

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
REPORT TO :	County Council
DATE:	14 May 2015
TITLE OF REPORT:	Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committees- 2014/2015
REPORT BY:	Councillor Meirion Jones (Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee) and Councillor Derlwyn Hughes (Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee).
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	To report on the work of the two Scrutiny Committees in 2014/2015
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1.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1.1 To note and approve the Scrutiny Committees Annual Report 2014-2015.
- 1.2 To appoint the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee as the “Scrutiny Champion” from May 2015 to May 2016 and the Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee from May 2016 to May 2017. Thereafter the role of the “ Scrutiny Champion” to alternate between the two Scrutiny Committee Chairs.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Annual Report 2014-2015 encompasses the work undertaken by the two Scrutiny Committees between the Council's Annual Meeting on the 8 May 2014 and 14 May 2015. Throughout this period the Scrutiny Committees have been fortunate to have received contributions from members and officers.
- 2.2 The Chairs of the two Scrutiny Committees led on developing the work programmes during this period. Details of matters considered are included in the attached Scrutiny Committees Annual Report 2014/2015.
- 2.3 At the Annual Meeting last year it was resolved to appoint Councillor Peter Rogers to serve as “Scrutiny Champion” from May 2014 to May 2015. In order to strengthen the link between the champion and the two Scrutiny Committees it is now considered that the role of “Scrutiny Champion” be allocated to the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee from May 2015 to May 2016 and the Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee from May 2016 to May 2017. Thereafter the role to alternate between the two Committee Chairs.
- 2.4 The role of the “Scrutiny Champion” is not remunerated. The Scrutiny Champion’s role is to:
 - Promote the Scrutiny function in and outside the Council
 - Support the continuing development of Scrutiny in the Council.

Appendix:

Scrutiny Committees Annual Report 2014/2015

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015

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Scrutiny Committees Annual Report 2014-2015 of the Isle of Anglesey County Council

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Foreword

Councillor R Meirion Jones

(Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee 2014-15)



This is the second opportunity I have had to introduce the Scrutiny Annual Report.

It is important for us to know where we have been in order to know where we are going. The elections in May 2013 saw the start of the Council's new structure of electoral wards with fewer members, 30 instead of 40. The new Scrutiny Committee structure also came into operation with two scrutiny committees – the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee instead of the previous five.

2014/15 was even more challenging for Scrutiny. It did not anticipate it would have to bear the impact of losing two direct officer support posts due to the across the board efficiency savings the Council was required to make. As the work of the Authority had not diminished the workload for Scrutiny to scrutinise remained similar to before, but, with reduced capacity, this made it increasingly difficult to achieve.

It could be said that this was compounded by Scrutiny's own success at developing its new Members. There has been a great deal of scrutiny activity and it has shown how Scrutiny Members contributed to the effective corporate governance of the Authority. Scrutiny is only as good as the effort the Scrutiny Members make it. We need to ensure that we can make and own our Forward Work Programme and suggest topics. Our officers do sterling work but we as Members must do the work. The Scrutiny Members deserve praise for all their hard work and we are fortunate with their range of knowledge, life experience and passion for public service. They are an example of a change in culture in that they have been willing to roll up their sleeves, to contribute directly and relishing the scrutiny process of being hands on and challenging policy and practice to come up with new ideas and drive improvement rather than the old more passive committee process. Despite the forced reductions Scrutiny was still able to act as critical friends and make challenges to proposals, make a difference and adding value to the process. Thanks are also due to the many officers and contributors to our activities.

These are just some examples of 2014/15 Corporate Scrutiny Committee/Panel Reviews -

- Closure of Llangefni Skate park Review
- Smarter Working Project Review
- Golf Course Closure Review

- Annual Budget-Setting Process 2015-16 (There was also consideration of the process and of the outcomes with the previous year's Budget-Setting Process. Many of the issues raised have been looked at by the Panel set up to consider the budget Process.)
- Scrutiny School Improvement Review Group
- Scrutiny review of Sickness Absence Management Panel
- Scrutiny review of Efficiency Savings for 2014-15 Panel

Obviously this created more work but such enthusiasm and work from Scrutiny Members should not be wasted and it will be necessary to revisit how to build in more capacity. Informal scrutiny briefing sessions prior to the formal meetings were developed and have been adopted as an improvement to the arrangements.

