

Communities Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Annual Report

2022 - 2023

Scrutiny
in Carmarthenshire



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Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



Contents

| Item | Title | Page Number |
|------|--|-------------|
| 1. | Introduction | 3 |
| 2. | Overview of the work of the Committee in 2022/23 | 3 |
| 2.1 | Number of Meetings | 3 |
| 2.2 | The Forward Work Plan | 3 |
| 2.3 | Pre- Decision Scrutiny | 4 |
| 2.4 | Performance Monitoring / Strategic Issues | 4 |
| 2.5 | Revenue & Capital Budgets | 6 |
| 2.6 | Establishment of Pre-decision Task and Finish Group – Development of Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy | 6 |
| 2.7 | Leisure, Culture and Outdoor Recreation Strategy - Consultation | 7 |
| 2.8 | Local Innovation Strategy | 7 |
| 2.9 | Community Asset Transfer Update | 8 |
| 2.10 | Annual Monitoring Report 2019/21 Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan | 8 |
| 2.11 | Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033 Draft Second Deposit | 9 |
| 2.12 | Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2023/24 | 9 |
| 2.13 | Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-25 Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Programme | 10 |
| 2.14 | An Alternative Outdoor Education Offer for Carmarthenshire | 10 |
| 2.15 | Update on the Ten Towns Initiative | 11 |
| 2.16 | Planning Obligation (Section 106) Update | 11 |
| 2.17 | Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-2026 | 11 |
| 2.18 | Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022-2027 | 12 |
| 2.19 | Update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund | 12 |
| 2.20 | Empty Homes Policy - Our Approach to Bringing Empty Homes Back to use | 12 |
| 2.21 | Tenant Compensation Policy | 13 |
| 2.22 | Rechargeable Repairs Policy | 13 |
| 2.23 | Conservation Area Appraisals | 14 |
| 2.24 | Burry Port Harbour Petition to Full Council – Update Position | 14 |
| 2.25 | Burry Port Placemaking Plan | 15 |
| 2.26 | Shared Prosperity Fund – Tackling Towns | 15 |
| 2.27 | Task and Finish | 16 |
| 2.28 | Site Visits | 16 |
| 2.29 | Development Sessions | 16 |
| 2.30 | Referrals | 17 |
| 3. | Challenges | 17 |
| 4. | Future Work | 17 |
| 5. | Support for the Scrutiny Function | 18 |
| 6. | Attendance | 18 |

Chair's Foreword



As the Chair of this Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year, I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for 2022/23. 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 again been a challenging period for the Council due to the effect of the covid pandemic and the Council's efforts to re-introduce services to pre-pandemic levels and I feel this Committee has continued to constructively play its part in terms of scrutinising performance and contributing to key council policies and decisions.

The forthcoming year will no doubt again be challenging but, I am confident the Committee will continue to focus on how to improve services effectively and efficiently and will have a positive impact on the outcomes for the residents of Carmarthenshire. I'm sure the Committee will also continue to work closely with the Council's Senior Managers and Staff to ensure that 2023/24 will be a productive year.

I would also like to thank all members of the Committee for their contributions and dedication during 2022/23.

Councillor Deryk Cundy
Chair of Communities, Homes and Regeneration 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 this report are to highlight the work undertaken by the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee during the 2022/23 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.

The Committee was chaired by Cllr. Deryk Cundy 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.

2. Overview of the work of the Committee in 2022/23

2.1 Number of Meetings

The Scrutiny Committee held 7 meetings during the 2022/23 municipal year.

2.2 The Forward Work Plan

The Scrutiny Committee develops its own Forward Work Plan (FWP) and in the main, meeting agendas were consistent with those outlined in the FWP, which was confirmed by the Committee at its meeting on the 29th September 2022.

