

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
REPORT TO :	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	15 September, 2015
SUBJECT :	SCRUTINY OUTCOME PANELS ESTABLISHED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S):	N/A
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1. REASON

A recent report published by the Auditor General for Wales entitled "*Good Scrutiny? Good Question!*"¹ made some key recommendations on local government scrutiny practice. This report gives particular reference to the following recommendations from that report:

- Improve the effectiveness of scrutiny committee members in holding the Executive to account [effectiveness of arrangements];
- Further develop scrutiny forward work programming [provide clear rationale for topic selection and be more outcome focussed];
- Align scrutiny programmes with the Council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements [performance issues and implications for improvement];
- Undertake regular self-evaluation of scrutiny [robustness of arrangements, clarity of roles – Scrutiny & Executive – and added value aspects of Scrutiny].

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is twofold:

- Provide a position statement/information regarding the Scrutiny Outcome Panels established by the two Scrutiny Committees of which there are currently 7;
- Propose how the Authority intends to further strengthen the alignment between the Scrutiny Function and the Council's strategic priorities.

3. POSITION STATEMENT: SCRUTINY OUTCOME PANELS

There are currently 7 active Scrutiny Outcome Panels as follows:

3.1 Corporate Scrutiny Committee (5)

- Disposal of Assets;
- Review of Specific Children's Services Case;

¹ Good Scrutiny? Good Question! Auditor General for Wales Improvement Study: Scrutiny in Local Government (May, 2014)

- Debt Write-offs;
- Efficiency Savings (2015/16);
- Corporate Safeguarding.

3.2 Partnership & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee (2)

- School Progress Review Group;
- Joint Scrutiny of Local Services Board.

Attached is a position statement as regards the background, remit and progress to date of each of the 7 Scrutiny Outcome Panels (**APPENDIX 1**).

4. ALIGNMENT: SCRUTINY FUNCTION & COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

4.1 The Council's two Scrutiny Committees hold to account, in a positive and constructive manner, the work of the Council's Executive and Partner organisations in order to assist the Authority to deliver on its strategic vision and priorities. It is also the function of our Scrutiny Committees to support services in maintaining high service delivery standards and to steer them towards improved efficiency and effectiveness;

4.2 The Authority's plan for improvement over the term of the current Council until 2017 is detailed in our Corporate Plan and associated Transformation Plan. The report by the Auditor General for Wales² (referred to in paragraph 1 above) made 9 key recommendations on scrutiny practice in Local Government in Wales. One of these recommendations was concerned with the need to provide a clear rationale for topic selection and be more outcome focussed as well as align scrutiny programmes with the Council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements;

4.3 To this end, it is recommended that the Parent Scrutiny Committees are supported to develop clarity around the following matters when considering the propriety of establishing new Scrutiny Outcome Panels:

- Agree a clear rationale for topic selection;
- Agreed terms of reference and desired outcomes;
- Alignment with the Council's strategic priorities;
- Ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the desired outcome.

In light of recent discussions with Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs, it is also recommended that the following be consulted on the proposed terms of reference and desired outcomes of any new Scrutiny Panels:

- Relevant Parent Scrutiny Committee;
- Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs Working Group;
- Senior Leadership Team.

² Good Scrutiny? Good Question! Auditor General for Wales Improvement Study: Scrutiny in Local Government (May, 2014)

5. RECOMMENDATIONS



The respective Scrutiny Committee is requested to:


- R1** Note the current state of play as regards the work of the seven Scrutiny Outcome Panels;
- R2** Support officers' endeavours to submit quarterly update reports on the work of the Scrutiny Outcome Panels to both Scrutiny Committees, Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs Working Group and the Senior Leadership Team;
- R3** Further strengthen the synergy and alignment between the Scrutiny Function and the Council's Strategic Priorities (as detailed in paragraph 4 of this report).