With non-executive members taking a more organised and active involvement in monitoring change management some tension was caused for those it focuses on, that is, the decision-makers and their professional advisors and we were made aware of this in the latter part of the year. The Wales Audit Office report 'Improvement Study-Scrutiny in Local Government' 2014 report echoed this when it highlighted local authorities still lack understanding of the role of direct scrutiny support, and the member led principle. Reference to this was made in the scrutiny service plan for 2014/15 but due to the capacity issues little progress was made and more effort will be required to further embed it and thereby strengthen Scrutiny. Further confirmation that Scrutiny requires this unique support, is supported by recommendations 31-34 in the Williams Report (Please see Appendix 1) and Welsh Government's backing for the establishment of the national standard 'Characteristics required for Effective Scrutiny'.

As I said in last year's Report and I reiterate here "It has been a challenging year, with many financial challenges. It is important that the Council continues to rise to the challenges and from a Scrutiny perspective that it continues to look at service improvement and contributes to policy development."

This Report provides an overview of the second year of the two Scrutiny Committees and highlights the achievements of the elected members in undertaking their scrutiny role. We hope that this document gives an interesting insight into our work.

Councillor Derlwyn Hughes

(Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee 2014-15)



2014/2015 was a successful year of consolidation for scrutiny in Isle of Anglesey. We built on the experience and good practice refined over the last 2/3 years to shape the way in which we reviewed and challenged the policies and decisions of the Executive and service delivery of other agencies.

The following report contains an outline of the key elements of the scrutiny work programme for 2014/2015, highlighting both the breadth of scrutiny's remit and the volume and diversity of our work. I hope you find them interesting and informative and will feed back to us any comments, questions or proposals for future reviews.

In selecting topics, our purpose has always been to act as a critical friend and to contribute in a positive way to the achievement of continuous service improvement and value for money.

I would like to thank the many members, officers and outside representatives whose thoughtful contributions, patience and enthusiasm have been invaluable throughout the year. Without their support scrutiny would not have a voice and our decision making processes would be less accountable, less inclusive and the weaker for it.

Looking forward to 2015/2016, we hope to continue the good work undertaken over the past year in engaging Town / Community Councils, communities and residents groups as we seek to further broaden the horizons of scrutiny and encourage involvement in the scrutiny process.

1. WHAT IS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

1.1 Scrutiny Committees form part of the way in which Local Government in Wales operates. As well as the establishment of a decision making Executive the Local Government Act 2000 required the establishment of one or more Scrutiny Committees to hold the decision-makers to account, drive improvement and play a role in assisting in policy development and review.

1.2 During 2014-2015 the scrutiny function at the Isle of Anglesey County Council was undertaken by following two Scrutiny Committees:

- Corporate Scrutiny Committee;
- Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee;

1.3 The three guiding principles of good scrutiny are to:

- Promote open and transparent decision making and to hold the decision takers to account in a constructive manner.
- Support the Council in achieving its vision for the county and its strategic aims and priorities.
- Promote continuous improvement, best practice and innovation with the services, functions and policies which the Council has responsibility for or influence over.

1.4 The Scrutiny Committees can undertake their work in one of the following ways

- Consider a topic during a formal meeting.
- Consider a topic over a longer period of time by establishing a Scrutiny Review Panel.
- Conduct informal sessions on a particular matter.
- Undertake site visits.

2. SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE










- 2.1 A Scrutiny Annual Report primary aim is to give an account of what the Scrutiny Committees have done from May to May in each year. Included in the report is a summary of items the two Committees have considered during 2014 /2015. The two Scrutiny Committees aim for next year is to add value by making meaningful and constructive recommendations to the decisions takers on how policies may be improved or request that a decision taken be reconsidered by way of the “call-in” process.
- 2.2 All Council’s in Wales have to provide services against a backdrop of reduced public expenditure which is likely to continue in the short to medium term. The general financial environment on the Island is difficult and scrutiny has an important part to play in improving service efficiency and the way the Council operates.
- 2.3 In order to measure itself Scrutiny has a wide set of quarterly performance indicators by which it can compare progress from one quarter to another. A schedule of all the indicators can be obtained from the scrutiny unit but the two key indicators for 2014- 2015 are shown in the table below:

Indicator Title(2014-2015)	Target (Q) – Quarterly (A) – Annually	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	End of Year
% of attendance of Committee Members and Portfolio Holders at Scrutiny Committee	80% (Q)	81%	81% ↔	90% ↑	77% ↓	82%
The % of Scrutiny Committee recommendations approved by the Executive	90% (Q)	100%	100% ↔	80% ↓	100% ↑	95%

3. Corporate Scrutiny Committee Focus

The focus of the Committee's work will be to secure assurance regarding the performance / delivery of all services, ensuring the Council achieves its corporate and service objectives (as outlined in its Corporate Business Plan, Annual Budget, Budget and Policy Framework, Performance Management Framework, Corporate Policies or their successor plans and policies) and to support and make recommendations for continuous improvement.

4. Committee Membership 2014-15

	Name	Ward	Political Party/Group		Name	Ward	Political Party/Group
	Cllr R Meirion Jones (Chair)	Aethwy	Plaid Cymru		Cllr Gwilym Jones (Vice Chair)	Llifon	Independent
	Cllr Raymond Jones	Caergybi	Independent		Cllr Jim Evans	Aethwy	Independent
	Cllr Victor Hughes	Bro Rhosyr	Independent		Cllr Lewis Davies	Seiriol	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Ann Griffith	Bro Aberffraw	Plaid Cymru		Cllr Llinos Medi Huws	Talybolion	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr R Llewelyn Jones	Caergybi	Unaffiliated		1 Vacant Seat		

Please note that during the course of 2014 -2015 the membership of the Committee also included Councillor Jeff Evans and Councillor Peter Rogers.

5. Committee Work Programme (2014/15)

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee met on 14 occasions.

Corporate Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15	
Committee Date	Item Considered
8 May 2014	To elect a Chairperson for the Corporate Scrutiny Committee
	To elect a Vice-Chairperson for the Corporate Scrutiny Committee
12 May 2014	Chairman's Update
	Committee Nomination to the Corporate Parenting Panel
	Housing Services Building Maintenance Unit
	Corporate Scorecard Quarter 4 2013/2014
	Arrangements for safeguarding Children in Schools
	Scrutiny Request-Closure of B4419 at Pentre Berw
	Work Programme
1 July 2014	Chairman's Update
	Older Adult's Accommodation Options-Garreglwyd
	Meeting the Needs of Older Adults: Accommodation Options Amlwch and Llangefni
	Annual report of the Statutory Director of Social Services
	Finance Matters- Capital Budget 2013-2014 Out Turn
	Finance Matters –Revenue Budget 2013/14 Provisional Out Turn
	Corporate Transformation Programme Board
1 September 2014	Chairman's Update
	Performance Monitoring-Corporate Scorecard Quarter 1 2014/2015
	Budget Monitoring –Capital Budget Quarter 1 2014/15
	Budget Monitoring – Revenue Budget Quarter 1 2014/15

	Member Referral –Closure of Llangefni Skate Park Outside Plas Arthur Leisure Centre
	Work Programme
	Extra Care Housing
26 September 2014	Closure of Llangefni Skate Park
15 October 2014	Chairman's Update
	Budget 2015/2016
	Smarter Working Project
	Extra Care Options in Amlwch and Llangefni
	School Modernisation- Holyhead Area
	Llangefni Skate Park-Scrutiny Review
4 November 2014	Smarter Working Project (Call-in)
24 November 2014	Chairman's Update
	Corporate Score Card Quarter 2
	Budget Monitoring –Capital Budget Quarter 2 2014/15
	Budget Monitoring-Revenue Budget Quarter 2 2014/15
	Revenue Budget Proposals 2015/16
	Transformation Programme Updates
	School Bus Contracts –Tenders and Charges Structure
	Llangefni Golf Club
13 January 2015	Chairman's update
	Work Programme
	Annual Report of the Education Service
	Analysis Report – Quality Core Assessment Practice- Children's Services










