pip O'Neill	LIC	
Cllr Jeff Evans	AM	

### EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL

Current Membership		Membership based on Political Balance Rules
Member	Political Group	
Cllr Margaret Roberts	PC	4 – PC
Cllr Non Dafydd	PC	
Cllr Arfon Wyn	PC	1 - GA
Cllr Alwen Watkin	PC	1 - LIC
Cllr Gwilym Jones	GA	
Cllr Ieuan Williams	GA	2 – AM
Cllr Keith Roberts	LIC	
Cllr Derek Owen	AM	

## 2. SCRUTINY PANELS – TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 As Members will recall, an improvement plan has been adopted by the Council incorporating recommendations to build on and further strengthen our Scrutiny function within a culture of incremental, continuous improvement. A more streamlined and flexible structure is one of our 5 key improvement themes with the aim of ensuring a well-designed structure where “form follows function” can support Scrutiny to have better

outcomes. We have therefore reviewed the terms of reference of our 3 scrutiny panels and have reduced the number of formal panel meetings to create Member capacity to complete more fieldwork in Education and Social Services.

2.2 Attached, for endorsement, are the amended terms of reference for each of the scrutiny panels as follows:

- i. Resources Scrutiny Panel – **Appendix 1**
- ii. Social Services Scrutiny Panel – **Appendix 2**
- iii. Education Scrutiny Panel – **Appendix 3.**

### **3. WELSH LANGUAGE AND EQUALITY STEERING GROUP – NOMINATION**

3.1 This is a new group which first met in May 2025 and replaces the Welsh Language Promotion Group when its terms of reference was revised to include the field of equality.

3.2 Both Scrutiny Committees are requested to nominate one Member to serve on the Welsh Language and Equality Steering Group. The terms of reference of the Steering Group is attached (**Appendix 4**) in order to assist Members in the selection process.

## **7. Impact assessments**

7.1. Potential impacts on groups protected under the Equality Act 2010

Not applicable for this overarching issue.

7.2. Potential impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage (strategic decisions)

Not applicable for this overarching issue.

7.3. Potential effects on opportunities to use Welsh and not treat the language less favourably than English

Not applicable for this overarching issue.

7.4. Potential impact on the Council's Net Zero Carbon target

Not applicable.

## **8. Financial implications**

Not applicable.

## **9. Appendices**

**Appendix 1:** scope and remit of the Resources Scrutiny Panel

**Appendix 2:** scope and remit of the Social Services Scrutiny Panel

**Appendix 3:** scope and remit of the Education Scrutiny Panel

**Appendix 4:** terms of reference of the Welsh Language and Equality Steering Group.

## **10. Report author and background papers**

Anwen Davies, Scrutiny Manager, Isle of Anglesey, Council Offices, Llangefni. LL77 7TW

## TERMS OF REFERENCE & MODUS OPERANDI

### RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL

## PART I – BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

### Financial Scrutiny

In the current economic climate, Members need assurance that the Council will make the best use of diminishing resources, particularly financial resources:

*"... Effective scrutiny is even more important as public services respond to the challenges of the global financial situation while continuing to try to improve services. Effective scrutiny can improve the evidence base for decisions on the allocation of resources as well as ensuring that decisions are transparent and are made in accordance with the needs of the local community..."<sup>1</sup>*

"How can we add value?" is the key question to be asked in terms of financial scrutiny and "how can we demonstrate that value is added at each stage of the financial process?" In this context, consideration should be given to the following issues:

- The process of setting the budget itself
- Determining priorities among competing demands
- Effective use of funds
- How financial monitoring and management takes place.

Financial scrutiny is much more than adding value to the decisions of the Executive alone. It is about ensuring that a proper scrutiny process forms part of the planning, implementation and follow up on key decisions that have an impact on taxpayers and local communities. As such, effective Scrutiny can:

- Challenge effectively
- Hold decision makers to account; and
- Assist the Executive to develop a robust budget for forthcoming years.

### Adding Value<sup>2</sup>

Financial scrutiny can take many forms but there are four fundamental areas where effective non-executive oversight can add value:

1. **Reviewing how resources are allocated** - monitoring how they are used and examining their impact. This is about following through from budget development and planning to the delivery of a budget and oversight over that budget in-year. It links to the way that scrutiny selects and prioritises its work
2. **Reviewing the integration between financial and service planning** - what is the level of integration between corporate and service planning and financial management / performance. There is a need for scrutiny to 'mainstream' an understanding of financial issues and undertake scrutiny that is strategic rather than line-by-line
3. **Testing out and making explicit whether the Council is directing its resources effectively** - testing out and making explicit whether the Council is directing its resources

<sup>1</sup> Good scrutiny? Good question! Improvement study Auditor General Wales: Scrutiny in Local Government, May 2014. Also, Raising the stakes – financial scrutiny in challenging times. A guide for Welsh local authorities (Centre for Public Scrutiny, June, 2014)

<sup>2</sup> Financial Scrutiny Practice Guide (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy and Centre for Governance and Scrutiny June 2020)

effectively to meet its priorities and demonstrating whether it is achieving value for money, equity and social value

4. **Providing, through scrutiny challenge to the Executive's management of the Council's finances and a different perspective on challenges** - Scrutiny having a clearly defined role and bringing something unique to the table in how it goes about its work.

### **Scrutiny of Resources**

Local Authority resources refer to the funding, personnel and infrastructure used to deliver services. These include:

- **Funding sources** – primarily from Council Tax, business rates and central government grants. Additional income comes from local fees and charges
- **Key services** – social care, education, housing, highways maintenance, waste management, planning, licencing, leisure centres and other services
- **Resources facilities** – the local authority has a portfolio of assets and facilities

This broader definition provides scope for this Scrutiny Panel to examine resource matters beyond Local Authority finances.

### **Our Local Arrangements**

The scrutiny of the process of establishing the Council's annual budget has developed and matured over recent years laying the foundations for a better, more strategic process based on outcomes and good practice. In fact, the process has allowed for a more systematic path with regard to financial scrutiny, which is an essential component of sound financial management and governance.

The scrutiny work carried out by the former Finance Scrutiny Panel<sup>3</sup> during the last Administration has also been a positive development in our financial scrutiny arrangements, through:

- Development of a model focusing on a smaller group
- Members developing a level of expertise
- Encouraging good attendance and teamwork.

