

DRAFT

**Policy and Resources
Scrutiny Committee**

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

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Chair's Foreword

As the Chair of this Committee, I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee for the 2017/18 municipal year. This report provides a comprehensive summary of the work undertaken by the Committee during this period and provides an opportunity to reflect on this work.



The past year has continued to be a challenging period for the Council and I feel that this Committee has continued to constructively play its part in terms of scrutinising performance and contributing to key council policies and decisions. I would also like to thank all members of the Committee for their contributions and dedication during 2017/18.

The Committee discussed and scrutinised a wide variety of topics during the past year. These included the standard and regular monitoring reports as well as new policies and strategies being introduced by the County Council.

The forthcoming year will no doubt be challenging, but I am confident that we will continue to focus on how to improve services effectively and efficiently. The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 established Public Service Boards (PSB) and this Committee has been designated to scrutinise this work. The aims of the Act are to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. During 2018/19 the Committee will continue to develop its role to ensure that Carmarthenshire's PSB is held democratically accountable.

I am looking forward, once again, to the challenge of chairing this Committee and with the assistance of my Vice Chair and the rest of the Committee hope we will have a positive impact on the outcomes for the residents of Carmarthenshire. We have already had some stimulating discussions regarding the items for the 2018/19 work programme and the Committee will continue to work closely with the Council's senior managers and staff to ensure that it is a productive year ahead.

As Chair of the Committee, I also Chair the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Forum which discusses improvements to the scrutiny function for consideration by the Council's Constitutional Review Working Group and acts as a forum for sharing and disseminating scrutiny good practice. We have concentrated this year on a Scrutiny Communication Strategy, the WAO Review of Overview and Scrutiny - Fit for the Future? and Public Participation.

Cllr. Giles Morgan

Chair of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

1. Introduction

Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution requires all scrutiny committees to "*prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committees activities over the previous year.*"

The main aims of the report are to highlight the work that has been undertaken by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee during 2017/18. It outlines the potential future work of the Committee. The document may also facilitate discussions on other items that could be included within future work programmes.

The Committee is chaired by Cllr. Giles Morgan and is made up of 13 Elected Members. Support is provided to the Panel by the Democratic Services Team and other Council officers as and when required.

This report provides an overview of the work of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee during 2017/18 municipal year. It gives Members the opportunity to reflect on the achievements during the year and to identify what worked well and where improvements could be made. This analysis is instrumental in developing scrutiny.

2. Overview of the work of the Committee 2017/18

2.1 Number of Meetings

The Scrutiny Committee held 6 meetings held in the 2017/18 Civic Year.

2.2 The Work Programme

The Scrutiny Committee develops its own Forward Work Programme (FWP) and in the main, meeting agendas were consistent with those outlined by the FWP, which was confirmed by the Committee at its meeting on 11th October 2017.

The Forward Work Programme (FWP) was mainly based on key areas identified as objectives within the Integrated Community Strategy and Improvement Plan together with standard items such as performance and budget monitoring reports, action plan monitoring reports, and specific requests from the scrutiny committee itself. Additional reports were also requested by the scrutiny committee during the year and the Forward Work Programme was amended accordingly.

The development of the concept of the Forward Work Programme and the process for its agreement, has allowed each scrutiny committee to determine its own work agendas. The benefits of such an approach has led to an improved level of debate and input during scrutiny committee meetings.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 put long term sustainability at the forefront of how public services are designed and delivered and it places emphasis on public bodies to work in partnership with each other and the public to prevent and tackle problems. The Act established Public Service Boards (PSB) for each Local Authority in Wales.

To ensure that PSBs are democratically accountable there was a requirement on Councils to designate an overview and scrutiny committee to scrutinise the work of the PSB. As the Council's designated Scrutiny Committee in this regard the Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee has continued in its role of scrutinising the work of the PSB and holding it to account on its performance in meeting the objectives of the Local Well-Being Plan. At its January meeting the Committee had welcomed Mr. Barry Liles, Principal of Coleg Sir Gar and Chairman of the Public Services Board, who had presented the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board Annual Report 2016-17.

The following sections will provide a snapshot of the main areas of the Committee's work.

2.3 Performance Monitoring Reports

One of the principal roles of scrutiny committees is to monitor the performance of services and functions within its remit. They undertake this work mainly through the consideration of performance monitoring reports and various action plan monitoring reports. The performance monitoring report provides a balanced picture of performance across the relevant service areas. The Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee received these reports at its meetings in October 2017 and March 2018. The reports mainly focus on underperforming indicators.

As part of its performance management role the Committee receives relevant information from the Council's key strategies and plans. The Committee considered the second year progress report on the Council's Corporate Strategy 2015-20 as well as the Council's Annual Report (2016/17). Annual reporting was one of the prime opportunities for review, monitoring and reflection and an opportunity for the authority to capture its on-going activity around meeting its general and specific duties. It also noted that the Council was held by law to publish an Annual Report on past performance by the end of October each year.

