

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Committee:	Full Council
Date:	24.09.26
Title of report:	Annual Scrutiny Report 2025 / 2026
Purpose of report:	To report on the work of the Scrutiny Committees and Panels during 2025 / 2026 and identify future work priorities
Author:	Angharad Fflur Hughes, Scrutiny and Committees Service Manager

1. Background

The Scrutiny Committees must report annually to full Council on the work that has been undertaken during the previous civic year and the intended work programme for the following year.

2. Subject matter

This report identifies the work undertaken by the two Scrutiny Committees and the three Panels during 2025/26, including the key achievements and the impact the work has had on decision making and service improvement. The report identifies how the chairs of both scrutiny committees led on the work of developing forward work programmes. During 2025/26 the forward work programmes were submitted to regular meetings of the Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice- chairs Forum and for approval at every meeting of the scrutiny committees. In November 2025, a Performance Panel Assessment was undertaken, resulting in recommendations to strengthen the Council's scrutiny arrangements. In response, a new action plan was developed to address these recommendations and this action plan is reflected in this report as part of the work programme for 2026/27.

3. Recommendation

Full Council is requested to:

1. Approve the Scrutiny and Overview Annual Report for 2025/26

2. Note the continued progress made in implementing our Scrutiny journey and the impact this is having on practice
3. Appoint the chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee as the Scrutiny Champion for the period May 2026 to May 2027

Appendix: Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2025/26

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Scrutiny Annual Report 2025/2026



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Introduction

Scrutiny is an essential role in the decision making processes within Isle of Anglesey County Council, it holds the Executive to account for their decisions, policies and the performance of Council Services.

The role of Scrutiny is to provide constructive challenge and support improvement across services and although scrutiny cannot take decisions it can make recommendations and publish findings.

This report gives an overview of the work carried out by the two Scrutiny Committees and the three Scrutiny Panels for the last civic year, May 2025 to April 2026.

The report also outlines how members have been supported to allow them to effectively scrutinise, how other stakeholders including citizens and partnerships have been involved and what the priorities are for future work programmes.

“Performance is well scrutinised in committees and panels.”

— Care Inspectorate for Wales Report
January 2026



“The Council works well, there is strong scrutiny...”

The Chair of the Council - Councillor Non Dafydd
Full Council Meeting,
May 2026

Foreword from the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee



**Councillor
Jeff Evans,
Chair,
Corporate
Scrutiny
Committee**

This is my first year as the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, I have enjoyed the opportunity and the challenge that comes with this role and I am pleased to present this foreword for the 2025/26 Annual Scrutiny Report.

Over the past year, the Committee has continued to play an important role in supporting transparent, accountable and effective decision-making across the Council. Through constructive challenge and evidence-based scrutiny, Members have sought assurance that services are performing well, that risks are being managed, and that improvement activity is focused on delivering positive outcomes for the residents and communities of Anglesey.

During 2025/26, the Committee considered a wide range of matters linked to the Council's strategic priorities, including corporate performance, financial planning, social services, housing, governance, safeguarding, and the delivery of key corporate plans. Members have given particular attention to areas where performance required further improvement, seeking clarity on the actions being taken, the timescales for delivery and the impact on residents.

The Committee has also continued to strengthen its approach to forward work programming, ensuring that scrutiny is timely, focused and aligned with the Council Plan. This has helped Members to concentrate on the areas where scrutiny can add most value, whether by providing assurance, contributing to policy development, or making recommendations to the Executive.

Foreword from the Corporate Scrutiny Committees Chair

I would like to thank my vice chair during 25/26 Councillor Sonia Williams and congratulations to Councillor Geraint Bebb on his appointment as vice chair for 26/27 and also like to thank all Members of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, and Resources and Social Service Panels for their commitment, preparation and thoughtful contributions throughout the year. I am also grateful to Portfolio Holders, officers, partners and invited contributors for attending meetings, presenting information and responding openly to Members' questions.

Looking ahead, effective scrutiny will remain essential as the Council continues to respond to financial pressures, increasing demand for services and the need to deliver continuous improvement. The Corporate Scrutiny Committee will continue to provide constructive challenge, support good governance and help ensure that decisions are informed by evidence, performance information and the needs of our communities.