Anwen Davies, Interim Scrutiny Manager/
Geraint Roberts, Scrutiny Officer
Corporate Scrutiny Unit


August, 2015

POSITION STATEMENT – SCRUTINY OUTCOME PANELS

<u>No</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Background, Remit & Progress to Date</u>	<u>Status</u>
1.	Scrutiny Outcome Panel: Disposal of Assets	Councillors Meirion Jones (Chair), Llinos Medi Huws, Jim Evans & Raymond Jones	Head of Service (Highways, Waste & Property) (DRW) [To be confirmed]	<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 01/09/ 2014 - The Corporate Scrutiny Committee established the Panel; • 13/10/14 and 18/12/14 - Panel's inaugural meeting diarised but adjourned due to unforeseen circumstances; • 01/07/2015 - Inaugural meeting of the Panel. <p>Remit</p> <p>Examination of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's current Asset Management Policy & Procedures in order to ensure that the Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Enables the Authority to dispose of assets effectively and efficiently; ➢ Is being implemented. • List of the Authority's property/assets to scrutinise implementation of the Asset Management Policy & Procedures; • Contribution made by the Smarter Working Project to the disposal of assets giving particular consideration to the following key drivers for implementing Smarter Working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Building closures; ➢ Restricted accommodation. • Corporate Asset Management Plan for Land & Buildings in order to ensure pre- decision scrutiny prior to consideration by the Executive. <p>Progress to Date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 08/07/15 & 28/07/15 – 2 further Panel meetings convened; • 2 further Panel meetings scheduled for 01/09/15 & 10/09/15; • Anticipated that a further 4 meetings will be required with the work of the Panel being submitted to the Parent Committee late 2015/early 2016. 	<p>Green – On schedule.</p> <p>Amber- behind schedule but task on course to be completed.</p> <p>Red - behind schedule and significant risk of not completing task.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div>
2.	Scrutiny Outcome Panel: Review of	Councillors Gwilym Jones, Llinos Medi Huws and	Head of Children's Services (AMH)	<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2014 - The Corporate Scrutiny Committee received a request to establish a Scrutiny Outcome Panel. 	<div style="text-align: center;"></div>

No	Name	Membership	Lead Officer	Background, Remit & Progress to Date	Status
	Specific Children's Services Case	Lewis Davies.		Remit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny were requested to review/examine a specific children's services case that had been the subject of media coverage. Progress to Date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25/06/15 – meeting of the Panel convened. Report on progress currently being prepared for Parent Scrutiny Committee (16/11/15). 	Green – On schedule. Amber- behind schedule but task on course to be completed. Red - behind schedule and significant risk of not completing task.
3.	Scrutiny Outcome Panel: Debt Write-offs	Councillors Meirion Jones, Jim Evans and Robert Llewelyn Jones with invitation to Finance Portfolio Holder as and when required	Interim Head of Function (Resources)/ Section 151 Officer (RM)	Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24/03/2015- The Corporate Scrutiny Committee established the Panel; 30/06/2015 - Inaugural meeting of the Panel. Remit Further examination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debt write-offs; Debt management within the Authority. through closer examination of the different elements of the Authority's debt management process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Definition of a debtor, what debt is due by Services and individual Service actions; ➤ Raising a debt and what happens. How payments are received; ➤ Enforcement - principles and methods/procedures; ➤ Debt write-offs. Progress to Date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28/07/15 – further meeting of the Scrutiny Panel convened; 5 meetings of the Panel scheduled for 01/09/15, 06/10/15, 03/11/15, 01/12/15 & 05/01/16; Anticipated that the Panel's Final Report will be submitted to the Parent Scrutiny Committee in February/March, 2016. 	

No	Name	Membership	Lead Officer	Background, Remit & Progress to Date	Status
4.	Scrutiny Outcome Panel: School Progress Review Group	Councillors Derlwyn Hughes, Alun Mummery, Meirion Jones, Gwilym Jones, Lewis Davies, Richard Owain Jones, Dylan Rees and Jim Evans. [At the request of SLT, consider the propriety of further extending the membership. Objective: Contribution to the work of the Panel across a broader base of Members].	Head of Service-Learning (DM)	<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scrutiny Outcome Panel was established following an Estyn Inspection of the Authority's Education provision and includes Members from both scrutiny committees; • Meetings were convened on 20/05/14, 05/06/14, 09/12/14, 05/02/15, 13/02/15, 10/03/15, 17/03/15 and 10/07/15. <p>Remit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Panel's terms of reference is to monitor the progress of individual schools that need support as identified in the Welsh Government school categorisation framework; ➤ The Panel can recommend to the Life Long Learning Department that a school requires more support by the Education Service and/or the Regional School Improvement Service (GwE). The work of the Panel is ongoing. <p>Progress to Date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A further meeting of the Panel will be convened on 21st October, 2015 with arrangements in hand to convene 5 further meetings of the Panel during the current municipal year (in order to monitor performance of 7 schools); ➤ The Panel has no formal end date and is ongoing from year to year. A report on the work of the Panel will be submitted to the Partnership and Regeneration Committee each November and to Full Council each May via the Scrutiny Annual Report. 	<p>Green – On schedule.</p> <p>Amber- behind schedule but task on course to be completed.</p> <p>Red - behind schedule and significant risk of not completing task.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div>
5.	Scrutiny Outcome Panel: Joint	Chair and Vice-Chair of the	Senior Manager – Delivery and	<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14/01/15 - The Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Joint Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Services Board Scrutiny Panel. 	<div style="text-align: center;"></div>