The Plan 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 Plan, and the process for its agreement, has allowed each scrutiny committee to determine its own work agendas. The benefits of such an approach 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 Scrutiny Committees remits were updated by Council following the May 2023 elections and each Scrutiny Committee became responsible for the overview and scrutiny of specific Cabinet Portfolios and their respective services. As part of that update Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee changed to become the Communities, Homes and Regeneration

Scrutiny Committee with its remit being to scrutinise the following Cabinet Portfolios and their service areas:

- Homes
- Rural Affairs and Planning Policy
- Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism

These service areas relate to a number of key responsibilities that include:

- Housing – Social and Private Sector
- Planning Policy
- Regeneration including physical and rural development
- Economic Development
- European and Externally Funded Programmes
- Libraries
- Arts and Theatres
- Museums and Archives
- Countryside facilities
- Sports, Leisure and Recreation

To compliment the work undertaken during formal meetings, the Committee also undertakes other scrutiny functions such as task and finish, visits to establishments falling within its remit together with member development sessions.

2.3 Pre- Decision Scrutiny

Scrutiny plays a key role in promoting accountability in the decision making process of the Local Authority. It is also useful in ensuring that Council policies reflect current priorities, as well as promoting efficiency and encouraging partnership working with external agencies.

In order for Scrutiny Committees to take on greater ownership of their own Forward Work Plans, a pre-decision method of scrutiny was introduced in September 2022 which allows Scrutiny Committees to decide which reports from the Cabinet Forward Work Plan they wish to come before them. As per the normal process, Committees are also able to identify their own topics and Cabinet are still able to invite a Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise a decision which was in the pipeline.

2.4 Performance Monitoring / Strategic Issues

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 reports provide a balanced picture of performance across the relevant service areas. The Communities, Homes and Regeneration

Scrutiny Committee received the Performance Monitoring Reports for the Council's 2022/23 Wellbeing Objectives at its meetings on the 19th December 2022 (Quarter 2 – 1st April 2022- 30th September 2022) and 5th April, 2023 (Quarter 3 – 1st April 2022 – 31st December 2022). It was noted the Council would continue reporting on the Objectives throughout 2022/23 until they were superseded by the new Corporate Strategy.

Carmarthenshire County Council Annual Report 2021/22 - As part of its performance monitoring role, the Committee received relevant information from the Council's key strategies and plans. One of the key areas relating to the Council's management is the Annual monitoring of progress achieved against the Council's well-being objectives detailed within the 2021/22 Report. With that in mind, the Committee, in December 2022, considered the Annual report detailing the progress and adaptations made during the year in relation to those elements of the Council's 13 Well Being objectives falling within its remit, which was adopted in June 2018, as amended, to reflect developing priorities and the impact of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, Brexit and climate change. The Committee noted that while it was considered good practice to ensure the Corporate Strategy was up to date and resources allocated to priorities, the Improvement Objectives must be published annually in accordance with both the Local Government (Wales Measure 2009) and The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. Equally, the Council had a duty under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales 2021) to report on performance-based self- assessment approach/

Outcome:

The Cabinet at its meeting in January 2023 recommended to Council that the Annual Report 2021/22 be received which was subsequently adopted by the Council in January 2023.

Departmental Draft Business Plans 2022 - 2023 – In April 2023 the Committee considered the Departmental Draft Business Plans 2023 - 2024 for those areas of the Communities, Chief Executive and Place and Infrastructure Departments falling within its remit (referenced below) detailing the strategic actions and measures required to be taken forward to enable the Council to make progress against its Well-Being Objectives, thematic priorities and service priorities. This provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider and comment upon the priorities outlined for the departments.

- Housing and Public Protection
- Housing Property and Strategic Projects
- Leisure
- Regeneration
- Place and Sustainability

Outcome:

The Committee approved the above Draft Business Plans for the service Divisions within the Communities, Chief Executive and Place and Infrastructure Departments falling within its remit.

Actions & Referrals - During the course of the municipal year requests can be made by members for additional items to assist in discharging their scrutiny role. Actions & Referrals updates are presented to Committee bi-annually providing an update on progress in relation to these requests.

2.5 Revenue & Capital Budgets

Budget Monitoring Reports - The Committee received quarterly reports on the departmental and corporate revenue and capital budgets. These reports enabled members to monitor and challenge the level of spend in each service area and the progress made in connection with any capital works.

Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2023/24-2025/26 - As well as monitoring the revenue and capital budgets, the Committee was also consulted on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26. The report provided the Committee with the proposed Revenue Budget Strategy for 2023/24 together with indicative figures for the 2024/25 and 2025/2026 financial years.