Foreword from the Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee



**Councillor
Dylan Rees,
Chair,
Partnership
and
Regeneration
Scrutiny
Committee**

Before introducing this report, I would like to pay a special tribute to Councillor Ken Taylor, a loyal and highly respected Member of our Committee. Throughout his time with us, Councillor Taylor gave his utmost to our work, approaching his role with a deep sense of commitment, an unwavering sense of responsibility along with his warmth and good humour. His contribution will be greatly missed.

I believe that effective scrutiny is a cornerstone of the Council's corporate governance arrangements. It plays a vital role in holding decision-makers to account, providing constructive challenge, and ensuring that the views of residents and communities are reflected in the decision-making process.

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 added value in terms of fulfilling the Council Plan, maintaining standards of our public services and scrutinizing the work of our Key External Partners. The Committee has made fair, robust recommendations to the Executive on a number of key topics and service areas during this period.

Over the past 12 months, the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the work of several key partners and strategic areas linked to the Council Plan 2023–2028. Key partners invited included North Wales Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Bangor University, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust, as well as representatives linked to economic development and Prosperity Fund activity.

Members considered priorities, partnership working, future opportunities, risks and challenges across these areas. They also provided constructive challenge on health and emergency care, post-16 education, innovation projects, economic development programmes, the Anglesey Freeport and changes to Local Growth Funding arrangements. Concerns about funding changes and governance arrangements led to correspondence being sent to both UK and Welsh Governments seeking reconsideration and greater clarity.

Foreword from the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committees Chair

The Committee also scrutinised key strategic plans supporting the Council Plan, particularly in relation to the Welsh language and education. This included consideration of the Welsh Standards Annual Report, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, school improvement guidance, the Education Digital Strategic Plan and the Education Scrutiny Panel Progress Report. Overall, the scrutiny work focused on strengthening partnership accountability, supporting strategic objectives and improving outcomes for Anglesey residents.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the Education Scrutiny Panel for their commitment, collaboration and dedicated service over the past year. Their valuable contributions, insight and constructive challenge have been critical in advancing the work of the Committee, supporting the delivery of the Council Plan and helping to maintain high-quality public services for the residents of Anglesey.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my Vice-Chair, Councillor Gwilym Owen Jones, for his continued support and valued contribution throughout my final year as Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. It has been a privilege to work alongside him and Committee members in strengthening the scrutiny function and promoting positive outcomes for the residents of Anglesey.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Councillor Sonia Williams on her election as the new Chair of the Partnerships and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. I am fully confident that her chairing skills will ensure that the Committee continues to provide added value to the scrutiny process.

How to get involved

Participating in Scrutiny gives people the opportunity to voice their opinions and get involved in the Council's decision making processes. Participation can also support the shaping of policies and services, improves transparency and trust and promotes accountability.

These are some of the ways that scrutiny engages with the stakeholders and the public;



- Having a specific web page called "Getting involved with Scrutiny" which identifies how the public can get involved
- Having a Protocol for Public Speaking in Scrutiny Committees
- Publishing each Committee's forward work programme on the Council's website to inform the public of our forthcoming work
- Inviting key partners to contribute at public meetings in order to broaden our understanding, inform discussions in the Council and add value to our partnership working locally
- Having co-optees on our Scrutiny Committees representing the Church in Wales, Catholic Diocese and parent governors
- Questioning strategies which include questions of public interest
- Site visits to local services to observe frontline service delivery
- Ensuring transparency by webcasting our Committee meetings for public viewing
- Publicising our Committee meetings on social media in order to encourage engagement
- Having a specific Scrutiny contact point via the Council's Customer Relationship Management System which provides the public with an accessible point of contact specifically related to the democratic process



Scrutiny Behind the Scenes

The Scrutiny team sits within the Democratic Services and is a small team consisting of two officers. In October 2025 there was a change in the team due to the Scrutiny Manager retiring, this led to the Scrutiny officer undertaking additional responsibilities until a new Scrutiny Manager was appointed in February 2026.

Some of the key achievements from 2025/2026 include;

- Scrutiny structures and processes were reviewed and recommendations made from both an external consultant and a Panel Performance Assessment. An improvement plan has been put in place to respond to these recommendations, and this plan is being monitored through the chair and vice chair forum meetings.
- Work is ongoing to raise awareness of the forward work plan and scrutiny structures and processes, this work includes presentations to all leadership and management teams within the authority.
- New members and new chairs have been supported in their new roles. This support has included face to face meetings and support to identify any training needs, and arrangements made to provide any identified training needs.
- Processes for tracking and monitoring actions raised in committees and panels have been reviewed, and improvements have been made to ensure that any actions raised are tracked and completed and reported back to the relevant committee or panel.
- Training sessions on questioning strategies were made available to all scrutiny committee members.
- Pre-committee meetings are arranged prior to every committee meeting to support members with the planning and to support effective scrutiny within the committees.
- Meetings are held with the Chairs prior to the committee meetings to brief the chair on the agenda and the items to be presented and to discuss any support needed prior to and during the committee meetings.
- Officers, Chairs and Vice Chairs meet bi-monthly to review forward work plans, to communicate any relevant information and to work in partnerships to review and improve scrutiny structures and processes.