No	Name	Membership	Lead Officer	Background, Remit & Progress to Date	Status
	Scrutiny of Local Services Board	Partnership and Regeneration Committee together with Councillor John Griffith. (Councillor Dylan Rees as Substitute Member)	Supporting Change Service (Gwynedd Council) (JR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March, 2015 - Gwynedd Council agreed to nominate Members to the Panel. <p>Remit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a "critical friend" challenge to the LSB/PSB; Scrutinise, evaluate and actively promote improvement in work carried out in line with LSB/PSB priorities (rather than those of individual constituent organisations represented on the LSB); Scrutinise, evaluate and actively promote improvement in developing and implementing projects to address the priorities agreed by the LSB/PSB; Submit reports to partners or the LSB/PSB and make recommendations on measures which may enhance impact; Reflect the voice and concerns of citizens and communities on the Isle of Anglesey and Gwynedd. <p>Progress to Date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer, 2015 – The Local Services Board (LSB) met on 26/06/15 and recommended that the Joint Scrutiny Panel should proceed on the basis that its membership be amended to reflect the statutory membership of the proposed Public Services Board (PSB) which will replace the LSB from April, 2016. The LSB Support Team are currently identifying nominees from the other statutory agencies (Health Board, Fire & Rescue Service and Natural Resources Wales). 	<p>Green – On schedule.</p> <p>Amber- behind schedule but task on course to be completed.</p> <p>Red - behind schedule and significant risk of not completing task.</p>
6.	Scrutiny Outcome Panel: Efficiency Savings (2015/16)	Councillors Meirion Jones, Llinos Medi Huws and Victor Hughes.	Interim Head of Function (Resources)/ Section 151 Officer (RM)	<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February, 2014 - The Corporate Scrutiny Committee established the Panel; 15/05/14 – Inaugural meeting of the Panel and 4 subsequent meetings convened; 20/04/15 – Panel's Final Report submitted to the Executive and the recommendations were approved; 10/06/15 – The Corporate Scrutiny Committee agreed to reconvene the Panel intermittently during 2015/16 to examine service efficiencies against targets. <p>Remit</p> <p>Examine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The degree to which 2015/16 efficiency savings are being achieved against Service targets; Whether there are robust project management arrangements in place to support realisation of the Authority's efficiencies strategy; Whether the actual level of savings being achieved are in line with projections; 	

No	Name	Membership	Lead Officer	Background, Remit & Progress to Date	Status
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of risks associated with the efficiencies strategy. <p>Progress to Date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 07/09/15 & 14/09/15 – first 2 Panel meetings scheduled; Terms of Reference and Project Plan currently being negotiated with the Interim Head of Function (Resources). 	<p>Green – On schedule.</p> <p>Amber- behind schedule but task on course to be completed.</p> <p>Red - behind schedule and significant risk of not completing task.</p>
7.	Scrutiny Outcome Panel: Corporate Safeguarding	To be confirmed by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 16/11/15	Head of Children's Services (AMH) [Delegated function: role of the Statutory Director of Social Services]	<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 06/07/15 – The Corporate Scrutiny Committee established the Panel in order to undertake a comprehensive review of the Authority's assurance and accountability arrangements for ensuring appropriate Corporate arrangements for safeguarding are in place and are working effectively. <p>Initial Remit*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor compliance with Audit (WAO) requirements by ensuring regular, formal scrutiny of safeguarding (the Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report); Hold the statutory Director of Social Services to account for effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. <p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions ongoing with the Statutory Director of Social Services and HOS (Children & Adults) to confirm Panel remit and timescales for convening Panel meetings; Progress report to be submitted to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 16/11/15 – to include consideration of Panel membership. <p>[*The final version Terms of Reference of the Panel will need to reflect the implications of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (statutory safeguarding responsibilities and the role of the Statutory Director of Social Services). A further report on the terms of reference of the Panel will be considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 16 November, 2015].</p>	