Outcome:

As part of the widespread consultation undertaken on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26, the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered the Strategy at its January 2023 meeting and endorsed the budget proposals, as submitted. The Budget Strategy was subsequently adopted by the Cabinet and Council at their meetings in February and March 2023, subject to some amendments and a reduction in the planned council tax levy.

2.6 Establishment of Pre-Decision Task and Finish Group – Development of Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy

In September 2022, the Committee considered a report on a proposal to establish a pre-scrutiny Task and Finish Group with the aim of developing an Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy for Carmarthenshire. The policy was considered to be essential as the Council, along with all Welsh Local authorities, was experiencing an unprecedented situation where the demand for social housing was exceeding supply, with the position having significantly worsened due to a number of external factors including:

- Welsh Government's 'No one left behind' approach to ensure everyone has a safe and secure place to live and to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and unrepeatable.
- Unintended consequences of the introduction of the new Rented Homes Act
- Huge pressures in general market in terms of house prices and rents
- Ukraine re-settlement programme and,
- UK wide proposed asylum dispersal scheme

Outcome:

The Task and Finish Group was duly established, and the Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy was approved by the Communities, Homes and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 26th January 2023 and subsequently adopted by the Council's Cabinet on the 27th February 2023 subject to the policy being in place for a period of up to 18 months in lieu of the recommended period of approximately one year.

2.7 Leisure, Culture and Outdoor Recreation Strategy - Consultation

In November 2022, the committee was consulted on the development of a new 10 year Leisure and outdoor Recreation Strategy for Carmarthenshire centred on the themes of:

- Where the Authority had been and its journey from 2007-2022
- Where it was now
- Where it was going

The Committee raised a number of issues including, a greater promotion of fishing, the contribution of leisure to the health of the population, level of childhood obesity amongst the 4-5 age group, the promotion of minor sports and the potential impact the economic climate may have on the strategy's deliverability.

Outcome:

The Strategy was endorsed by the Committee. It was then subject to a formal consultation process with the final strategy initially being scheduled for consideration by the Council's Cabinet, post consultation, in October 2023.

2.8 Local Innovation Strategy

In November 2022, the Committee considered the Council's proposals to adopt a Local Innovation Strategy focussing on the following four innovation opportunities to support the recovery and restructuring of Carmarthenshire's economy.

Opportunity 1 – Digital

- Improved fibre and mobile connectivity
- Opportunities for next generation digital technologies
- Addressing digital skills
- Developing a rural digital innovation centre

Opportunity 2 – Health

Development of a dispersed living laboratory to test new medical products and services

Opportunity 3 – Foundational Economy

Sustainable food procurement and development of the local food supply chain

Opportunity 4 – Circular Economy

Leveraging an approach for the Net Zero Agenda through reducing waste and recycling

As part of the Committee's deliberations, a number of issues were raised which included, benefits arising for the county from the Swansea Bay City Deal, achievability of Welsh Government targets for a reduction in food production to enable the country to produce its own food while also achieving carbon reduction and also the progress of the Pentre Awel development.

Outcome:

The proposals were recommended for adoption to the Council's Cabinet and were subsequently adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting held on the 28th November 2022.

2.9 Community Asset Transfer Update

The Committee, in November 2022 received an update report on the progress of the Council's Community Asset Transfer Programme together with a newly proposed updated Community Asset Transfer Procedures Document. As part of its consideration, the Committee raised issues in relation to the reasons for delays in the transfer of some assets and to the condition of others on transfer.

Outcome:

The Committee received the updated report and recommended the adoption to Cabinet of the newly updated Community Asset Transfer Procedures Document, which was adopted on the 27th March 2023

2.10 Annual Monitoring Report 2021/22 Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan & Annual Performance Report

In November, the Committee received the 2021/22 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) on the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) together with the Annual Performance Report produced in accordance with statutory requirements for its submission to Welsh Government, and publication on the Council's website by the 31st October. The Committee noted the Adopted LDP would be developed as further evidence and data became available prior to submission to the Cabinet and Council for approval. The content of the AMR would also be used to inform the preparation of the revised Local Development Plan.

