

Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report 2018-19

Foreword

Welcome to Pembrokeshire County Council's Annual Scrutiny Report which highlights the work of our five Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2018-19. The Overview and Scrutiny process is an essential part of the Council's democratic structure and governance framework. It plays a key role in scrutinising the delivery and performance of Council services and holding decision makers to account through an approach based on positive pressure and constructive challenge.

It has been an interesting year and throughout the report you will see that each of the five Committees – Services, Corporate, Policy and Pre-decision, Partnerships and Schools and Learning – has looked at a number of topics which are important to both ourselves as elected Members and to the residents we serve. We would like to thank all colleagues for their contribution to the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committees this year.

As Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees we recognise our shared responsibility to work together to strengthen the Council's governance arrangements through delivering value-added scrutiny and we aim to continue to demonstrate our shared commitment to focus on the issues which matter most to Pembrokeshire residents over the next 12 months.



Cllr Brian Hall
Chair, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Cllr David Bryan
Chair, Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Cllr Guy Woodham
Chair, Policy and Pre-decision Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Cllr John Davies
Chair, Schools and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Cllr Rob Summons
Chair, Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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1. Overview and Scrutiny in Pembrokeshire

Overview and Scrutiny is a key component of Pembrokeshire County Council's governance and democratic framework. Its role is to help shape and develop policy, to identify and challenge under-performance, to strengthen decision-making and to hold the Executive to account for the decisions it takes. It is common to think of Scrutiny as a 'critical friend', and through constructive challenge and support it seeks to provide assurance to people for the actions and decisions the Council takes.

Overview and Scrutiny is a legislative requirement under the Local Government Act 2000 which introduced major changes to the way in which Councils make decisions. The Act enabled Councils to introduce new political structures, including one involving a Leader and Cabinet model (the Executive) and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Executive is responsible for taking key decisions about services in accordance with the policies adopted by the Council. Overview and Scrutiny Committees monitor performance, contribute to policy development and review and investigate matters which affect the County and its residents. Another function of Overview and Scrutiny Committees is to balance the Executive's powers, if necessary, by holding the Executive to account by examining and questioning their decisions. In simple terms, the function of Scrutiny allows non-Executive Members to influence how decision-makers can work more effectively for the people they serve.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees are responsible for developing their own work programmes and are encouraged to adopt an outcome-focussed, risk-based prioritised approach to the topics it decides to scrutinise. It is important to note that an Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot make decisions; it can only make recommendations. It is for the Executive to determine whether to accept or not recommendations made by a Committee.

In March 2016, following a review by the Corporate Governance and Democratic Services Committees and recommendations in the Welsh Audit Office Corporate Assessment of Pembrokeshire County Council in 2015, Councillors voted to introduce five new Overview and Scrutiny Committees from September 2016 to replace the previous 'thematic' Committees.

This new model was introduced on a pilot basis and refined the focus of Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the following key areas of Council business: Corporate, Partnerships, Policy and Pre-decision, Schools and Learning, and Services. This annual report provides an overview of the work of each of the five Committees over the past 12 months and highlights some of the good practice and positive outcomes which have been achieved as well as noting some of the challenges the Committees face.

It should also be noted that following the pilot phase, the scrutiny model has been reviewed and evaluated during 2018 and recommendations to further revise and improve the scrutiny structure were agreed by Council in May 2019. More information on these proposals can be found in the "Looking Ahead" section of this report.

For this year's annual report we have also undertaken Member survey which provides a richer picture of how scrutiny is currently working in the Council. It is important to listen to these views in order to understand what works well and what could be done better so that we continue to improve the effectiveness of the scrutiny function.

2. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Role and remit

The role of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise corporate functions and support services and its scope includes oversight of the overall strategic direction, policies, plans and priorities of the Cabinet (through the Programme for the Administration) and Council (post-decision) and to monitor the implementation of such as appropriate.

The Committee's scope also includes scrutiny of corporate support services through the development of a risk-based approach utilising relevant management information such as Service Transformation Plans, performance measures, business risk and external inspection / regulatory reports. The remit of the Committee specifically covers the following:

Corporate functions:

- Office of the Leader
- Cabinet Member annual reports
- Chief Executive
- Budget monitoring (annual and quarterly)
- Corporate performance monitoring (annual and quarterly)
- Corporate planning
- WAO corporate reports
- Service improvement
- Corporate safeguarding

Corporate services:

- Financial Services
- Information Technology
- Audit and Risk
- Customer Services
- Human Resources
- Legal and Committee Services
- Procurement
- Marketing and Communications
- Electoral Services

Membership

Membership of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is as follows:

