

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

7 SEPTEMBER 2023

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY FUNCTION – ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Recommendations / Key decisions required:

- That the Democratic Services Committee considers the Scrutiny Function's Annual Report for 2022/23.

Reasons:

- To provide the Democratic Services Committee with an overview of the Council's Scrutiny Function and the respective Scrutiny Committees' work during the 2022/23 municipal year.

Cabinet Decision Required: NO
Council Decision Required: NO

Relevant Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder(s): N/A

Cllr. Giles Morgan (Chair of the Chairs & Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum / Chair of the Corporate Performance & Resources Scrutiny Committee)

Directorate:
Chief Executive's

Name of Head of Service:
Linda Rees Jones

Report Author:
Michelle Evans Thomas

Designations:

Head of Administration & Law

Principal Democratic Services
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY FUNCTION – ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

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

Carmarthenshire County Council has five Scrutiny Committees who normally meet on a six weekly basis.

The Scrutiny Committee remits were update by the Council following the May 2022 elections and each Scrutiny Committee became responsible for the overview and scrutiny of specific Cabinet Portfolios and their respective services.

In order for Scrutiny Committees to take on greater ownership of their own work programmes, a pre-decision method of scrutiny was introduced which allowed Scrutiny Committees to decide which reports from the Forward Plan they wish ed to come before them and as per normal process Committees were also able to identify their own topics and Cabinet could still invite a Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise a decision which was in the pipeline.

The attached report provides an overview of the Council's Scrutiny Function and makes specific reference to the work of the 5 Scrutiny Committees:-

- Corporate Performance and Resources
- Communities, Homes and Regeneration
- Education, Young People and the Welsh Language
- Place, Sustainability and Climate Change
- Health and Social Services

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: **Linda Rees Jones**

Head of Administration and Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	NONE	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Scrutiny function has an important role in helping the Council to achieve its expressed aims:

- People in Carmarthenshire are healthier
- People in Carmarthenshire fulfil their learning potential
- People who live, work and visit Carmarthenshire are safe and feel safer
- Carmarthenshire's communities and environment are sustainable
- Carmarthenshire has a stronger and more prosperous economy

2. Legal

Article 6.2 of the County Council's Constitution states that a scrutiny committee must:

"Prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committee's activities over the previous year."

Each Committee has prepared individual annual reports which have been combined in this report of scrutiny activity during 2022/23 to the Democratic Services Committee.

3. Risk Management

- An ineffective scrutiny function could undermine the Council's corporate governance arrangements and lead to poor quality decision making.
- Lack of progress in enhancing the role of scrutiny will impact on its effectiveness and esteem within the Council.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Linda Rees Jones Head of Administration & Law

1. Scrutiny Committee(s) – This report contains information from the individual Scrutiny Committee annual reports, received by the relevant committees during June/July 2023.

2. Local Member(s) – N/A

3. Community / Town Council – N/A

4. Relevant Partners – N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Scrutiny Committee information and links to Annual Reports	Scrutiny information page: Cymraeg – https://www.sirgar.llyw.cymru/cartref/cyngor-a-democratiaeth/pwyllgorau-a-chyfarfodydd/craffu/#.XcqGZcTgpPY English - https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/committees-meetings/scrutiny/#.XcqGOcTgpPY Agendas and Minutes: Cymraeg - https://democratiaeth.sirgar.llyw.cymru/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1 English – http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011	English – http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/pdfs/mwa_20110004_en.pdf Cymraeg – http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/pdfs/mwa_20110004_we.pdf
Council Constitution	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/the-council/councils-constitution/