In considering the report the Committee raised a number of issues, including:

- the promotion of Hydro Electric Power and small-scale energy renewable projects
- the challenges facing town centre retail units.

Outcome:

The Committee received the report and noted compliance with the requirement for its placement on the Council's website by the 31st October 2022. The Annual Monitoring Report 2021/22 for the Adopted LDP was also approved by Council in December 2022

2.11 Revised Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018-2033 Draft Second Deposit

In November, the Committee received a progress report on the preparation and adoption of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018-2033 Draft Second Deposit identifying the Council's land use vision, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Growth requirement for the County through to 2033. The report also detailed a comprehensive set of policies and provisions including site specific allocations for housing and employment use as well as environmental and other spacial considerations.

The Committee commented on a number of areas within the report including, the identification of land for the provision of affordable housing, place making policies and requirements, housing growth projections, the impact of phosphate regulations on development and also the provision of homes in the countryside for local people.

Outcome:

The report was received by the Committee. It was also considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on the 14th October 2023 which recommended its approval to Council. Council considered the report at its December 2022 meeting and endorsed it for public consultation.

2.12 Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2023/24

In December, the Committee considered the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2023/24, presented as part of the budget consultation process. The report reflected the latest proposals contained in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, being the primary financial planning tool for delivering the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+).

The Committee endorsed the report and proposed rent increases to the Cabinet and Council for consideration as part of the budget submission to the Council.

Outcome:

The Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent setting proposals were adopted by the Cabinet and Council at their meetings in February and March, 2023 respectively

2.13 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26 Carmarthenshire's Housing Investment Programme

In December, the Committee considered the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26 Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Plan, the five main themes of which were:

- Supporting Tenants and Residents
- Investing in Homes and our Estates
- Providing more homes
- Providing Affordable Warmth and Decarbonising Housing Stock
- The Local Economy, Community Benefits and Procurement

The Committee raised a number of issues on the report that included: void levels, the support offered to tenants and on the Council proposals to provide an additional 2,000 new homes over the next five years.

Outcome:

The Committee resolved to recommend the report to Cabinet and Council which was accepted at their meetings in February and March 2023 respectively.

2.14 An Alternative Outdoor Education Offer for Carmarthenshire

In December, the Committee was requested to feed into a forthcoming report reviewing the Council's current Outdoor Education Offer and to explore options for an alternative delivery model to be delivered from within existing resources. It was noted that as the existing outdoor education facility at Pendine had reached the end of its life, and the Council had no capital funding available for its replacement, an alternative delivery model was being explored with a new purpose being proposed and re-defined following consultation with schools and other key stakeholders, as follows:

- To deliver high quality, challenging, outdoor education opportunities, primarily to Carmarthenshire pupils, aligned to the new curriculum.
- To provide a range of residential opportunities for children to develop their social and emotional intelligence skill whilst experiencing being away from home.
- To deliver high quality outdoor education opportunities at a range of outdoor recreation sites and settings, including at schools.
- To consider wider, possibly commercial opportunities that will help grow and sustain the Outdoor Education offer across the County of Carmarthenshire.

The Committee referred to the value of the existing outdoor residential facility at Pendine and fully supported the need for the continued operation of outdoor education provision while also suggesting options to facilitate its continued provision

Outcome:

The Committee received the report with the final post consultation report initially being scheduled to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on the 18th September, 2023

2.15 Update on the Ten Towns Initiative

In December, the Committee considered an update report on the work of the Council's Ten Towns Initiative outlining the support secured to progress the initiatives at a local level.

Outcome:

The update report was received.

2.16 Planning Obligation (Section 106) Update

In December, the Committee received an update report providing an overview of the developer contributions received through planning obligations (Section 106 Agreements). The report outlined background information relating to planning obligations, the process of applying for developer contributions together with an overview of the income and expenditure during 2021/22, as well as providing an update on the position for the 2022/23 financial year.

Outcome:

The update report was received.

