

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held in the Committee Room and virtually on Zoom on 18 March, 2026

- PRESENT:** Councillor Jeff Evans (Chair)
Councillor Sonia Williams (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors Geraint Bebb, Celfyn Furlong, John Ifan Jones, R. Llewelyn Jones, Jackie Lewis, Llio A. Owen, Keith Roberts, Dafydd Rhys Thomas, Arfon Wyn.
- Co-opted Member: Mr John Tierney (The Catholic Church)
- Portfolio Members**
- Councillors Gary Pritchard (Leader and Portfolio Member for Economic Development), Carwyn Jones (Portfolio Member for Housing and Community Safety), Alun Roberts (Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism, Maritime and Property), Dafydd Roberts (Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language), Ieuan Williams (Portfolio Member for Highways, Waste and Climate Change).
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Social Services
Head of Housing Services (for item 6)
Head of Highways, Waste and Property (for item 5)
Head of HR, Communications and Customer Experience (EHW) (for items 4 & 5)
Head of Democracy (DS)
Strategic Performance and Projects Manager (GP) (for item 5)
Policy and Welsh Language Manager (FO) (for item 4)
Scrutiny and Committee Services Manager (AH)
Committee Officer (ATH)
Democratic Services Support Officer (Webcasting) (CH)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Alwen Watkin, Neville Evans (Portfolio Member for Adult Services), Dyfed Wyn Jones (Portfolio Member for Children, Young People and Families), Robin Williams (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance, Corporate Business and Customer Experience), Kathryn Seeney (Co-opted Member – Parent Governor Primary Sector), Christina Williams (Co-opted Member – Parent Governor Secondary Sector and ALN), Lynn Ball (Director of Function (Council Business/Monitoring Officer).
- ALSO PRESENT:** Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer, Head of Digital, Performance and Modernisation

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and extended a particular welcome to Councillor Celfyn Furlong recently elected to the Council and a new member of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

1. APOLOGIES

The apologies for absence were presented and were noted.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 18 February 2026 were presented and were confirmed as correct.

4. ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2025

The report of the Head of Democratic Services incorporating the Annual Equality Report 2025 was presented for the Committee's consideration and review.

Councillor Alun Roberts, Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism, Maritime and Property presented the report in his role as champion for equalities and diversity, noting that the report outlines how the Council has met its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, during 2024/25. The report provides an overview of progress made towards delivering the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2024-2028, highlights key achievements and presents workforce equality data for the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. It also details the steps taken to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.

Looking ahead, the Council intends to build on the progress made during 2024/25 by focusing on five priorities – strengthening the use of equality data, increasing focus on measurable outcomes, further developing collaboration with regional community cohesion colleagues, completing monitoring and reporting arrangements and preparing for the new statutory health impact assessment duty coming into force in April 2027. Overall, the report demonstrates that the Council continues to make positive progress in promoting equality, improving inclusion and embedding fair practices across its services. It reaffirms the Council's commitment to providing a fair, accessible and inclusive service and to fostering a positive culture of equality both within the organisation and in its engagement with the public.

In reviewing the report, the committee discussed the following matters –

- The reasons why the Council employs more women than men.

The committee was advised that for social and longstanding reasons, women continue to undertake unpaid caring roles at much higher rates than men, which in turn makes part-time, flexible or fixed roles - the type of jobs typical in local government – more attractive. This means that the Council naturally attracts a higher proportion of female applicants. The Council's workforce therefore reflects wider trends across the sector in Wales. While officers acknowledged that this pattern is the result of longstanding social factors, they noted that the Council recognises the importance of continuing efforts to address the imbalance.

- Members asked whether addressing this trend forms part of the Council's collaborative work with partners.