Scrutiny in Numbers

17 Committee Meetings held

Chair and Vice-Chair
Forum Meetings

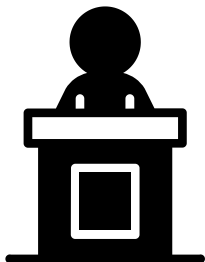


Corporate

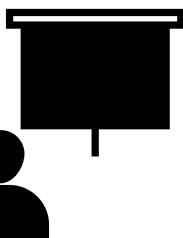
8

Partnership and
Regeneration

9



5



Briefing Sessions

20



Letters sent on behalf of
Committees to UK and Welsh
Government

3

Actions raised and Actioned

Partnership and
Regeneration



11

Corporate



7

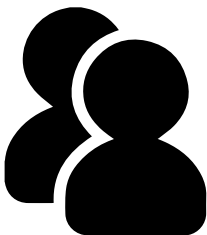
Committee Attendance

Officers

84

Other Members

86



Reports Presented

Partnership and
Regeneration



15

Corporate



24

External Stakeholders

18



Scrutiny Webcasting Views in Numbers

Scrutiny Committee meetings are webcasted to support openness, accountability and public engagment in decision-making.

Webcasting enables residents and stakeholders to observe discussions, understand how decisions are reviewed and challenged, and access proceedings more conveniently, helping to strengthen transparency and trust in local governance.

The information below brings together data from the two Scrutiny Committee meetings that were webcasted during 2025–2026. It presents the relevant details in one place, providing a clear overview of the data and figures for ease of reference and review.



**17 hybrid
meetings held**



**Hours of
webcasting
views = 487**



**77 Average
views per
webcast meetings**

Impact of Scrutiny

Scrutiny creates impact by monitoring and challenging service performance, improvement and decision making, it raises awareness of partnership working and what is working well. Scrutiny can also strengthen accountability, allows more peoples voices to be heard and ensures that the work of the Council is open and transparent to the public. Below are some specific examples of how Scrutiny has had an impact in 2025/26;

Theme	Action	Impact
Partnership Working	Following the Local Health Board's annual attendance at the Scrutiny Committee in 2024, Elected Members identified the need for more regular dialogue on local health care provision. As a result, briefing and forum-style drop-in sessions were arranged in November 2025, giving Members the opportunity to raise experiences, concerns and questions directly with Health Board representatives.	The sessions strengthened partnership working between the Authority and the Local Health Board, improved communication on local health matters, and provided a more responsive way for Members to raise issues affecting residents. Positive feedback from the sessions has led to a commitment to hold them annually, with consideration being given to introducing similar arrangements with other key partners.
Service Improvement	During school visits, Members noted inconsistencies in the transition opportunities offered across primary and secondary schools. This was recorded as an action and communicated to the Learning Service.	As a result, the Service Manager responsible for this area has begun collating information from all schools. This work will be used to introduce common transition principles, supporting greater consistency in the transition experience for learners across schools.
Strengthening Accountability	The Education and the Social Services Scrutiny Panels have worked in partnership to scrutinise Corporate Safeguarding reports before they are presented to the Scrutiny Committee. The Panels have met twice as part of this approach and have agreed to continue working in partnership.	This joint approach has strengthened accountability by enabling Members from both Panels to consider safeguarding matters collectively, share insight across service areas, and provide more robust challenge before reports are presented to the Scrutiny Committee. 12

Overview of Corporate Scrutiny Committee



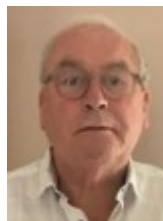
Chair, Councillor Jeff Evans



Vice Chair, Councillor Sonia Williams



Members of the Committee; Councillors Llio Angharad Jones, Dafydd Rhys Thomas, John Ifan Jones, Arfon Wyn, Keith Roberts, Alwen Watkin, Geraint Bebb, Robert Llewelyn Jones, Jackie Lewis, Aled Morris Jones (first part of the year), Celfyn Furlong (second part of the year)



Co-opted Members of the Committee; Christina Williams, Kathryn Seeney, John Tierney, Wenda Owen

The Purpose of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee is to;

- Scrutinise the performance / delivery of all services,
- Ensure the Council achieves its corporate and service objectives
- Scrutinise the Corporate Business Plan, Annual Budget, Budget and Policy Framework, Performance Management Framework, Corporate Policies or their successor plans and policies.