2.17 Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-2026

In January 2023, the Committee considered a report on the Housing Support Programme (HSP) Strategy 2022-2026, produced in accordance with Welsh Government requirements, detailing the strategic priorities of the Council, and its partner agencies, on homelessness prevention and housing related support services over the coming 4 years (2022-26). The Strategy refreshed earlier priorities included within the Local Authority's former homelessness strategy and the Housing Support Grant (HSG) Delivery Plan for 2021-22, with the development of the priorities having been informed by a comprehensive need assessment exercise that included direct engagement with stakeholders within the Local Authority providers of support services and service users.

A number of issues were raised on the report including funding / grant available together with the Service of Section 21 Notices by private landlords.

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the report which was subsequently approved by Cabinet at its meeting on the 20th February 2023

2.18 Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022-2027

In January 2023, the Committee considered the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2022-27, produced in accordance with Welsh Government Requirements, containing a series of High-Level Actions to enable the Council to transition to a Rapid Rehousing approach to help make homelessness in Carmarthenshire rare, brief and unrepeatable.

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the report which was subsequently approved by Cabinet at its meeting on the 20th February 2023

2.19 Update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund

In January, the Committee received an update report on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The report contained information on the application form and assessment criteria for the Anchor and Standalone projects, and it was noted a guidance document to assist applicants was currently being prepared. The report also detailed information on the following 5 anchor projects approved by the Cabinet:

Community Anchor,
Rural Anchor,
Place Anchor
Supporting Local Business Anchor
Employability & Skills Anchor

A number of issues were raised on the report including the progression of the Fund through the democratic processes of the four constituent authorities of the Swansea Bay City Deal, the inclusion of the Ten Towns Initiative within the Rural Anchor together with there being opportunities for all town and community councils to apply for funding.

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the report which was subsequently approved by Cabinet at its meeting on the 20th February 2023

2.20 Empty Homes Policy – Our approach to bringing empty homes back to use

In February, the Committee considered a report on the Council's Empty Homes Policy detailing its approach, vision and work programme for the next four years to tackle and bring empty private residential homes within the County back into use. It was noted that since 2017 the Council had reduced the number of private

empty homes within the County from 2667 to 1,984 with the aim of the policy being to further reduce that number to 1500 by 2026

A number of issues were considered as part of the report including:

- the targeting of empty homes and the options available to the council for their re-introduction to the housing stock
- the issue of second or holiday homes
- funding availability via grants/loans to bring empty homes back to use.
- implementation timescales

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the report for referral to the Cabinet subject to some amendments. The Cabinet approved the report at its meeting on the 20th February 2023 for formal submission to the Welsh Government

2.21 Tenant Compensation Policy

In February, the Committee considered a report detailing the Council's approach to when it may be appropriate to compensate its tenants who have suffered loss or inconvenience due to service failure and to also help guide officers when dealing with tenants, ensuring a clarity and consistency of approach when compensation was being considered. It was noted the policy had been prepared in response to the Local Government Ombudsman's expectation for landlords to have a compensation policy to provide guidance on offering compensation and to ensure landlords were protected when claims were made.

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the report for referral to the Cabinet which is scheduled for consideration at its meeting on the 3rd July 2023

2.22 Rechargeable Repairs Policy

In February, the Committee considered a report detailing proposed criteria for when a council tenant would be recharged for repairs undertaken by the council which were the tenants responsibility under their tenancy agreement.

The Committee raised a number of issues with the report which included:

- The Council undertaking works on a re-chargeable case by case basis where tenants were unable to undertake their own repairs,
- The introduction of an inspection regime
- Recovery procedures where tenants failed to repay recharges,
- Recharging for accidental damages

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the report for referral to the Cabinet which is scheduled for consideration at its meeting on the 3rd July 2023

2.23 Conservation Area Appraisals

In April, the Committee considered a report on appraisals undertaken on 10 conservations areas within Carmarthenshire and the proposed amendments to their boundaries, where applicable. The report detailed the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken between the 24th June and 26th August 2022, and outlined the next steps and future stages towards the adoption of the appraisals and their outcomes. It was also noted the appraisals had been undertaken in accordance with the Council's legal duties under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

The Committee raised a number of issues as part of the report that included:

- How to advise residents of their properties were situated within a Conservation Area
- The erection of solar panels on properties within the Conservation Area

Outcome:

The Committee approved the report and for a letter to be sent to the Welsh Government to highlight the challenges and contradictions between conservation areas and the climate emergency and that it considers how it can best support in both preserving, and saving, the environment. The report is also to be scheduled for consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on the 17th July 2023.