Cllr Brian Hall, Chair (Independent)
Cllr Samuel Kurtz, Vice-Chair (Conservative)
Cllr John Cole (Not affiliated to any group)
Cllr Jon Harvey (Not affiliated to any group)
Cllr David Howlett (Conservative)
Cllr Michael John (Independent)
Cllr Stephen Joseph (Not affiliated to any group)
Cllr Reg Owens (Independent)
Cllr Michael Stoddart (Not affiliated to any group)
Cllr Alison Tudor (Labour)
Cllr Thomas Tudor (Labour)
Cllr Jacob Williams (Not affiliated to any group)
Cllr Michael Williams (Plaid Cymru)

Work of the Committee in 2018-19

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme is largely driven by the corporate and financial planning timetable, the review of budget and performance outcomes, and the development of the Council's strategic objectives. The Committee has a broad role in overseeing progress to deliver the Council's Transformation programme and it also maintains oversight of corporate safeguarding matters.

June 2018

- County Council Budget Outturn Monitoring Report 2017-18
- Transformation Programme Monitoring
- Corporate Service Review – IT
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18

September 2018

- Wales Audit Office report: Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future?
- Time to Change presentation
- Corporate Service Review - Audit and Risk Service
- Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 1 2018-19
- Corporate Risk Register 2018/19
- Draft Improvement Review 2017/18
- Transformation Programme Monitoring
- Notion of Motion on Voting Age
- Local Safeguarding Data Report

November 2018

- Corporate Service Review – Legal and Committee Services
- Integrated Budget Monitoring – Quarter 2 2018-19
- Financial Regulations
- Contract Procedure Rules
- Transformation Programme Monitoring
- Notice of Motion regarding a Legal Opinion
- Public Services Ombudsman’s for Wales Annual Letter 2017-18
- Referral from Audit Committee on Internal Communications relating to a complaint made by the Council to Dyfed-Powys Police

January 2019

- Referral from Audit Committee on Internal Communications relating to a complaint made by the Council to Dyfed-Powys Police
- The response to a public question at full Council
- Draft County Council Budget 2019-20 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20- 2022/23
- Corporate Service Review – Procurement
- Transformation Programme Monitoring

March 2019

- Integrated Budget Monitoring report Q3
- Corporate Plan 2019-20
- Corporate Service Review – Elections
- Whistleblowing Annual Report
- Transformation Programme Monitoring
- Notice of Motion relating to Commercial Property Grant Scheme in Pembroke Dock
- Notice of Motion relating to complaint to the Professional Standards Division of Dyfed Powys Police

What difference did the Committee make?

The Committee has had a specific focus this year at each meeting scrutinising individual corporate service areas such as IT, Audit and Risk, Procurement, Legal and Committee Services and Election Services. This has been one of the main benefits of the introduction of a Committee with a Corporate focus as it has enabled scrutiny Members to shine a light on areas of the organisation that were overlooked under the

previous directorate-based model, and through this Member scrutiny and general understanding of all areas of the Council has been strengthened.

The Committee plays an important role in providing assurance around the Council's corporate safeguarding responsibilities and arrangements, and in bringing additional challenge to the delivery of the Council's Transformation programme through its oversight of minutes from the Transformation Board and receipt of regular updates on progress from the Cabinet Member.

In general however, by its nature the work of the Committee focuses on the corporate policies and financial management of the Authority and therefore the Committee's work is heavily weighted towards reviewing past financial performance and scrutinising developing proposals around key strategic corporate planning arrangements. In doing so, the Committee provides assurance that the Council continues to deliver value for money for Pembrokeshire residents within budget, and that it meets its core statutory corporate responsibilities.

The Committee has appreciated the engagement of Cabinet Members to support the review of specific work areas particularly in terms of the Finance and Transformation perspectives which are central to the Committee's work.

Future challenges

The financial pressures upon the Authority show no signs of abating. The impact on service delivery continues to bite and service delivery is changing. The strategic direction and priorities of the organisation need to respond to financial challenges and this heightens the need for scrutiny to align corporate and financial planning with transformation.

Aligning corporate and financial planning alongside the transformation programme is an ongoing challenge for the Committee and Members have expressed concerns about the ambition of plans against the reality of budgets.

More can be done to monitor in year performance and delivery of the Corporate Plan and the Council's Wellbeing Objectives and to ensure alignment between our Wellbeing Objectives and those set out in the Well-being Plan for Pembrokeshire produced by the Public Services Board (the scrutiny of which has previously resided with the remit of the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee but which will be brought under this Committee under new proposals for 2019-20). Under the Well-being of Future Generations Act the Council has statutory requirements placed on it as a corporate body and the Committee has a key role to play in providing assurance that the Council is delivering against this important legislation.

3. Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Role and remit

The role of the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise activity where the Council works in partnership or collaboratively with other agencies. The Committee has been designated with the statutory responsibility for scrutinising the activity of the Public Services Board (PSB) as required under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and this provides the main focus for its work.