## **PART II – PANEL REMIT AND SCOPE**

### **REMIT**

The Resources Scrutiny Panel will operate with the following key objectives:

- Develop a model of working on finance matters focusing on a smaller group to enable Members to become more involved, develop a level of expertise, encourage good attendance and teamwork
- Forum to discuss information regarding the Council's financial risks and financial performance, as a basis to inform the forward work programme of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee
- Free up space on the agenda of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee meetings in order to ensure scrutiny of transformational and strategic matters
- Forum to develop a group of Members with the expertise and ownership to lead financial discussions in the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

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<sup>3</sup> The Finance Scrutiny Panel was established in Summer, 2017 as a sub panel of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee

## SCOPE

Topic	Work programme	Timeline
Induction	Induction of Panel members	4 July, 2022
Quarterly monitoring of the Revenue and Capital Expenditure	Scrutiny of expenditure against budget profile	Quarterly
The forthcoming year's budget	Sharing information on financial risks to the Council in order to inform the forward work programme of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee	July → September
	Draft budget - the mechanics and process of the financial settlement	
	Overview of the position regarding any efficiencies	October → November
	Scrutinise risks associated with the budget proposals	
	Scrutinise how achievable the proposals are	
	Scrutinise the Council Tax level for the following year	
Medium Term Financial Plan	Scrutinise the principles and assumptions	September
Service Areas	Scrutinise pressures within individual service areas	To be scheduled within the annual budget cycle
Debt Management	Scrutiny of debt management performance (to include income collection rates)	To be confirmed
Fees and Charges	Scrutiny of fees and charges for the coming financial year	To be confirmed
Second Home Premium	Scrutinise the principles, assumptions and recommendations	November / December (tbc)
HRA Business Plan	Scrutinise the principles and assumptions	January / February
Council balances and reserves	Questioning and scrutiny	June / July
Value for Money / Social Value through Procurement		tbc



## PART III – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

### 1. Governance / Panel Membership

- The scrutiny panels have been established to undertake work streams on behalf of the parent scrutiny committees and as such are working groups without decision-making powers
- Panel membership will be subject to political balance principles and rules<sup>4</sup>.

The core membership of the Panel will include:

- Elected members** - 3 members from both scrutiny committees and based on the political balance formula of the Council
- Portfolio Member for Resources** – as an observer, with no vote
- Officers** – Director of Function (Resources) and S151 Officer, Accountancy Services Manager, Scrutiny Manager

From time to time, the Panel's work will require the attendance of other Elected Members (e.g. members of the Executive Committee) and / or officers from other service areas.

### 2. Frequency of Meetings and Quorum

- **Frequency of meetings** – the panel has been established as a standing panel to consider the breadth of local authority financial issues which are summarised in the table above. The panel will therefore meet regularly, in accordance with the schedules and timelines of the Council's budgetary processes as follows:
  - July – Qtr 4 budget monitoring / annual outturn
  - September – Qtr 1 budget monitoring
  - November – Qtr 2 budget monitoring
  - December – Initial Draft Settlement for new financial year
  - January – Initial Budget Proposals for new financial year
  - February – Capital Proposals / Final Draft Revenue Proposal for new financial year / Qtr 3 budget monitoring.
- **Quorum** – this will not apply to the panel.

### 3. Recording Meetings and Reporting Arrangements

- The panel will run in the format of a business meeting. The Scrutiny Unit will collate and distribute any papers in preparation for each meeting and provide a list of action points following each meeting
- **Reporting arrangements** - regular reporting by panel members to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee. As part of the Scrutiny Annual Report, the Panel will publish an annual statement summarising the added value its scrutiny work has achieved.

[11/07/2025, 23/07/2025, 19/08/2025 & 09/09/2025]

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<sup>4</sup> The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the main principles governing political balance of local authorities

## TERMS OF REFERENCE & *MODUS OPERANDI*

### SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

## PART I – BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

### Scrutiny of Social Services

Keeping vulnerable children, young people and adults safe is a critically important role and one that requires the Council and partners to work together effectively. There has been significant public attention in recent years due to national high-profile examples where Local Authorities and partners have failed vulnerable individuals, with tragic consequences.

In reporting poor inspection outcomes, care inspectorates<sup>1</sup> often cite poor scrutiny practices amongst other system failings. Ensuring meaningful and robust scrutiny of policies and also support and / or services available to protect vulnerable individuals is therefore a key element of the leadership role of Scrutiny Elected Members.

Ensuring meaningful and robust scrutiny of Social Services is a key element of the leadership role of Scrutiny Members and is much more than adding value to the decisions of the Executive alone. It is about ensuring that a proper scrutiny process forms part of the planning, implementation and follow up on key decisions that have an impact on vulnerable individuals in our local communities or in the care system. As such, effective Scrutiny can:

- Challenge effectively
- Hold decision makers to account; and
- Assist the Executive to make robust decisions for future generations.

### Our Local Arrangements

Scrutiny of Social Services has evolved and developed since the former Social Services Improvement Panel was established<sup>2</sup>. The role of the Panel focused on monitoring and scrutinising progress and distance travelled against the Social Services improvement programme and performance against key performance indicators; provide assurance to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on adequate and timely progress / local performance. The scrutiny work carried out by the former Social Services Improvement Panel during the last Administration was a positive development, having an impact on Social Services performance and improvement journey:

- Development of a model focusing on a smaller group
- Members developing a level of expertise
- Encouraging good attendance and teamwork.