Members were advised that the relationship with Coleg Llandrillo Menai is particularly important in promoting the employment opportunities available within the Council, as are the structures in place to support young people to join the organisation and progress. The committee was given examples of the Council's wider partnership work to promote equality and inclusion, including collaboration with the regional community cohesion team. This partnership has enabled the Council to identify new groups and organisations to engage with, drawing on the team's knowledge and understanding of local

communities. This has been a notable strength in the reporting period and is an area the council intends to continue developing. Working alongside the community cohesion team, the Council has hosted several staff events involving third sector partners and charities. Because the team is regionally based and funded by Welsh government, the Council has also been able to benefit from additional training opportunities and to bring in new partners, including groups representing women's interests.

- Members noted the gender pay gap between men and women employed by the Council (which at 8.6% is lower than the UK average figure) and sought clarification of its causes and actions being taken to address it.

The committee was assured that the Council pays the same rates for the same work regardless of gender. The Portfolio Member explained that the Council has taken steps to make recruitment more accessible, including offering digital application routes and increasing engagement with potential candidates before posts are advertised. The Council also supports staff progression by facilitating promotion pathways, encouraging applications for advancement and providing development, mentoring and leadership programmes. In recent years, this has included appointing a woman to the post of Chief Executive.

- The committee enquired about the extent to which the Council employs people with disabilities and whether more could be done to encourage applications and promote inclusion.

The committee was advised that inclusion and equality whether relating to the gender pay gap or disability depends on creating the right work environment for all employees. The Council is a welcoming employer and has achieved Level 2 accreditation as a Disability Confident Employer. It is considering the steps required to progress to Level 3 which involves actively championing and leading on disability inclusion across the wider area. Although accreditation is important and attaining Level 3 is desirable, it is equally important that the Council can show that its workforce reflects the communities it serves and is accessible to all parts of society.

A member suggested that every job advertisement should state that applications from people with disabilities are welcome. The committee was advised that the Council will continue to foster a culture that encourages disabled applicants and will explore all opportunities to attract and support employees with disabilities within the workforce.

The Chief Executive emphasised that the Council does employ people with disabilities and has made adjustments to buildings and processes to enable them to carry out their roles effectively and contribute fully in the workplace. A number of employees with disabilities are supported through strong relationships with their managers and the wider support of the Council as an employer. The Council is currently reviewing its joint working agreement with Coleg Llandrillo Menai, and this is an area where it hopes to strengthen collaboration in order to create a clearer pathway into employment for young people generally and for young people with disabilities in particular, helping them access opportunities within the Council.

- Members asked about the availability of job sharing and suggested that, if offered this should be clearly stated in job advertisements.

The committee was assured that the Council welcomes applications for flexible working, including job share arrangements. Managers will consider how best to organise work within their teams, and job sharing is one of the tools available to help create a working environment that supports employees' lives outside the workplace. It was emphasised that the Council aims to use every appropriate mechanism to enable people to build a career within the organisation while maintaining a healthy balance between work and life beyond it.

- Members wanted to know what more could be done to help staff feel comfortable and confident in sharing equality data.

The committee was assured that a deliberate, multi-layered campaign is underway to encourage staff to do so. This includes displaying information in visible areas, using posters and email messages, and reinforcing the message through the council's governance structures e.g. the Policy Portal, HR and annual professional development conversations with managers. The importance of clear and consistent messaging was emphasised. It was noted that the internal communication channel is used to explain why collecting equality data matters - to improve policies, monitor fairness in processes, and ensure the council's workforce reflects the communities it serves. The Council also maintains regular dialogue with regional partners and shares ideas on how to address this challenge. Building trust is essential, especially around why the Council collects this information, how it is used, how it is kept safe and who has access to it.

In response to further questions, the Head of Democracy confirmed that the Equality Policy is expected to be shared with staff via the Policy Portal at the beginning of April. The Chief Executive also confirmed that data on the number of women applying for senior roles within the Council would be reviewed and shared with members outside the committee.

Having reviewed the Annual Equality Report 2025 and received assurance regarding the matters raised, the committee resolved to note the report and to recommend it to the Portfolio Member for publication.

