

Report to:	Democratic Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	23 March 2018
Lead Officer:	Head of Democratic Services
Report Author:	Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Title:	Draft Annual Report of the Council's Scrutiny Committees 2017/18

1. What is the report about?

The proposed arrangements for compiling the Annual Report of the Council's Scrutiny Committees.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To seek the members' views on the proposed arrangements for production of this year's Annual Report, their support in undertaking the evaluation exercise on the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny function, and any suggestions the Committee may have on how the report could be further enhanced.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee:

- 3.1 comments on the proposed approach towards producing the Scrutiny Committees' Annual Report for 2017/18;
- 3.2 supports the exercise undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny function and encourages all members and officers invited to participate in the exercise to do so; and
- 3.3 suggests any additional information it would like to see included in the Annual Report to be presented to Annual Council in May 2018.

4. Report details

- 4.1 Section 7.4.4 of the Council's Constitution states that the Scrutiny Committees must report annually to Full Council on their work with recommendations for their future work programme and amended working practices if appropriate.
- 4.2 Traditionally the Committees' Annual Report is presented to Annual Council at its meeting in May of each year.
- 4.3 As part of the preparatory work for the production of the 2017-18 Annual Report the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG), at its meeting in January 2018,

discussed the information that should be contained within this year's Annual Report and its format. Having regard to the fact that 2017-18 was the first year of a new Council, and that the Council's Corporate Plan had only recently been approved, the Group concluded that this year's report should focus on:

- discussing the Council's new corporate priorities;
- how to get the public more engaged with Scrutiny;
- an update on the work of the In-house Adult Social Care Task and Finish Group; and
- information on the new Public Services Board and how it will be scrutinised in future

It was agreed that the format should include a picture page of the membership of each committee immediately preceding a report on that committee's work during the year.

- 4.4 The SCVCG also concluded that it would be useful for a 360° evaluation of the effectiveness of the scrutiny function to be undertaken against the nationally recognised 'Outcomes and Characteristics for Effective Local Government Overview and Scrutiny'. For this purpose a link to a questionnaire was circulated to all councillors, co-opted members and officers who attend scrutiny committee meetings in early March 2018, with a response deadline of 21 March 2018. The link in the e-mail circulated directs recipients to an electronic survey which is available on 'Survey Monkey'. Issuing the confidential questionnaire via 'Survey Monkey' makes it easier for individuals to respond and for results to be collated. As the Wales Audit Office (WAO) is keen for Scrutiny to evaluate its effectiveness on a regular basis members and officers are encouraged to complete the questionnaire and submit it by the above deadline date.
- 4.5 An analysis of the questionnaire results will be included in the Annual Report along with information on any areas of weakness identified and proposed actions to strengthen those areas during the coming year.
- 4.6 As the production of the Annual Report is still at an early stage Democratic Services Committee members are requested to support the approach taken for its production and to suggest any additional information or ideas that may enhance the quality of the final report.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The production of an Annual Report will outline how Scrutiny supports the Council's ambition to deliver its corporate priorities and Corporate Plan. It will explain Scrutiny's role in monitoring and challenging projects and actions to deliver the priorities going forward. Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs, residents' wishes and within budget.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

The publication of the Annual Report forms part of the regular committee reports despatch to county councillors and other recipients, therefore there are no additional costs entailed with its publication. The Annual Report upon approval and translation will be distributed electronically to Council outlets such as libraries, One Stop Shops,

town and community councils, and all school councils within the County. It will also be available on the Council's intranet and website.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

A Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) is not required for this report as no decision or change of policy is being sought. The Annual Report is presented solely to inform councillors and residents of the Scrutiny Committees' work during the preceding twelve months and as a means of outlining potential future areas of work.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group have been consulted on the report's contents and format.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

N/A

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committees' Annual Report.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 7.4.4 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must report annually to full Council on their workings with recommendations for their future work programme and any amended working methods if appropriate.

Democratic Services Committee's duties in relation to Scrutiny are detailed in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

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