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<sup>1</sup> Care Inspectorate Wales; Care Quality Commission (England)

<sup>2</sup> Children's Services Improvement Panel was established in June, 2017 the scope of which was broadened to include Adult Social Services in June, 2019

## PART II – PANEL REMIT AND SCOPE

### REMIT

It is a **natural next step** to further develop Member scrutiny of Social Services ensuring a broader scope to its work, with the following key benefits:

- Develop a model of working in Social Services which focuses on a smaller group to enable Members to be more involved, to develop a level of subject expertise and to encourage good attendance and teamwork
- Further strengthen the capacity of Members to challenge performance by improving the quality of information and data on services
- Forum to discuss information around Service risks as a basis to inform the forward work programme of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee
- Forum to develop a group of Members with the expertise and ownership to lead discussions on Social Services matters in the Corporate Scrutiny Committee

### What Care Inspectorate Wales expects to see in terms of political leadership and scrutiny

Elected Members have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the Social Services provision to enable them to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

The role of the Social Services Scrutiny Panel is to:

1. Monitor and scrutinise in a meaningful and robust way:
  - Progress and distance travelled against Service development programmes
  - Quantitative and qualitative performance of Social Services.
2. Ensure that the voices of children, young people and adults are heard when considering the effectiveness and impact of services
3. Provide assurance to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on the following elements:
  - Adequate, timely progress in delivering Service development programmes
  - Quantitative and qualitative performance of support and care services to children, young people and adults

### SCOPE

Topic	Work programme Focus	Timeline
Effective Scrutiny	Induction of Panel members – workshop format.	July 2022 and during Panel meetings.
Skills	Skills set - training & development inputs to ensure clarity of role and subject knowledge to enable effective	Delivery throughout the municipal year ensuring alignment

Topic	Work programme Focus	Timeline
Self-evaluation	scrutiny eg CIW, service area leads, partners.	with Panel scrutiny work
	<b>Self-evaluation</b> – Member critique of own performance to enable review, reflection & learning. Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stock take</li> <li>Review, evaluate and reflect</li> <li>Establish foundation for next period</li> <li>Confirm Member ownership.</li> </ol>	Annual – to be determined by Panel members  November 2026 – overview of the work of the Panel 2022 - 2026
<b>Fieldwork</b>	Elected Members and Senior Leaders to meet staff from a variety of teams in order to hear first-hand staff experiences.	TBC – discussion with Panel members
<b>Theme 1: Age Friendly Strategic Plan</b>	Age Friendly Strategic Plan – detailed look at the strategic, whole Council direction	Fieldwork feedback – Haulfryn Llangristiolus
<b>Theme 2: Youth Justice</b>	Ensure effective delivery of the 2025/26 Youth Justice Plan for Ynys Môn and Gwynedd.	July 2025 - June 2026
<b>Theme 3: Care Provision for Older People</b>	The Anglesey vision, aims and objectives for care provision for older people Update on Extra Care Housing	Fieldwork feedback – i'w gadarnhau
<b>Thema 4: Llesiant Meddwl Môn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on team restructure and embedding practice</li> <li>Identification of themes and early intervention</li> </ul>	Fieldwork feedback – Llesiant Meddwl Môn Team Community Support Team
<b>Theme 5: Supported Living (Learning Disabilities)</b>	Supported Living (Learning Disabilities) – detailed look at the care model Provision for individuals with learning disabilities – to what extent does provision meet need	Fieldwork feedback – Learning Disabilities Team (Children and Adults)
<b>Theme 6: Trauma Informed Anglesey</b>	Trauma Informed Anglesey – journey thus far and developments on the horizon	Fieldwork feedback – tbc
<b>Voice of the Service User</b>	Scrutinise the effectiveness of mechanisms in place to hear the voice of children, young people and adults as an integral part of the Social Services provision on the Isle of Anglesey Use of case studies, videos and pen pictures (mirror current good practice adopted by the Corporate parenting panel).	Delivery throughout the municipal year ensuring alignment with Panel scrutiny work – consider when reporting on progress under each of the themes (provide examples)

## PART III – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

### 1. Governance / Panel Membership

- The scrutiny panels have been established to undertake work streams on behalf of the parent scrutiny committees and as such are working groups without decision-making powers
- Panel membership will be subject to political balance principles and rules<sup>3</sup>.

The core membership of the Panel will include:

- Elected members** - 4 Members from both scrutiny committees and based on the political balance formula of the Council
- Portfolio Members for Social Services (Adults and Children & Families Services)** – as observers, with no vote
- Officers** – Director of Social Services, Head of Adult Services, Scrutiny Manager.

From time to time, the panel's work will require the attendance of other Elected Members (e.g. members of the Executive Committee) and / or officers from other service areas.

### 2. Frequency of Meetings and Quorum

- **Frequency of meetings** – the panel has been established as a standing panel to ensure accountability, oversight and scrutiny of social services on Anglesey, as summarised in the table above. The panel will therefore meet in accordance with the timeline for the submission of progress reports on social services scrutiny to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee as follows:
  - 2 hybrid meetings of the Panel each civic year – May and November
  - small group thematic fieldwork in local social services provision between each meeting of the Panel in order to scrutinise and monitor impact on service users. Fieldwork to focus on key priority themes aligned to the Council Plan 2023/2028
- **Quorum** – this will not apply to the panel.

### 3. Recording Meetings and Reporting Arrangements

- The panel will run in the format of a business meeting. The Scrutiny Unit will collate and distribute any papers in preparation for each meeting and provide a list of action points following each meeting
- **Reporting arrangements** - regular reporting by panel members to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

[14/07/2025, 21/08/2025, 26/08/2025 & 09/09/2025]

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<sup>3</sup> The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the main principles governing political balance of local authorities

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE & *MODUS OPERANDI***

### **EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL**

## **PART I – BACKGROUND & CONTEXT**

### **Scrutiny of Education**

Education accountability and Member scrutiny of the wider education system is a critically important role and one that requires the Local Authority and its partners to work together effectively. Following changes to how schools operate and with more reform on the horizon<sup>1</sup>, there is a potential risk for much less clarity and understanding of who is accountable for what and who has the overview of local education systems. Recent Welsh Government guidance provides a new point of reference. The School Improvement Guidance: Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability<sup>2</sup> outlines the Government's expectations of all stakeholders in contributing to sustainable school improvement.

It is therefore opportune to reconsider the question of what the role of Elected Members is in this system. There needs to be clear and structured local oversight and leadership in order to ensure checks and balances outside of individual schools' own governance systems on how the overall education system is operating at a County level. To this end, the Education Scrutiny Panel has an important contribution to make. Ensuring meaningful and robust scrutiny of education is a key element of the leadership role of Scrutiny Members. Effective scrutiny should add value and enhance improvement, accountability and transparency.

Scrutiny of education is about holding the Executive Member and education service providers to account, and at a strategic level:

- Looking at / scrutinising how all the components work together eg how local partners coordinate activities
- That all efforts are having a positive impact on learner outcomes.

Education scrutiny is much more than adding value to the decisions of the Executive alone. It is about ensuring that a proper scrutiny process forms part of the planning, implementation and follow-up on key decisions that have an impact on taxpayers and local communities. As such, effective scrutiny can:

- Challenge effectively
- Hold decision-makers to account; and
- Assist the Executive to make robust decision for future generations.