More broadly, its scope includes oversight of all of the Council's key strategic partnership arrangements and to scrutinise, where appropriate, where the Council works collaboratively to deliver or commission services at a local, regional or national level. To this end, the remit of the Committee covers the following:

PSB scrutiny:

- Development and production of a local Well-being Assessment
- Development and production of a Well-being Plan
- PSB Annual Plan
- PSB activity and progress in delivering its priorities
- Requiring any member or invited participant of the PSB to attend and give evidence (only in respect of the exercise of joint functions conferred on them as members of the PSB).

Other:

- Strategic Partnerships
- Joint strategic commissioning
- Statutory partnerships (e.g. Community Safety Partnership)

Membership

Membership of the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee is as follows:

Cllr David Bryan, Chair (Conservative)

Cllr Dr Simon Hancock, Vice-Chair (Not affiliated to any group)

Cllr Margot Bateman OBE (Independent)

Cllr Aden Brinn (Conservative)

Cllr Joshua Beynon (Labour)

Cllr Vic Dennis (Labour)

Cllr Paul Dowson (Not affiliated to any group)

CLlr Stephen Joseph (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Phillip Kidney (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Pearl Llewellyn (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Myles Pepper (Independent)
CLlr Paul Rapi (Plaid Cymru)
CLlr Kenneth Rowlands (Independent)

Co-optees:

Superintendent Ross Evans, Dyfed-Powys Police
Amy Richmond-Jones, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
Anna Bird, Hywel Dda University Health Board
Wales Probation Service

Work of the Committee in 2018-19

June 2018

- Mid and West Wales Regional VAWDASV Draft Strategy
- Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme
- Health Services in Pembrokeshire
- Task and Finish Group report looking at working with Third Sector to deliver services to improve health and well-being
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18
- Strategic Partnerships Governance and Performance Arrangements

October 2018

- Hywel Dda University Health Board Transformation Programme
- Community Asset Transfer policy
- Universal Credit rollout in Pembrokeshire
- Pembrokeshire Public Services Board
- Response from Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport regarding Syrian Refugees

January 2019

- County Council Budget 2019-20 and Summary Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-20 to 2022-23
- Destination Pembrokeshire Partnership
- Pembrokeshire Public Services Board – Communities theme
- Health Services in Pembrokeshire

- Notice of Motion relating to placing Hywel Dda University Health Board into special measures
- Referral from Cabinet on Town Council Link officer evaluation of pilot project
- Letter from Councillor R Sinnett re flooding at Lower Priory and Havens Head

February 2019 Extraordinary meeting

- Flooding at Lower Priory and Havens Head

March 2018

- Pembrokeshire Public Services Board – Recruitment and Employment Transformation Framework
- Update on Universal Credit rollout in Pembrokeshire
- Referral from Cabinet on Town Council Link Officer Evaluation of pilot project
- Flooding at Lower Priory and Havens Head

What difference did the Committee make?

The Committee has provided oversight and assurance of strategic partnership working in Pembrokeshire through its scrutiny of the Public Services Board (PSB). The Chair of the Committee attends the PSB meetings to demonstrate the Committee's commitment to engaging with the PSB and its work, and through this he is able to inform Committee Members about the process and detail of the PSB's deliberations and provide greater context to its work. In 2018-19, the Committee has started to scrutinise the emerging workstreams in the PSB's Well-being Plan and has held sessions with the lead partners from both the Communities-themed project and the Recruitment and Employment project.

The Committee invited community groups supporting the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Pembrokeshire to give evidence on their work and experiences to date in June last year. The community groups have worked tirelessly to overcome the issues of attracting financial support from UK Government and have worked with local partners to deliver an integrated and holistic offer to the refugees. The Committee recognised the barriers for the refugees seeking employment and wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport asking for reconsideration of the rule that driving theory tests can only be taken in English or Welsh. The response from the Secretary of State highlighted safety issues associated with non-English or Welsh speakers driving in the UK.

Recently, the Committee was asked by Cllr Sinnett to review the flooding that had affected Lower Priory and Havens Head in November 2018 and how effective the co-ordination of a collaborative partnership response had been and what lessons could

be learned from the episode. An extraordinary meeting was held in February to gather evidence from relevant partners and other stakeholders with an interest in the matter. Local residents were invited to attend and they provided presentations and information on their experiences and concerns. The Committee identified a number of recommendations for the Council and partner agencies in moving forward and the work will carry over into scrutiny's work programme over the coming year.

Future challenges

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee structures have been reviewed and Council has taken a decision to disband the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee; nonetheless some of the current challenges the Committee has faced will still be addressed within the revised scrutiny structure.