	Scrutiny Outcome Panels Update
3 February 2015	2015/16 Initial Budget Proposals
10 February 2015	Capital Bids 2015/16
	Budget Proposals 2015/16- Response to the Public Consultation
	Corporate self-Assessment
24 March 2015	Debt Write Off
	Corporate Score Card Q3 2014/2015
	Revenue and Capital Monitoring Reports Q3 2014/2015
	Scrutiny Outcome Panel- Efficiency Savings
	Scrutiny Outcome Panel- Sickness Absence
16 April 2015	Chair and Members Update
	Annual Delivery Document 2015/2016

6. Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Focus

The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee focus is to ensure that the interests of the citizens of the Isle of Anglesey are promoted, and that the Council's priorities and resources are most beneficially reflected, in the partnerships, joint working, collaboration and external agency arrangements, as exist from time to time. 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. In addition the Committee's remit also extends to regeneration matters and the "Enterprise Island" concept (or successor plans and policies).

7. Committee Membership 2014-15

The Committee comprises of 10 elected Members.

	Name	Ward	Political Party/Group		Name	Ward	Political Party/Group
	Cllr Derlwyn R Hughes (Chair)	Lligwy	Independent		Cllr Alun Mummery (Vice Chair)	Aethwy	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr William T Hughes	Twrcelyn	Independent		Cllr Richard Owen Jones	Twrcelyn	Independent
	Cllr Dafydd Rhys Thomas	Ynys Cybi	Independent		Cllr John Griffith	Talybolion	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Carwyn Jones	Seiriol	Plaid Cymru		Cllr Dylan Rees	Canolbarth Mon	Plaid Cymru
	Cllr Robert Llewelyn Jones	Caergybi	Unaffiliated	1	Vacant Seat		

Please note that during the course of 2014 -2015 the membership of the Committee also included Councillor Raymond Jones.

8. Committee Work Programme (2014/15)

During 2014/15 the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee met on 9 occasions. The dates and items considered are shown in the table below. Minutes of each meeting are on the Council's website.

Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15	
Committee Date	Item Considered
8 May 2014	To elect a Chairperson for the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
	To elect a Vice-Chairperson for the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
13 May 2014	Committee Nomination to the Corporate Parenting Panel
	Single Integrated Plan
	Clearing of Files from Old Ysgol Y Graig Llangerfni
	Update by the Chair and Vice-Chair
	Work Programme
11 July 2014	New Nuclear Build at Wylfa-Supplementary Planning
24 July 2014	North Wales Police Communications Centre
	Regional and Local Arrangements to Safeguard Children and Adults
	Regional Commissioning of Children and Young People's Advocacy Service
	Corporate Transformation Programme Board –Progress Update
	Update by the Chair and Vice-Chair
	Work Programme
25 September	Single Integrated Plan- Gwynedd and Ynys Mon

2014	Mon Communities First –Progress Report
	Local Housing Strategy for Anglesey 2014/2019
	Charter/Pleasure Boat Fees 2014/2015
	Work Programme for the Anglesey Integrated Delivery Board for Health and Social Care Services
	North Wales Wales Fire and Rescue Service-Consultation on the Improvement Plan 2015/2016
	Update by the Chair and Vice-Chair
	Work Programme
27 November 2014	Single Integrated Plan (Gwynedd and Ynys Mon) and Proposed Joint Local Service Board Scrutiny Arrangements
	Housing Revenue Account Subsidy –Voluntary Agreement
	Proposed Changes to the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy and Policy
	Annual Report on the SLA with Regional School Improvement Service (GwE)
	Annual Report- Listening and Learning from Complaints
	Annual Update –Safeguarding Arrangements for Vulnerable Adults in Anglesey
	Update by the Chair and Vice-Chair
Work Programme	
14 January 2015	Proposed Joint Local Service Board Scrutiny Arrangements
	Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) Local Authority Social Services Inspection Evaluation and Review
	Corporate Safeguarding (Children)
	Update by the Chair and Vice-Chair
	Work Programme
12 March 2015	Well Being of Future Generations Bill and Key Priorities of Gwynedd and Ynys Mon
	Annual Community Safety Partnership Update
	Partnership Working Proposals in Relation to Securing Improvements to the A5025 and Other Highways to facilitate the Development Proposals of Horizon Nuclear Power
	Early Years Budget
	Update by the Chair and Vice-Chair
	Work Programme