### **Our Local Arrangements**

Scrutiny of schools has evolved and developed since the Schools' Progress Review Panel was established in 2012<sup>3</sup>. The role of the Panel until 2022 focused on improving performance of all

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<sup>1</sup> Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 – creates a legislative framework to improve the planning and delivery of additional learning provision;

Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 – establishes the Curriculum for Wales in law.

<sup>2</sup> School Improvement Guidance: Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability. Welsh Government January 2021

<sup>3</sup> The Schools' Progress Review Panel was established in November, 2012 by the former Education and Leisure Scrutiny Committee. It arose from recommendations made by Estyn at the time on the quality of education services for children and young people on Anglesey.

schools by providing robust challenge on individual schools' performance; encouraging the sharing of good practice between schools, taking on board lessons learnt and individual schools' experience; enhancing local Members' knowledge of key performance drivers and challenges facing schools on the Isle of Anglesey; evidencing that school performance was being monitored by Elected Members. The scrutiny work carried out by the former Schools' Progress Review Panel during the past decade has been a positive development, having an impact on schools' performance by:

- Development of a model focusing on a smaller group
- Members developing a level of expertise
- Encouraging good attendance and teamwork.

Our local Education Scrutiny Charter (at **Appendix 1**) provides an overarching summary bringing together the Council's commitment and values underpinning Elected Member scrutiny of matters which are of strategic importance to the Local Authority.

## **PART II – PANEL REMIT AND SCOPE**

### **REMIT**

It is a **natural next step** to further develop Member scrutiny of education ensuring a broader scope to its work, with the following key benefits:

- Further develop a model of working in Education which focuses on a smaller group to enable Members to be more involved, to develop a level of subject expertise and to encourage good attendance and teamwork
- Further strengthen the capacity of Members to challenge the quality and impact of the services provided to schools
- Forum to discuss information around Service risks as a basis to inform the forward work programme of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
- Forum to develop a group of Members with the expertise and ownership to lead discussions on Education matters in the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

### **What Estyn expects to see in terms of political leadership and scrutiny**

Elected Members have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the education provision to enable them to discharge their responsibilities effectively:

- 1. Standards – challenge performance in order to raise standards around outcomes**
- 2. Quality and effectiveness – an understanding of the breadth and quality of education provision**
- 3. Leadership – understanding of the effectiveness of education leadership at all levels in the County.**

## SCOPE

Topic	Work programme Focus	Timeline
<b>Effective Scrutiny</b>	<b>Induction</b> of Panel members – workshop format. Aim: Member familiarisation of revised scope and terms of reference	24 June, 2025
Skills	<b>Skills set</b> - training & development inputs to ensure clarity of role and subject knowledge to enable effective scrutiny eg Estyn, service area leads.	Delivery throughout the municipal year ensuring alignment with Panel scrutiny work
Self-evaluation	<b>Self-evaluation</b> – Member critique of own performance to enable review, reflection & learning. Objectives: i. Stock take ii. Review, evaluate and reflect iii. Establish foundation for next period iv. Confirm Member ownership.	Annual – to be determined by Panel members
<b>Theme 1: Transition</b>	<b>Effective Transition</b> – readiness to learn  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve Member understanding of the importance of effective transition on learners</li> <li>Identify how schools are supported to ensure effective transition</li> </ul>	Theme introduction at Panel Meeting → 24 June 2025  Fieldwork in 3 schools → September 2025  Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → 24 September 2025
<b>Theme 2: Attendance</b>	<b>Good Attendance in Schools</b> –  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of “improving school attendance” strategy</li> <li>How effectively schools are supported in helping to raise attendance</li> </ul>	Theme introduction at Panel meeting → 24 September 2025  Fieldwork in 3 schools → details tbc  Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → 17 December 2025
<b>Theme 3: Curriculum for Wales</b>	<b>Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021</b> - Curriculum for Wales → career and work-related experiences  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve member understanding of Career and</li> </ul>	Theme introduction at Panel meeting → 17 December 2025  Fieldwork in 3 schools → details tbc



Topic	Work programme Focus	Timeline
	<p>Work-Related Experience (CWRE) within the Curriculum for Wales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review how effectively are schools supported in developing CWRE within the curriculum and what opportunities are there for learners?</li> </ul>	<p>Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → 19 March 2026</p>
<b>Theme 4: Schools' Self-improvement</b>	<p><b>Self-improvement journey for schools –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve member understanding of self-improving schools, and where schools on Anglesey are up to on their own self-improvement journey</li> <li>Consider how effectively schools are being supported by the Learning Service in becoming self-improving.</li> </ul>	<p>Theme introduction at Panel meeting → 19 March 2026</p> <p>Fieldwork in 3 schools → details tbc</p> <p>Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → June 2026</p>
<b>Theme 5: Welsh Language</b>	<p><b>Welsh in Education (10-year focus)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise / monitor delivery of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for the Isle of Anglesey</li> <li>Monitor local performance against national performance indicators on an annual basis</li> </ul>	<p>Theme introduction at Panel meeting → June 2026</p> <p>Fieldwork in 3 schools → details tbc</p> <p>Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → September 2026</p>
<b>Theme 6: Inclusion</b>	<p>Improve Members' understanding of "school inclusion"</p> <p>Consider how effectively schools are supported within the Inclusion service area</p>	<p>Theme introduction at Panel meeting → September 2026</p> <p>Fieldwork in 3 schools → details tbc</p> <p>Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → December 2026</p>
<b>Theme 7: Impact of Poverty</b>	<p><b>Reduce the impact of poverty on attainment –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise Members' awareness of the expectation on schools to</li> </ul>	<p>Theme introduction at Panel meeting → December 2026</p> <p>Fieldwork in 3 schools → details tbc</p>

Topic	Work programme Focus	Timeline
	<p>consider how they reduce the impact of poverty on learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how effectively schools reduce this impact, and the support they receive to help achieve this.</li> </ul>	Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → March 2027
<b>Theme 8: NEET</b>	<p><b>Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve member understanding of NEETs</li> <li>Consider how effectively the Local Authority and schools support</li> </ul>	<p>Theme introduction at Panel meeting → March 2027</p> <p>Fieldwork in 3 schools → details tbc</p> <p>Self-evaluation / reflections at Panel meeting → Post local authority elections 2027</p>
<b>Voice of the Learner</b>	Each focus area ensures that Members consider learner experience through learner voice. This is an integral part of the education provision on the Isle of Anglesey and forms a golden thread running through the work of the Panel.	TBC – discussion with Panel members

## PART III – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

### 1. Governance / Panel Membership

- The scrutiny panels have been established to undertake work streams on behalf of the parent scrutiny committees and as such are working groups without decision-making powers
- Panel membership will be subject to political balance principles and rules<sup>4</sup>.