Outcome:

County Council approved the Council's Annual Report for 2016/17.

2.4 Attendance Management Monitoring Report April 2017 to September 2017

In December 2017 the Committee considered a report on Attendance Management Performance for the period April 2017 to September 2017 which detailed sickness absence figures for the Departments for quarter 2 (April to September) along with benchmarking and performance ranking tables. The report also included a breakdown of the key causes for absence to enable the Committee to scrutinise the council's performance in relation to managing attendance. One of the outcomes of the report was the arrangement of a development session for members of the Policy and Resources Committee to enable members to gain a greater understanding of sickness management within the authority and schools and agreeing the type of data it wishes to see in future reports.

2.5 Revenue & Capital Budgets

The Committee received quarterly reports on the departmental and corporate revenue and capital budgets. These reports enabled members to monitor the level of spend in each area and the progress made in any capital works.

As well as monitoring the current budget the Committee was also consulted on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21. The report provided the Committee with the current proposals for the Revenue Budget for 2018/19 together with the indicative figures for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years.

Members accepted the report and endorsed the Charging Digest.

The Committee was consulted on the Five Year Capital Programme 2018/19 - 2022/23. It was noted that the proposed Delta Lakes schemes within the Wellness and Life Science Village were not part of the capital programme.

Outcome:

County Council approved the Revenue Budget Strategy and the Five Year Capital Programme.

2.6 Quarterly Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Reports

The Committee received quarterly updates outlining the activities within the Treasury Management Function, in line with the requirements of the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy approved by the County Council on the 23rd February 2016.

2.7 2017/18 Well-being Objectives and Governance & Resource – Departmental and Corporate Performance Monitoring Reports

One of the principal roles of scrutiny committees is to monitor the performance of services and functions within its remit. They undertake this work mainly through the consideration of half-yearly performance monitoring reports and various action plan monitoring reports. The performance monitoring report provides a balanced picture of performance across the relevant service areas. The Committee considered the performance reports for its remit at its meetings in October 2017 and March 2018. During its meeting in October 2017, the Committee was apprised of what the Authority was doing about the high level of sickness absence that was demonstrated within the report. Following a suggestion the Committee unanimously resolved that arrangements be made for the Committee members to visit the occupational health unit followed by an informal session on HR.

2.8 Corporate Asset Management Plan and Office Accommodation Strategy Update

In December 2017 the Committee received an update on progress in relation to the actions contained within the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016-2019 and Office Accommodation Strategy. The report also provided an outline of the outcomes envisaged via agile working which would become a significant feature of the Office Accommodation Strategy in future years.

2.9 Annual Report 2016/17 on the Welsh language

In December 2017 the Committee considered the Annual Report in relation to the Welsh language and the introduction of the Standards during 2016-17. The Report had been produced in order to comply with the Welsh Language Commissioner's monitoring arrangements.

2.10 Carmarthenshire Public Services Board (PSB)

In December 2017 and February and March 2018 the Committee, as the designated scrutiny committee appointed to scrutinise the work of the PSB, considered the minutes of meetings of the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board. Members of the Scrutiny Committee have had the opportunity of attending PSB Meetings as observers. At its December meeting the Committee also considered and noted the 'Draft Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan: The Carmarthenshire We Want' which had been developed by the PSB. The Plan was published by May 2018, following public consultation, in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Committee also received the

PSB's Annual Report 2016/17 at its meeting in January 2018 which had been presented by the Board's Chair Mr. Barry Liles.

2.11 Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2016-17

In December 2017 the Committee considered the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2016-17 which detailed how the Council had implemented its Strategic Equality Plan and fulfilled its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Specific Duties for Wales.

2.12 Transform, Innovate & Change (TIC) Programme Annual Report 2016/17 & Business Plan 2017/18

In February the Committee received the 'Transform, Innovate & Change (TIC) Programme Annual Report 2016/17 & Business Plan 2017/18' along with a presentation which included a case study on a current TIC project.

2.13 Draft Carmarthenshire Well-Being Plan: The Carmarthenshire We Want

In February the Committee considered the 'Draft Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan: The Carmarthenshire We Want' which had been developed by the Public Services Board [PSB] with a view to being published by May 2018, following public consultation, in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2.14 Corporate Enforcement Policy

In March 2018 the Committee considered and endorsed a revised Corporate Enforcement Policy document which came into effect on the 1st April 2018.

2.15 Digital Technology

In March 2018 the Committee considered and approved reports on

- the first ever Digital Schools Strategy for Carmarthenshire;
- a proposed Digital Technology Strategy 2018-2021;
- a proposed policy to govern how the Council provided its computers with internet access to members of the public.