5. MONITORING PERFORMANCE: CORPORATE SCORECARD Q3 2025/26

The report of the Head of Digital, Performance and Modernisation incorporating the Corporate Scorecard for Quarter 3 of the 2025/26 financial year was presented for the Committee's consideration. The scorecard report details the performance of key indicators in delivering the Council's day to day operations which support the broader objectives of the Council Plan.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Housing and Community Safety presented the scorecard report noting that the majority of indicators (86%) with set targets performed well during the quarter, achieving Green or Yellow RAG status. Notable examples of good performance are detailed in section 2.3 of the report. Eight indicators are currently rated Red or Amber against their targets – these, and the associated mitigation measures are detailed in section 2.2 of the report and relate to Social Care and Wellbeing (re-referrals within Children's Services), Housing Services (re-letting void properties and delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants), the Economy (the total number of customers with mooring contacts and the percentage of high risk businesses subject to planned inspections that were inspected for compliance with food hygiene legislation), Climate Change (specifically waste recycling), and Whole Council Health (timeliness of responses to FOI requests). He confirmed that all these areas are being monitored by the Leadership Team.

In reviewing the corporate scorecard for the third quarter, the committee raised the following matters -

- The committee wanted to know what more could be done to increase the percentage of visits to the Welsh language interface of the Council's main website.

Members were advised that the Welsh Language forum has been discussing ways to make forms, documentation and consultations easier and more accessible through the medium of Welsh. The performance indicator is also monitored by the Welsh Language Steering Group. Although there has been a slight improvement, further consideration will be given to additional actions when the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy is reviewed at the end of the year. The Council would like to see a higher percentage of users accessing the Welsh language interface, particularly given that Anglesey has one of the

highest densities of Welsh speakers. One of the challenges is encouraging residents to feel confident that their standard of Welsh is good enough to use the Welsh language version of the site.

- Members noted a decline in the Q3 performance in Climate Change PI 02 – the percentage of domestic waste reused, recycled or composted when compared with the Q3 performance over the past two years. Members acknowledged that dry weather earlier in the year had reduced the amount of green waste collected, and they queried whether the target for Q3 should be adjusted to reflect this. Members also asked whether the Council had engaged with other authorities that have successfully met Welsh Government's 70% recycling target.

The committee was advised that the Council does engage with other councils through various forums and organisations, including the WLGA and the Regional Partnership Board. The Council has identified that its food waste recycling rate at 52kg per household is significantly lower than that of councils achieving the 70% target which are averaging around 126kg per household. This remains a key challenge. The Council will analyse feedback from the public consultation to identify lessons, particularly around increasing food waste recycling. The communications team continues to promote recycling messages and the Council participates in a national recycling campaign – *Be Mighty. Recycle*. It was suggested that more direct engagement, including visits, may be needed to raise awareness and educate residents. The message may be that if residents wish to avoid a move to four weekly waste collections, recycling levels including food waste, must increase.

In response to a question regarding the decline in recycling within Council buildings - and the importance of the Council setting an example if it expects residents to improve their own recycling - it was confirmed that an action plan has been developed to improve performance. Measures include strengthened communication, recycling champions within departments, benchmarking activity and regular progress tracking.

- Members asked when it was likely that the council would meet the 51 day target for re-letting void properties under Housing PI 03.

They were advised that the trend is improving and that, for units processed since April, 2026, the average void time stands at 57.8 days. Around 270 units are managed each year, representing a significant workload. It was also noted that access to a void property can sometimes be delayed, for example when a tenant has died. Capacity within the service has been increased, and the Portfolio Member for Housing continues to meet regularly with the Voids team to monitor progress.

The Head of Housing Services, responding to concerns about Plas Alltran remaining vacant and showing signs of deterioration six months after its redevelopment as social housing for care leavers, provided a brief update on the situation. He noted that the property is still within the defect liability period attached to the refurbishment contract, and discussions with the contractor are underway to address outstanding matters. As the building is listed, CADW's approval is required before any additional works can be undertaken. He advised that work is expected to commence in the coming weeks.