The core membership of the Panel will include:

- Elected members** - 4 Elected Members from both scrutiny committees and based on the political balance formula of the Council
- Portfolio Member for Education** – as an observer, with no vote
- Officers** – Director of Education, Skills and Young People, Scrutiny Manager.

From time to time, the Panel's work will require the attendance of other Elected Members (e.g. members of the Executive) and / or officers from other service areas.

<sup>4</sup> The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the main principles governing political balance of local authorities

## 2. Frequency of Meetings and Quorum

- **Frequency of meetings** – the panel has been established as a standing panel to ensure accountability, oversight and scrutiny of the education system on Anglesey, as summarised in the table above. The panel will meet in accordance with the timeline for the submission of progress reports on education scrutiny to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee as follows:
  - i. 4 hybrid meetings of the Panel each civic year – June, September, December and March
  - ii. Small group thematic fieldwork in schools between each meeting of the Panel in order to scrutinise and monitor impact on learners. Fieldwork to focus on key priority themes aligned to the Council Plan 2023/2028
- **Quorum** – this will not apply to the panel.

## 3. Recording Meetings and Reporting Arrangements

- The panel will be run in the format of a business meeting. The Scrutiny Unit will collate and distribute any papers in preparation for each meeting and provide a list of action points following each meeting
- **Reporting arrangements** - regular reporting by panel members to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

[10/07/2025, 21/08/2025 & 26/08/2025)

## AN INTRODUCTION TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

“Effective public scrutiny committees can be a powerful vehicle for change. It can improve the delivery of services; it can connect the public to decision-makers and politicians; it can improve efficiency.....”

[Centre for Governance and Scrutiny 2008]

### WHAT IS SCRUTINY?

Focus on matters of real concern to citizens of the Isle of Anglesey.

Challenge decision makers to drive forward better performance.

Provide checks and balances for Executive decision making.

### 4 KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Provide a “critical friend” challenge to the Executive.
2. Reflect the voice and concerns of citizens.
3. Be led and owned by Members of the Council.
4. Make an impact on service delivery.

### WHAT SCRUTINY IS NOT.....

Getting involved in minor matters or matters involving individuals.

Dealing with complaints or regulatory matters e.g. planning or licence applications.

Dealing with matters that are still subject to court proceedings.

Political.

A debating Chamber.

Considering matters subject to review by another organisation within or external to the Local Authority.

Opportunity to ask questions of officers on non-agenda items.

Negative.

A place to have a nice look at things.

## WORK OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

### Scrutiny Committees can:

1. Review and scrutinise decisions of the Executive, individual Portfolio Holders or Offices of the Council.
2. Prepare reports or make recommendations.
3. Review any matters referred to it under “Call In” rules and prepare reports and recommendations as required.
4. Review and scrutinise the performance of services.
5. Respond to external organisations whose actions affect the residents of the Island.
6. Require Executive Members and senior officers to attend meetings and to be challenged about matters within their areas of responsibility.
7. Invite expert advisors, other Members of the Council, stakeholders or members of the public to take part in Scrutiny reviews.
8. Refer matters to the Scrutiny Panels (made up of smaller groups of Members).

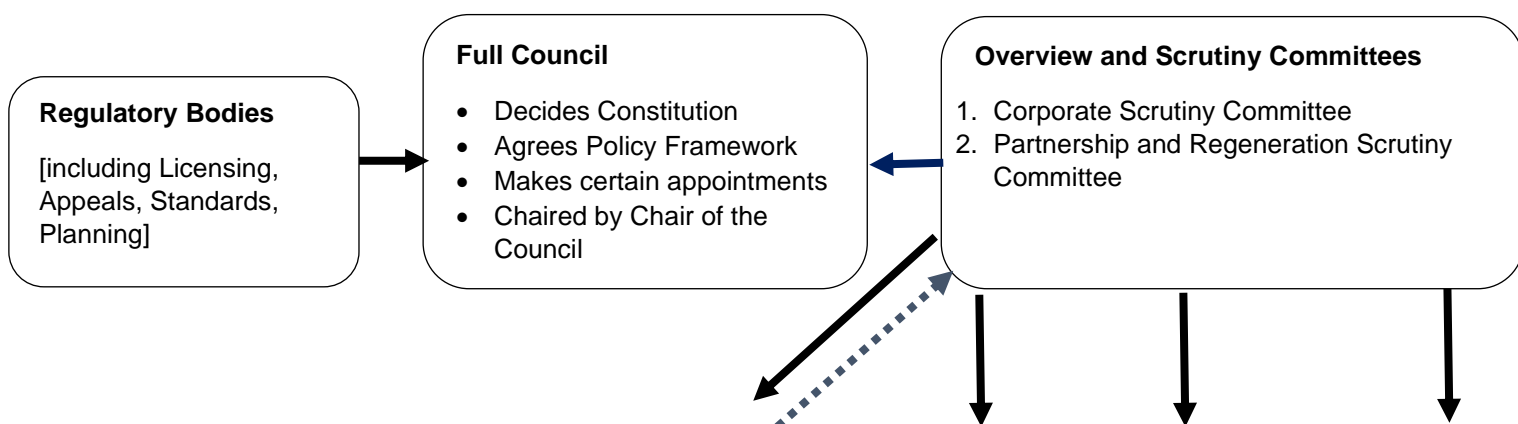
## COUNCIL STRUCTURE

The Council has 35 Councillors in total. 9 Councillors form the Executive, the main decision making body. The Council also has a number of Committees to deal with matters like Licensing, Planning and internal issues such as Governance and Staffing Matters.

The rules governing the way in which Overview and Scrutiny Committees operate including the legislative context can be found in Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution.

There are 2 Overview and Scrutiny Committees involving the majority of our Elected Members.