3. Other Scrutiny Activity

3.1 Task and Finish

The Committee did not undertake a task and finish review during 2017/18.

3.2 Site Visits

The Committee did not undertake any site visits during 2017/18.

3.3 Development Sessions

The following all-member development sessions /seminars were held during 2017/18, to which Committee members were invited:

- 15-05-2017 Ethics, Standards, Legal Duties and Responsibilities [induction] - 15th May 2017;
- Member Development and Training - Finance including Budgeting & Treasury Management - 17TH May 2017;
- Introduction to Marketing and Media for all members - 27TH June 2017;
- Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act - 4TH September 2017;
- Health & Safety (including Corporate Manslaughter) - 28th September 2017;
- Welsh Local Government (WLGA) Regional Workshop - 13TH October 2017;
- Digital Transformation Seminar - 16TH October 2017;
- Substance Misuse all member development session - 13TH December 2017;
- Members Development the Evaluation of the Councillor Induction Programme for 2017 - 11TH December 2017;
- Members' seminar regarding the Local Housing Company - 19TH March 2018;
- Financial Exploitation Safeguarding Scheme seminar - 27TH March 2018.

In addition, there were several departmental budget seminars held.

The Committee also visited the occupational health unit which was followed by an informal session on HR.

4. Challenges

In undertaking its work the Committee has faced several challenges, which have included items not being reported in line with the FWP, level of detail in reports –sometimes too much detail sometimes too little.

5. Future Work

The Committee has made significant progress and will continue to concentrate on topics where Member's input will result in positive outcomes to drive forward service improvement. The future work of the Committee will be considered as part of the

Forward Work Programme planning session. In addition, the FWP will continue to be monitored during the course of the year.

6. Support for the Scrutiny Function

Support for Carmarthenshire County Council's Scrutiny function is provided by the Democratic Services Unit, based in the Administration & Law Division of the Chief Executive's Department.

Support for the Scrutiny function includes:

- Providing support and constitutional advice to the Council's Scrutiny Committees and to members of those Committees as well as producing minutes of their meetings and ensuring items arising from those meetings are actioned
- Giving support and advice in relation to the functions of the Council's Scrutiny Committees to executive and non-executive members of the Council and its officers;
- Managing the strategic development of Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire through engaging in national and regional Scrutiny networks and initiatives, supporting the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum, and the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Executive Board Forum;
- Advising and supporting the implementation of the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 as guidance is published;
- Managing the co-ordination and development of the Scrutiny forward work programmes in conjunction with Scrutiny members;
- Managing and co-ordinating Scrutiny review work, including the operation of scrutiny task and finish groups, authoring reports in conjunction with the groups, and assisting in the implementation and monitoring of completed reviews;
- Managing the Scrutiny member development programme;
- Despatching agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings a minimum of 4 working days prior to the meeting.

For more information on scrutiny in Carmarthenshire including work programmes, task and finish reports and annual reports, visit the County Council's website at:

www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/scrutiny

To contact the Democratic Services Unit, please call 01267 224028 or e-mail scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

7. Attendance

Attendance by members of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee during the 2017/18 year is shown in the table below. A total of 6 meetings were held between May 2017 and April 2018.

Scrutiny Committee Member	No. of meetings attended out of possible 6	%
Cllr. F. Akhtar	3	50%
Cllr. S.M. Allen	6	100%
Cllr. T.A.J. Davies	5	83.33%
Cllr. H. Davies	5	83.33%
Cllr. D.C. Evans	3	50%
Cllr. J. K. Howell	5	83.33%
Cllr. G.H. John	6	100%
Cllr. A.C. Jones	5	83.33%
Cllr. D. Nicholas – up to 7/2/18	0 [out of 4]	0%
Cllr. J. G. Prosser	6	100%
Cllr. A.G. Morgan	6	100%
Cllr. B. Thomas – up to 11/10/17	1 [out of 1]	100%
Cllr. D.E. Williams	6	100%
Cllr. K. Madge – from 12/1/18	3 [out of 4]	75%
Cllr. K. Broom – from 21/3/18	2 [out of 2]	100%
Substitutes	No. of meetings attended	
Cllr. J.S. Phillips	1	
Cllr. D. Thomas	1	
Cllr. W.T. Evans	1	
Cllr. S. Najmi	1	
Cllr. E.G. Thomas	1	
Cllr. K. Lloyd	1	

EBM	No. of meetings attended
Cllr. David Jenkins	6
Cllr. E. Dole	1
Cllr. M. Stephens	5

8. Glossary of Terms

CIPFA - The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

PSB - Public Service Board

FWP - Forward Work Programme

TIC - Transform, Innovate & Change

WBFG – Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015