- With regard to Economy PI 07 – the percentage of high risk businesses subject to planned inspections that were inspected to ensure compliance with food hygiene legislation, members noted that the 2026/27 budget includes an additional allocation for food safety inspections. Members asked how this funding would be used.

They were advised that that investment will strengthen capacity and resilience, enabling the service to address the existing inspections backlog while maintaining current inspection levels so that no new backlog develops. Priority will be given to high risk businesses, particularly those handling high risk food products. The service has also been managing the introduction of new licensing regulations for special procedures

which has required capacity to be redirected. During the period, 34 practitioner licences were issued, and the team also responded to two health and safety incidents. The aim is to clear the backlog by the end of quarter 4.

- Members queried whether increased capacity would lead to improved performance for Housing PIs 04 and 05 which relate to the delivery of disabled facilities grants both up to and over £10k.

Members were advised that the targets will not be met by the end of the financial year, as the budget for the year has been fully allocated, resulting in delays to new approvals.

- The Director of Social Services explained in relation to Social Care and Wellbeing PI 08 - the percentage of referrals of children that are re-referrals within 12 months, which was rated Red for the quarter - that cases previously closed following intervention can be re-referred for a variety of reasons. The service intends to carry out a detailed examination of these cases and work directly with the families involved to understand what aspects of the initial intervention could be improved. The position is being monitored and the data for quarter 4 so far does not indicate that the trend is continuing.
- With regard to questions about the Economy - particularly business units let and initiatives to support people into work - the committee was advised that an update on Freeport activity was presented to the Partnerships and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee the previous day. The Council has been particularly successful in letting business units with performance above target and has also secured NWEAB Growth Deal funding for business units in the north of the island. The Council works with partners in the third sector such as Môn CF to support people back into work or help them start new businesses.

The committee welcomed the performance of the Council's services overall and expressed particular appreciation for the work of Housing Services, recognising their continued efforts to improve outcomes. Members also commended the Food Inspection Team for their support, advice and responsiveness despite a demanding workload.

Having reviewed the Corporate Scorecard for Q3 2025/26 and having regard to the responses to the issues raised, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee resolved -

- **To note the Corporate Scorecard report for Q3 2025/26 including the areas which the Leadership Team is exploring and investigating to manage and secure further improvements into the future. These were in relation to Social Care and Wellbeing (re-referrals of children within a 12 month period); Housing (re-letting of void properties and delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants) Economy (number of annual mooring contracts and inspection of high risk business for compliance with food hygiene legislation), Climate Change (Domestic Waste recycling) and Whole Council Health (responses to FOI requests within timescale).**
- **To recommend the scorecard report and mitigating measures outlined therein to the Executive.**

6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2026-2056

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2026-2056 was presented for the committee's consideration.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Housing and Community Safety presented the report noting that the HRA Business Plan sets out the Council's long term strategy for maintaining, improving and expanding its council housing stock while ensuring the Housing Revenue Account remains financially sustainable. The plan is required to secure Welsh Government's Major Repairs Allowance of approximately £2.7m for 2026/27. Through the HRA, the Council manages and owns 4,095 properties and 581 garages across the Island. During the period of the Business Plan, the housing stock will grow by more than 25%, to

more than 5,000 properties to meet the increasing demand for social housing with over 950 people currently on the waiting list. The Business Plan includes a £16m capital programme for 2026/27 covering WHQS works, maintenance, adaptations, and energy efficient measures alongside £15.5m for new developments including Extra Care Housing in Menai Bridge.

The Head of Housing Services outlined the pressures associated with achieving WHQS 2023, decarbonising existing homes and meeting local housing demand while keeping rents affordable. He noted that although the HRA Business Plan remains viable, careful management is essential given the planned £57m of borrowing over the 5 year capital programme to 2030/31.