## SCRUTINY WITHIN THE COUNCIL’S DECISION MAKING PROCESS



**Executive****Leader and Portfolio Holders (9)**

- Proposes policy and budget
- Implements policy framework
- Takes delegated executive decisions as a group or individuals

Social  
Services  
Scrutiny  
Panel

Resources  
Scrutiny  
Panel

Education  
Scrutiny  
Panel



# **SIARTER CRAFFU ADDYSG** ***EDUCATION SCRUTINY CHARTER***

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## **SIARTER CRAFFU SCRUTINY CHARTER**

This Charter is an overarching summary bringing together the Council's commitment and values underpinning Elected Member scrutiny of matters which are of strategic importance to the Local Authority.

### **1. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT**

#### **1.1 Scrutiny**

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)<sup>1</sup> 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.

#### **1.2 Welsh Language**

There is a significant national policy basis relating to the Welsh language that decision makers and those responsible for holding them to account should be aware of. First and foremost is the Welsh Government language strategy namely Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers. The education system is key to creating and nurturing Welsh speakers of the future in order to realise the vision of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. There is a duty on all local authorities<sup>2</sup> to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) setting a strategic direction for planning, delivering and developing Welsh medium teaching in the local area.

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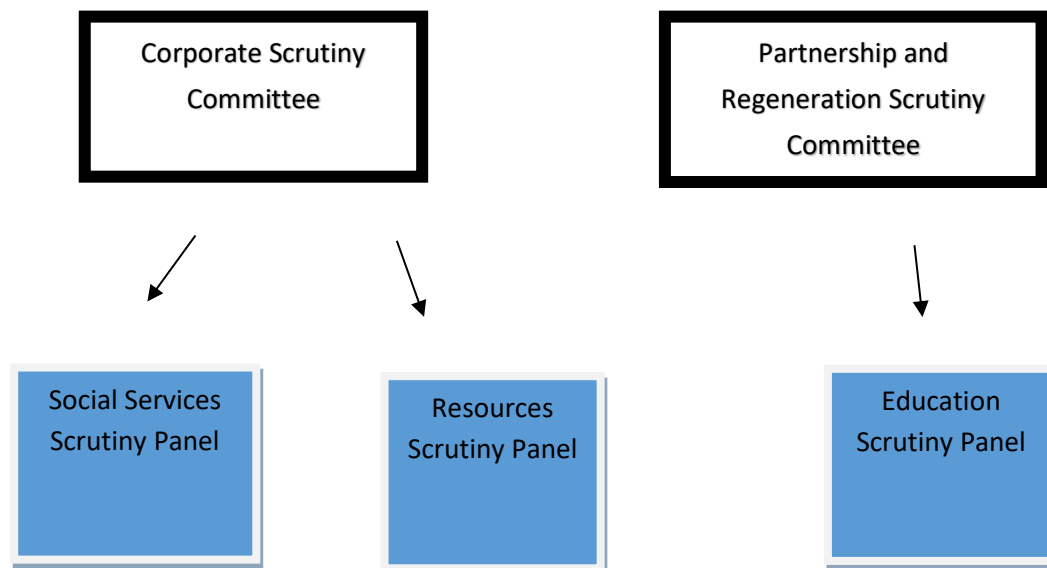
<sup>1</sup> Good Scrutiny Guide: Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (2004)

<sup>2</sup> The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

## 2. BACKGROUND & LOCAL CONTEXT

### 2.1 Scrutiny

Our local Scrutiny structure is made up of two Scrutiny Committees and three Panels:



The role / purpose of Scrutiny in our governance arrangements is provided in **Appendix 1**.

### 2.2 Welsh Language

Alongside our WESP<sup>3</sup>, we have a number of policy commitments to develop the Welsh language through the education system and more widely. The Welsh language and education are priority areas in the Council Plan: 2023-2028. The aim of our strategy to promote the Welsh language and our Modernising Learning Communities and Developing the Welsh Language Strategy is to develop use of the language locally throughout the education system – early years, statutory education, post-16 education, higher / further education and lifelong learning.

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<sup>3</sup> Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032







## OUR VISION FOR EFFECTIVE SCRUTINY

Our vision for delivering effective scrutiny:

### **Vision**





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

### **Our Guiding Principles for Scrutiny on Anglesey**

-  Scrutiny is characterised by an atmosphere of mutual trust, co-operation and shared responsibility for achieving the best outcomes for local communities on the Isle of Anglesey
-  Scrutiny Members are non-political in carrying out their support and challenge roles
-  Scrutiny activity directly broadens the evidence base for decisions and transformational change by providing a view on how proposals are likely to be received by local communities
-  Scrutiny Members help ensure that a strategic, long term approach is taken when major service strategies are being considered by providing constructive challenge in testing assumptions, looking at risk and challenging how resources are prioritised.

### **Our Values**

#### **Scrutiny on the Isle of Anglesey .....**

-  is forward and outward thinking and proactive (rather than inwards and reactive)
-  has a clearly defined and valued role in the Council's governance and improvement arrangements
-  is non-political and incorporates a wide range of evidence and perspectives including those from strategic partners, regulators and the public
-  is led by Elected Members who have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their role effectively

- receives effective support from the Council's Leadership Team who ensures that information provided to Scrutiny is of high quality and provided in a timely and consistent manner
- takes into account concerns expressed at ward level in a non-parochial way when managing the forward work programme
- is well planned, chaired effectively and makes best use of the resources available to it
- is recognised by the Executive and 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 range of internal and external stakeholders



### 3. DELIVERING EFFECTIVE EDUCATION SCRUTINY

#### Scrutiny of education

Education accountability and Member scrutiny of the wider education system is a critically important role and one that requires the Local Authority and its partners to work together effectively. Following changes to how schools operate and with continuous reform on, clarity and understanding about accountability in the school system is essential.

Education is one of our 6 key strategic objectives<sup>4</sup> - ensuring an effective provision for today and for future generations. Isle of Anglesey County Council have therefore reconsidered the question of what the role of Elected Members is in this system. There needs to be clear and structured local oversight and leadership in order to ensure checks and balances outside of individual schools' own governance systems on how the overall education system is

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<sup>4</sup> Council Plan 2023-28



operating at a County level. To this end, the Education Scrutiny Panel has an important contribution to make. Ensuring meaningful and robust scrutiny of education is a key component of the leadership role of Scrutiny Members. Good scrutiny is about adding value and enhancing improvement, accountability and transparency.