2.24 Burry Port Harbour Petition to Full Council – update Position

In May 2023, the Committee received an update report on the petition submitted to Council on the 25th January 2023 regarding the condition of Burry Port Harbour detailing the current position and operational concerns raised by both Council Officers and the Friends of Burry Port Marina.

The Committee expressed serious concerns at the condition of the Harbour subsequent to the granting of a 150 year lease to Burry Port Marine Ltd in 2018 and to the numerous broken pledges and breaches of lease over that period. In particular:

- the lack of dredging in the harbour to the point where it now seriously affected harbour operations for boat users,
- lack of repair and maintenance including the harbour gates which had been inoperative for the past few months with oil leaking into the water.
- pontoons breaking free in the harbour and floating into the bay.
- While the harbour had 450 berths, only 49 were occupied.
- The company's financial position

- The current condition of the harbour could deter any interest by potential future operators.
- Additional concerns were raised in relation to a list of other improvements around the harbour not progressing, including an upgrade of the commercial pontoons, a re-commencement of work to the old RNLI building into a new Harbour Masters' Office and improved changing and showering facilities for harbour users.

Outcome:

The Committee resolved for its concerns at the current situation at the Harbour to be conveyed to the Cabinet and that Cabinet be requested to visit the Harbour at low tide and to consider terminating the lease agreement with Burry Port Marine Ltd if no improvements had been achieved by the end of the current legal process.

Cabinet at its meeting held on the 19th June was informed that subsequent to the Committees meeting, Burry Port Marine Ltd went into administration on the 22nd June. The Cabinet noted the position and that officers were in discussion with the appointed administrators.

2.25 Burry Port Placemaking Plan

In May 2023, the Committee considered a report on the adoption of a Placemaking Plan for Burry Port to identify opportunities aligning the recovery proposals for the town centre with the regeneration aspirations of the harbour side area to ensure Burry Port maximised the impact of planned regeneration activity in the local area, with the Plan's main aims being to:-

- Grow existing business.
- Maximise job creation.
- Support the development of a knowledge economy.
- Developing distinctives of the area
- Identify current and future role of service provision in the community.
- Support opportunities for sustainable energy provision
- Establish sustainable income generation for future growth.
- Increase resilience, sustainability and future growth of the town and surrounding communities.

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the Plan which is also initially scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on the 3rd July 2023

2.26 Shared Prosperity Fund – Tackling Towns

At its May meeting, the Committee received a report on the Shared Prosperity fund and the operation of the Council's Tackling Towns Programme within the Place Anchor. The programme aimed to improve Carmarthenshire's town centres by being targeted towards supporting policies and interventions to

respond to on-going challenges they faced. Annexe A to the report provided the Committee with a list of the proposed projects within each of the 14 centres covered by the programme.

Outcome:

The Committee approved the report which is also initially scheduled for consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on the 3rd July

2.27 Task and Finish

In September, the Committee resolved to establish a Task and Finish Group to develop an Emergency Social Housing Allocation Policy for Carmarthenshire. The Group met on 5 occasions between October 2022 and January 2023 culminating in a Draft Policy being submitted to its meeting in January 2023. The Committee endorsed the Draft policy which was subsequently adopted by Cabinet at its meeting on the 27th February, 2023.

The Committee also requested regular monitoring reports on the policy's operation be submitted to all its future meetings. The first monitoring report was received at the Committee's meeting in May 2023

2.28 Site Visits

While a number of site visits were included within the Committee's 2022/23 Forward Work Programme, it was unable to undertake those due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19.

2.29 Development Sessions

The Committee held one service specific development session during 2021/22 on the Draft Leisure Strategy to help inform its development prior to consideration by the Council in 2023.