In scrutinising the HRA Business Plan, the committee raised the following points –

- The committee sought assurance that the Council's partnership with housing associations in developing new social housing would not result in overdevelopment that could undermine the character and balance of communities and villages.

The committee was advised that the Council manages its own housing stock and that housing association partners allocate homes using the Council's housing list. The Council has carried out a local housing needs assessment which provides the baseline for identifying what types of housing are required and where. When a development opportunity arises, the Council considers whether it meets an identified need. It also draws on local intelligence, including waiting list data that shows how many individuals require housing, the type of accommodation they need and preferred locations.

- The committee enquired whether Housing Services still face a challenge in accessing properties to undertake necessary maintenance and/or improvement works to enable them to meet targets.

The committee was advised that under tenant choice, the Council as landlord respects the wishes of tenants who decline improvements because they are satisfied with their homes as they are. In those circumstances the service can only make its desired improvements when the property becomes vacant and is re-let. However, the Council must still carry out mandatory annual checks, such as boiler servicing. If a tenant refuses access, the Council can use legal powers to gain entry in order to meet its statutory obligations.

- Members enquired about rent affordability and the help available for tenants facing financial difficulties.

They were informed that the Housing Service's Financial Inclusion Team helps tenants in hardship and can signpost them to additional sources of support. The J. E. O'Toole Centre also offers specialist advice and is available to all Anglesey residents. Similar support arrangements are in place within housing associations. The Council uses the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Living Rent methodology to assess rent affordability for its tenants and this confirms that current rent levels are affordable. Approximately 74% of rent collected is paid through the benefits system, either fully or partially. Rental income is essential to the HRA, as it provides the core funding required to maintain, manage and invest in the Council's housing stock.

- The committee asked about improving older homes within the housing stock, particularly the transition of oil-fuelled properties into more energy efficient homes.

Members were advised that a housing stock condition survey was completed two to three years ago, and its findings now form the baseline for identifying required maintenance and improvements, including upgrades to kitchens, bathrooms and windows in line with those components' lifecycle. The Council has also developed targeted energy pathways setting out what each housing unit needs to reach SAP 75 – the standard assessment procedure used to measure home energy performance - and identifying any homes unlikely to achieve this level. While the Business Plan reflects the Council's commitment to maintaining and improving its housing stock, it does not yet include full decarbonisation costs as these remain uncertain. Even so the Council is further ahead in this area than many other landlords. Among the Council's 4000+ homes, around 209 still rely on oil burning boilers and will require specific attention to convert them to more energy efficient systems.

- Members enquired about tenant satisfaction and the methods used to engage with tenants.

They were informed that the Council is required to carry out a STAR survey every two years to assess how tenants feel about their homes and the services provided by the Council as landlord. The results are collated nationally and benchmarked against other social landlords, with the Council consistently performing in the upper quartile. More than 1,100 tenants responded to the most recent survey with 84% stating they were satisfied with the overall service, 83% were satisfied with their homes, 81% felt their rent provided value for money, and 88% were satisfied with the safety of their homes. The Council also engages tenants through its tenant participation team, a tenants' forum and an outreach bus is used to visit communities and gather feedback.

Having reviewed the documentation and received assurance regarding the matters raised, the committee resolved to recommend the Housing Revenue Business Plan 2026-2056 for the Executive's approval.

7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Scrutiny Manager incorporating the Committee's Forward Work Programme for 2026/27 was presented for consideration.

In response to a specific request and with the consent of the Chair as these were not matters on the agenda, the Chief Executive provided an update on the Holyhead Gateway project, which aims to expand Holyhead Port and forms part of the North Wales Growth Deal. He also outlined the situation regarding the redevelopment of the former Anglesey Aluminium site and reported on ongoing work to address issues relating to the provision of parking facilities for lorries traveling to Ireland through Holyhead Port.

It was resolved to agree the current version of the Forward Work Programme for 2026/27.

**Councillor Jeff Evans
Chair**