Corporate Scrutiny Committee Key Achievements 2025/26

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee has provided constructive challenge, sought assurance and influenced improvement across key Council priorities during the year;

Education and Young People: Members provided robust challenge on the future of post-16 education provision and the proposal for a new secondary school building in the Holyhead area, seeking assurance on engagement, Welsh language considerations, affordability, risks, compliance with the School Organisation Code and the impact on learners and communities.

Performance Improvement: The Committee scrutinised the Corporate Scorecard and highlighted key areas requiring improvement, including swimming lesson participation, housing voids, Disabled Facilities Grants, NEET figures, school exclusions, waste recycling, fleet emissions and FOI performance.

Strategic Planning: The Committee reviewed and endorsed key strategic documents, including the Annual Delivery Document 2025/26, the Self-Assessment and Performance (Wellbeing) Report 2024/25, the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2026–2056 and the initial draft Revenue Budget proposals for 2026/27.

Housing: The Committee welcomed progress on housing voids and allocations, scrutinised the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, and sought assurance on rent affordability, maintenance access, housing

stock improvements, energy efficiency and the impact of new social housing developments on communities.

Net Zero Strategic Plan 2026-2031:

Members scrutinised the plan, raising important questions about value for money, emissions data, renewable technology, solar panel and battery recycling, electric vehicle charging, education, and the scale of investment required to upgrade housing stock.

Regional Emergency planning Service: The Committee reviewed the Regional Emergency Planning Service Annual Report and challenged issues relating to bridge closures, Holyhead Port disruption, equality considerations in emergencies, and cyber security resilience.

Budget Challenge: Members examined the 2026/27 draft revenue budget proposals, questioning Council Tax premiums, grant funding, additional learning needs funding, inflationary pressures, reserves, service pressures, cyber security investment, public conveniences, member allowances and the potential need for a crematorium facility on the Island.

Secured follow-up and future scrutiny: The Committee requested further updates and reports, including progress on flood management schemes, annual monitoring of the Smallholdings Management Strategic Plan, and the Towards Net Zero Strategic Plan.

Overview of Partnership and Regeneration Committee



Chair, Councillor Dylan Rees



Vice Chair, Councillor Gwilym Jones



Members of the Committee; Councillors Non Dafydd, Douglas Fowle, John Ifan Jones, Euryr Morris, Pip O'Neill, Derek Owen, Margaret Roberts, Sonia Williams, Liz Wood, Ken Taylor



Co-opted Members of the Committee; Christina Williams, Kathryn Seeney, John Tierney, Wenda Owen

The Purpose of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is to;

- Ensure the interests of the citizens of the Isle of Anglesey are promoted.
- Ensure the Council's priorities and resources are most beneficially reflected, in the partnerships, joint working, collaboration and external agency arrangements.
- The remit of the Committee will extend to local, regional and national arrangements and will include (but will not be limited to) those areas in which the Council has a statutory duty such as crime and disorder matters.

Key Achievements of Partnership and Regeneration Committee 2025/2026

The Partnership and Regeneration Committee has provided constructive challenge, sought assurance and influenced improvement across key Council priorities during the year;

Economic Development: items were discussed as part of the Committee's commitment to scrutinise the work made by the department which included: Prosperity Fund Enterprise, UK Government Funded Programme and the Anglesey Freeport. Members raised concerns regarding the recent changes to the Local Growth Funding arrangements, including the impact of revisions to grants on revenue-funded posts and services on Anglesey, and the lack of clarity around the Corporate Joint Committee's future decision-making role. These concerns led to letters being sent to both the UK and Welsh Governments, requesting that the issues be reconsidered and seeking greater clarity on the implications of the proposed arrangements.