The following all member development sessions / member seminars were held during 2022/23:-

- Introduction and overview of how to use Zoom
- Introduction and overview of mod.gov
- Code of Conduct, Ethics, Standards, Legal Duties & Responsibilities
- Introduction to Carmarthenshire County Council & Launch of Induction Programme
- Constitutional Matters & Meeting Preparation
- Local Government Finance
- External Regulators
- Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire
- Climate Change, Mitigation and De Carbonisation
- Planning

- Equalities & Diversity
- Carbon Literacy
- Personal Safety and Self Care, Stress Management, Personal Resilience, Work-life balance
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence
- Cyber Security
- Introduction to Marketing and Media
- Armed Forces
- Complaints Policy
- Transform, Innovate and Change
- Emergency Planning
- Speed Reduction Legislation
- Council Owned Companies
- Section 106 Legal Agreements
- Council Performance Management Framework
- Modernising Education Programme Review
- Future Waste Changes
- Dyfed Pension Fund Training
- Sustainable Communities for Learning
- Member Enquiries
- Corporate Strategy Workshop
- Housing Repairs Briefing
- Conservation Areas Briefing

In addition to the above, several departmental budget seminars were held as part of the Council's consultation process on the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and five year capital programme.

2.30 Referrals

The Committee made no referrals to other scrutiny committees/cabinet during 2022/2023

3. Challenges

One of the significant challenges faced by the County in 2022/23 was the impact of the Covid Pandemic on the provision of services to the residents of Carmarthenshire and the councils' efforts to achieve a return to pre- pandemic service levels.

4. Future Work

The Committee has made significant progress and will continue to concentrate on topics where Members' input will result in positive outcomes to drive forward service improvement. To ensure best use is being made of meeting time and with the benefit of the added value of pre-meetings, the Committee is keen to achieve a more streamlined scrutiny process.

The future work of the Committee will be considered as part of the Forward Work Programme planning session. The FWP will continue to be monitored during the course of the year, together with the Cabinet FWP.

5. 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:

- Formulating, in accordance with the FWP, and despatching agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings a minimum of 4 working days prior to the meeting,
- Providing support and constitutional advice to the 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 meetings of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs with the Executive Board,
- Advising and supporting the implementation of the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 as and when guidance is published,
- Managing the co-ordination and development of the Scrutiny Committees' forward work programmes in conjunction with Scrutiny Committee members,
- Managing and co-ordinating Scrutiny review work, including the administration of scrutiny task and finish groups, assisting in writing reports in conjunction with the groups and assisting in the implementation and monitoring of completed reviews,
- Assisting with the Scrutiny member development programme.

For more information on Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire including forward 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

6. Attendance

Attendance by members of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee during the 2022/23 municipal year is shown in the table below. A total of 7 meetings were held between September 2022 and May 23 against the scheduled 7.

| Scrutiny Committee Member | No. of meetings attended | % |
|--|---------------------------------|----------|
| Cllr D. Cundy | 7 | 100 |
| Cllr. A. Davies | 7 | 100 |
| Cllr. B. Davies | 6 | 86 |
| Cllr. H. Davies | 6 | 86 |
| Cllr. T. Davies | 6 | 86 |
| Cllr N. Evans (From end of September 22- until April 2023) | 4 | 57 |
| Cllr R. Evans | 5 | 71 |
| Cllr. K. Howell | 7 | 100 |
| Cllr. B. Jones | 6 | 86 |
| Cllr. D. Owen | 5 | 71 |
| Cllr. M. Palfreman | 6 | 86 |
| Cllr. H. Shepardson | 6 | 86 |
| Cllr. R. Sparks | 6 | 86 |
| Cllr. M. Thomas (To end of September 2022 – RE-appointed to the Committee in April 2023) | 2 | 29 |
| Substitutes | No. of meetings attended | |
| Cllr. E. William | 1 | |
| Cllr A. Leyshon | 1 | |
| Cabinet Member | No. of meetings attended | |
| Cllr. L.D. Evans | 6 | |
| Cllr. A. Davies | 4 | |
| Cllr. G. John | 5 | |
| Cllr A. Lenny | 6 | |
| Cllr E. Thomas | 2 | |
| Cllr P.M. Hughes | 1 | |