Scrutiny of education is therefore also about holding local providers to account, and at a strategic level:

- Looking at / scrutinising how all the components work together eg how local partners co-ordinate activities
- That all efforts are having a positive impact on learner outcomes.

Education scrutiny is much more than adding value to the decisions of the Executive alone. It is about ensuring that a proper scrutiny process forms part of the planning, implementation and follow up on key decisions that have an impact on learners, taxpayers and communities.

### **What we expect to see**

We expect to see political leadership and effective scrutiny by Members who have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the education provision to enable them to discharge their responsibilities effectively:

- ✚ **Standards** – challenge performance in order to raise standards around outcomes
- ✚ **Quality and effectiveness** – an understanding of the breadth and quality of education provision
- ✚ **Leadership** - understanding of the effectiveness of education leadership at all levels in the County.

### **Creating the conditions:**

The following actions and behaviours seek to ensure effective scrutiny of education matters by our Members:

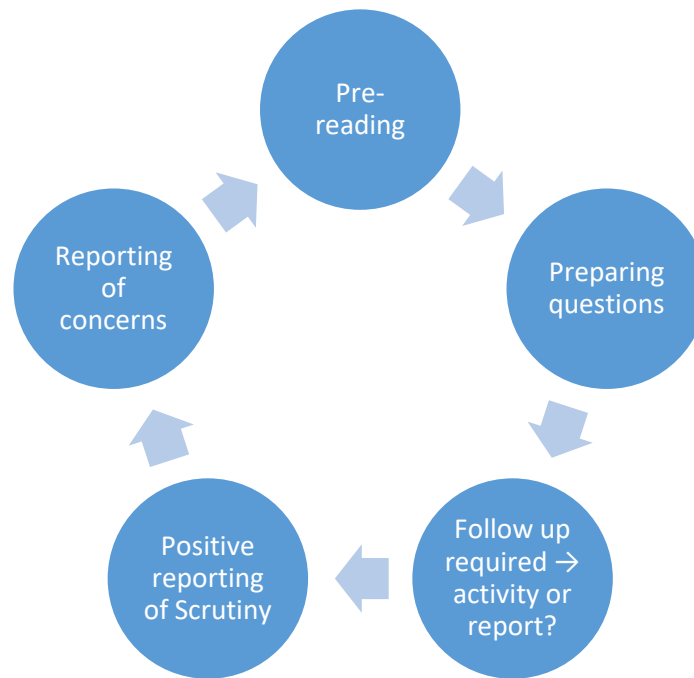
### **Conditions For Effective Education Scrutiny – Elected Member Commitment**

- **sticking to the broader vision for the Education Service**
- **being knowledgeable about the topic and researching before Scrutiny**
- **asking open, probing and supplementary questions**
- **looking in detail at topics**
- **detailed consideration at Committee**
- **be respectful when scrutinising**
- **build respectful, productive relationships between Elected Members and officers**
- **close to schools, ears on the ground to collate informal evidence**
- **ensure ample opportunity for open conversations at Panel level**
- **have robust Committee and Panel forward work programmes to set direction**
- **respect the choice of language of fellow Members with the duty to comply with the Welsh language standards**
- **support the Council's commitment through its Welsh language policy and other plans to develop use of the language**

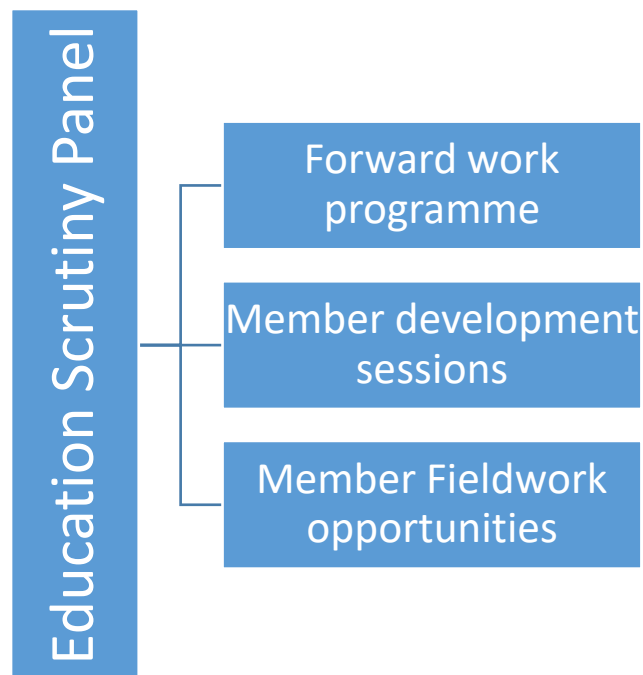
### Elected Members' Pledge

Our Elected Members are committed to:

- i. maintaining effective scrutiny by:



- ii. developing background knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the education provision for children and young people on the Isle of Anglesey by:
  - ✓ further developing our model of working which focuses on a smaller “group” - allowing Members to participate more, develop a level of subject “expertise”, encourage good attendance and team work. Also as a forum to develop a group of Members with the ownership and expertise to lead discussions on Education matters in the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee -

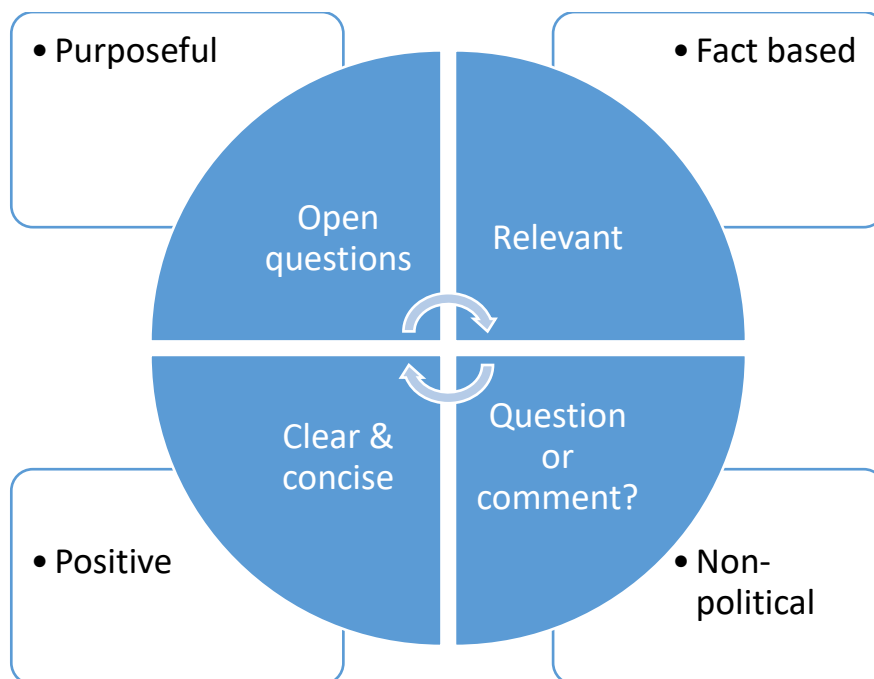


- ✓ building trusting relationships and enable team building amongst Panel members in order to encourage an appetite to further develop Scrutiny work
- ✓ providing periodic opportunities in the calendar for Member self-evaluation to enable reflection and learning
- ✓ fully participating and engaging in fieldwork sessions to individual schools as a means of keeping in touch with every day challenges facing Head Teachers and staff in our schools. This to include reporting back to Panel members on key issues and risks.



- iii. developing an effective questioning strategy as a foundation for all Scrutiny activity:

## Good question?



Further guidance on effective questioning is provided in **Appendix 2**.

iv. effective chairing of Panel and Committee meetings:

Clarity -  
recommendations

Summarise

Remain on topic

Differentiate between  
questions and comments

Inclusive &  
respectful

Participation by all Members

### EXPLANATORY NOTE:

The Education Scrutiny Charter was drawn up by officers of the Isle of Anglesey County Council in 2022/23 and included input from Elected Members namely:

- i. Education Scrutiny Panel
- ii. Parent Scrutiny Committees namely the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
- iii. Scrutiny Chairs / Vice-Chairs Forum
- iv. Political Group Leaders
- v. Leadership Team.

## Good Question? A Guide for Education Scrutiny Members

**Your short factual introduction:** this gets everyone focused on the key issue.  
Use the title of anyone you address for clarity

**Your open question(s):** these questions start with → Who, What, When, Where, How, Why and can't be answered with a yes or no answer. No problem to use two short linked questions

**Your probing question(s):** these questions usually start with phrases like "Given that you have stated that ....." Or "Can you be more specific about...." "Can you explain then why...." "What else is required?" "So that I may understand....." "Describe how this will look in 3 years...." "What difference will this make?"

**Your closed summarising question(s):** these questions can be asked by you or (if you miss it) by the Chairman at the end of your contribution. They aim to achieve absolute clarity of an answer and are aimed at achieving a clear "yes" or "no" answer for the respondent. Feel free to use 2 short linked closed questions. These questions begin with "So you are stating that...."; "You feel therefore that ....." ; "So you are clear that ....." ; "Your target is therefore ....."



# Welsh Language and Equality Steering Group: Terms of reference

**Publication date:** May 2025 (v.1)



# Welsh Language and Equality Steering Group: Terms of reference

## Revision history

Version	Date	Summary of the changes
1	05/2025	Original terms of reference

## Next revision date

Document to be reviewed: May 2026

Review conducted by: Welsh Language and Equality Steering Group

## Further information

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, or have any questions about its contents, please contact us using the details below.

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Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Council Offices  
Llangefni  
LL77 7TW

Phone: 01248 752 520

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## Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This document is also available in Welsh

## Background

1. The Welsh language and equality steering group gives strategic direction on monitoring and promoting the Welsh language and equality in all aspects of the Isle of Anglesey County Council's work. Its work is based on the strategic priorities, values, and overall objectives of the council plan, as well as the legislative principles of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Equality Act 2010.
2. In accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011:
  - the Welsh language should not be treated less favourably than English in Wales; and
  - persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of Welsh if they wish to do so.
3. Under the Equality Act 2010 all forms of discrimination are prohibited in relation to the following nine protected characteristics, also known as protected groups:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
4. In Wales, under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a specific duty to ensure better outcomes for people facing socio-economic disadvantage.

## Responsibilities

5. To promote the Welsh language and equality in all aspects of the council's work and to monitor progress against organisational and legislative objectives.
6. The Welsh language:
  - Contribute to reviews of the Welsh language policy and monitor compliance with the policy and the requirements of Welsh language standards.
  - Contribute to, and receive progress reports on, Welsh language promotion strategy action plans.
  - Contribute to annual reports annual Welsh language reports.
  - Receive progress reports on Welsh language training and workforce language skills.

- Receive progress reports on the work of Fforwm Iaith Ynys Môn (Anglesey's Welsh language forum).
- Contribute to consultation responses that relate to the Welsh language.

## 7. Equality:

- Contribute to reviews of the equality and diversity policy.
  - Contribute to, and receive progress reports on, strategic equality plan action plans.
  - Contribute to annual equality reports.
8. Refer any risks in terms of compliance with statutory requirements to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny for further consideration.
  9. Lead on the implementation of a sustained cycle of improvements with the support of specific officers and services.
  10. Contribute to reviews of the council plan and other key strategies and, where appropriate, offer guidance on priorities relating to the Welsh language and equality.
  11. Recommend any Welsh language and equality related expenditure at a council-wide level such as commissioning random checks, investing in IT software (including internal systems), campaigns, etc.

## Membership

### 12. Membership of the group will be as follows:

- Education and Welsh language portfolio member
- Equality portfolio member
- Representatives from both scrutiny committees (chairs to nominate one member of either committee)
- Chief Executive (chair)
- Head of Profession Human Resources and Transformation
- Head of Democratic Services (vice-chair)
- Policy and Welsh Language Manager
- Policy Officer
- Translation Service Manager
- Digital Product and Delivery Manager
- Community Cohesion and Resettlement Manager
- Community Cohesion Co-ordinator

### 13. Other officers are invited to present information on specific topics on an occasional basis.

## Governance and accountability

14. The group will meet at least three times a year.
15. Any recommendations requiring approval prior to implementation will be referred to the Corporate Management Team. Progress on the group's activities will be reported annually to the Corporate Management Team.
16. The group's activities will be reported annually to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.