Council Plan: 2023-2028: Members scrutinised a number of key strategic plans which will enable the Local Authority to realise the 6 key strategic objectives of the Council Plan for 2023-2028:

Welsh Language: The Committee looked at the Welsh language which is one of the six strategic objectives of the Council Plan for 2023-2028. It is an integral part of our identity, culture and heritage and we have a responsibility to ensure that it continues to develop and thrive. The areas in particular which were scrutinised by Members include the following

- Welsh Standards Annual Report: 2024/25
- Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2024/25 - Measuring Progress.

Education: As a Council, we are committed to supporting children and young people to be: ambitious and capable learners ready to learn and play a full part in both life and work. The areas scrutinised by the committee included:

- School improvement guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability
- Education Digital Strategic Plan.
- Education Scrutiny Panel Progress Report.
- ALN and Inclusion Service

The **external partners** who have appeared before the Committee during 2025/2026 include:

North Wales Police and North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner:

Members scrutinised the priorities of the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, along with the collaboration between the two, noting future working opportunities along with risks and challenges.

Grwp Llandrillo Menai & Bangor University:

Members invited these key partners to appear before the Committee for the first time to present and be scrutinised on the work of the University and College, including their collaborative arrangements with the Council in delivering innovative projects on the Island, as well as opportunities for post-16 learning and further education.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Welsh Ambulance University Trust:

Members scrutinised progress against Audit Wales' 2024 report, Urgent and Emergency Care: Flow Out of Hospital in the North Wales Region, during a joint discussion with key partners. Members provided constructive challenge and explored key issues with a shared commitment to improving health outcomes, promoting independence, and enhancing the wellbeing of Anglesey residents.

Scrutiny Panels

There are three panels supporting the work of the Scrutiny Committees, these panels meet less frequently than the Committees and a lot of the work carried out by the panels happens out in the community. All the members who sit on the panels must also be a member of one of the Scrutiny Committees. Each panel is supported by robust governance arrangements which ensure a clear focus, remit and work programme and there are reporting and escalation processes in place to ensure that the work of scrutiny panels is reported regularly to the two Parent Committees.

Resource Panel

The Resource Panel has 6 members and meets 6 times a year, it is responsible for scrutinising the Council budget. Having a separate panel ensures that members are given sufficient time to complete detailed scrutiny on the the Council spend.

Education Panel

The Education Panel has 8 members and meets 4 times a year, they have a 2 year forward work programme and during 2025/2026 the panel scrutinised various themes both in the committee room and by visiting a selection of primary and secondary schools. The Panel also scrutinise schools causing concern and any schools placed in Estyn Category. During the year visits were arranged to 8 schools and the following themes were scrutinised;

- Effective Transitioning between Phases
- Improving Attendance
- Curriculum for Wales - Experiences that are related to the working world

Social Services Panel

The Social Services Panel has 8 members and meets 2 times a year, they have a 2 year forward work programme and during 2025/2026 the panel scrutinised various themes both in the committee room and by visiting existing services and new provision in the community. Visits were made to services to scrutinise the following;

- Anglesey Mental Wellbeing Team
- Supported housing for individuals with mental health needs
- Community support for individuals with mental health needs
- Learning Disability Day Opportunities
- Respite services for children with disabilities

Looking Ahead - Priorities and Recommendations for 2026/ 2027

For 2026/2027 we will continue to build on the work that has been undertaken during 2025/2026 and our priorities for 2026/2027 are;

- Continue to programme work in advance by keeping the forward work programme under review at each meeting, ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are given the opportunity to suggest relevant topics for scrutiny. We will also continue to share the programme as widely as possible to raise awareness of the content.
- We will deliver the new improvement plan and ensure that recommendations are implemented including the recommendation from the Performance Panel Assessment looking at how we can ensure that the scrutiny structure effectively scrutinises economic development priorities.
- With new Members likely to join the Council following the May 2027 elections, a comprehensive induction, training and development plan will need to be established. This plan should be developed in partnership with officers, with the views and experiences of current Members playing a crucial role in ensuring that it is focused, relevant and effective in meeting its aims.
- Continue working closely with ADSO (The Association for Democratic Services) and collect and share best practices across other authorities, and also implement any findings and improvements identified as a result of the work carried out as part of the Participation working group.
- Review and update the website ensuring that all information is current and relevant and can be easily found.
- Continue to work in partnership with our stakeholders to ensure the forward work programme for briefing sessions contains sessions that are relevant and of interest to the members and the public.
- Following the drop in sessions that were held with the Health board in November 2025 and the positive feedback received from both the members and officers from the health board, we will look to expand this type of session to other partnerships.