12 Mai 2015	Llys Llewelyn, Aberffraw
	Finance Transformation Manager post for Libraries, Culture and Youth Services
	Update by the Chair and Vice-Chair
	Work Programme

9. SCRUTINY ENGAGEMENT

- 9.1 The views and ideas of the public and other organisations with an interest in a topic under consideration are valuable in effective Scrutiny.
- 9.2 Best practice Scrutiny normally involves Members working with local people and organisations to provide effective and responsive services.
- 9.3 Scrutiny Committees will meet in public (except in circumstances where confidential matters are to be discussed) and the dates, location of the meetings and the forward work programmes are available on the Council's web site at <http://www.anglesey.gov.uk>
- 9.4 Partners and outside agencies may also be invited to attend Scrutiny Committees to enable the Committee to seek their views and observations on issues affecting the delivery of corporate objectives.
- 9.5 To find out more about Scrutiny in Anglesey or to give your views please contact the Scrutiny Team at:

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APPENDIX 1- Extract from the “Commission on Public Service Governance on Public Service Governance Report” dated January 2014. (also known as “the Williams Report”).

Recommendations 31-34

Scrutiny

31. The importance, status and value of scrutiny must be recognised, prioritised, continually sustained and reinforced. To support this:
- All elected members, independent health board members, non-executive directors, and officers must acknowledge the importance and value of scrutiny in improving services for people and organisations in Wales. The independence of scrutiny must be strongly asserted and protected, as must its essentially constructive and positive nature;
 - Executive members, non-executive directors, and officers, must similarly acknowledge the value of scrutiny in helping them to deliver services better. They must publicise and explain their decisions clearly, and invite scrutiny of them, including pre-decision scrutiny, willingly and openly. They must also acknowledge and respond to scrutiny reports promptly and in good faith; and
 - As part of raising the stature and profile of scrutiny, and engaging citizens, there must be increased visibility of the outputs and outcomes from local government scrutiny.
32. Organisations must regard scrutiny as an investment to deliver improvements and future savings. They must resource and support scrutiny accordingly:
- Local authorities must make appropriate support available, at officer level, to develop co-ordinated scrutiny plans, identify gaps in expertise on the committees and provide proportionate and understandable information to committee members. Other organisations must similarly ensure that resources for scrutiny are sufficient for an effective scrutiny function;
 - Mandatory training must be provided to all members and chairs of local government scrutiny committees. Equivalent training must also be mandatory for community health council members engaged in scrutiny roles, fire and rescue authority members, others charged with formal scrutiny. Equivalent training should also be given to non-executive or independent members to support their role in holding their executive to account; and
 - Organisations must adopt a “best practice” approach to scrutiny not a “least required”. The scrutiny outcomes and characteristics being prepared by the Centre for Public Scrutiny must be developed in discussion with other public sector organisations. Once agreed, they must be adopted by each organisation within 6 months.
33. Local government scrutiny committees and other formal scrutiny bodies must engage more effectively with the public and partners. That should include the co-option of individuals from advocacy and other groups onto scrutiny committees to increase such committees’ capacity and capability to provide constructive and informed scrutiny.

Audit, inspection and regulation

34. Auditors, inspectors and regulators who report on individual organisations must do so directly to the appropriate scrutiny or audit committee. Where appropriate, they should assist the Committee in its consideration and holding the executive to account.