The way in which scrutiny of the Public Service Board is undertaken is being reconsidered and it is likely that a different method of scrutiny will be trialled to enhance current practice. In broad terms it is accepted that given the long term view of the Well-being Plan and the systemic and cultural changes necessary to deliver on its vision will not occur over the short term, scrutiny of the PSB's work needs to be undertaken in a more timely manner (as opposed to a standing item) and to be more focussed to ensure scrutiny's impact is maximised and to raise the profile of such scrutiny to make it more meaningful.

Regional partnerships continue to be a challenge for scrutiny due to the variety and complexity of governance arrangements and the differing geographies on which such partnerships are constituted. The Swansea Bay City Region has established a regional scrutiny committee comprising of three nominated Members of the Council. Education through Regional Working (ERW) has an ERW Scrutiny Councillor group which brings together Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Committees on a regional basis to discuss common issues and areas of concern (the work of which is overseen by the Schools and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and the West Wales Care Partnership is in the process of defining appropriate governance structures.

Rather than simply duplicating other regional scrutiny arrangements, local scrutiny of strategic partnerships needs to have a specific focus on what is best for Pembrokeshire, and to align with and add value to what is already established regionally.

4. Policy and Pre-decision Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Role and remit

The role of the Policy and Pre-decision Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of policies, plans and strategies in order to contribute to the quality and robustness of Cabinet decision-making. The remit and scope of the Committee includes:

- Cabinet's forward work programme
- Proposals for services changes, transformation and / or efficiencies
- Integrated Impact Assessments
- Strategies and plans, as appropriate
- Annual budget proposals

Membership

Membership of the Policy and Pre-decision Overview and Scrutiny Committee is as follows:

CLlr Guy Woodham, Chair (Labour)
CLlr Josh Beynon, Vice-Chair (Labour)
CLlr Tony Baron (Conservative)
CLlr Michelle Bateman (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Kevin Doolin (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Paul Dowson (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Mike Evans (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Tim Evans (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Huw George (Independent)
CLlr Stan Hudson (Conservative)
CLlr Mike James (Independent)
CLlr Elwyn Morse (Independent)
CLlr Rhys Sinnett (Plaid Cymru)

Work of the Committee in 2018-19

The Committee's work programme has covered a broad range of important topics over the past year, including its ongoing work supporting the significant changes to the Waste Service which are due to be introduced shortly along with several key pieces of work related to the Council's Transformation Programme.

In addition Members are engaged in a major piece of work reviewing how the Council manages and operates its County Farms and the Committee has also established a

Finance Panel which enables non-Executive Members to be engaged in the development of the Council's budget and Council Tax proposals.

The Committee also has a key role in scrutinising Council policy and strategy prior to adoption and has made an important contribution to strengthening many of these key documents throughout the year.

As Council funding continues to reduce in real terms and Cabinet is faced with ever more difficult and challenging decisions about how and where to allocate resources and what the future shape of Council services looks like, the Policy & Pre-decision Overview and Scrutiny Committees provides non-Executive Members with a vehicle through which they can have a voice and represent the views and concerns of residents.

July 2018

- Leisure Service Strategy
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18

September 2018

- County Farms Policy Review
- Corporate Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Waste Working Group update report
- Finance Panel update
- WAO Overview and Scrutiny report

November 2018

- Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy
- HR and People Strategy
- Enhancing Pembrokeshire Grant review
- Council Budget development 2019-20
- Corporate Debt Recovery Policy
- Homelessness Strategy

January 2019

- Draft Council Budget 2019-20 and Summary Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-20 to 2022-23
- Employee Code of Conduct

March 2019

- Pay Policy Statement 2019-20
- Local Toilet Strategy
- County Farms Policy Review working group interim report
- Waste Working Group update report

What difference did the Committee make?

The Committee's primary functions are to provide effective non-Executive Member engagement in the development of major proposals prior to Cabinet decision through focussed and appropriate constructive challenge, and in the development and review of Council policy and strategy. Through using its positive pressure and influence the Committee contributes to a stronger and more robust decision-making and policy framework which fully represents the needs and concerns of Pembrokeshire's residents.

While much of the Committee's work takes place in the formal public meeting setting some of its most effective work occurs as a result of establishing working groups which act on behalf of the full Committee. These working groups enable Members to properly explore and understand the rationale and drivers for potentially significant service or policy changes in the kind of detail that is not possible in a one-off Committee meeting. Through the process of utilising working groups the full Committee is able to make clear, evidence-based recommendations.

Currently, the Committee has 3 active working groups. Two of these are playing a key role in supporting major change proposals regarding the Waste Service and in reviewing the Council's approach to how it can better manage its County Farm estate in the future. The third of these working groups works closely alongside the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Director of Resources in the development of the Council's budget and Council Tax setting proposals.

As a result of the active engagement of the respective Cabinet Member, the Committee also plays an important role with regards to the Council's transformation programme, and it has current and emerging involvement in important pieces of work around the HR function and Communications, as well as an ongoing interest in the transformation of the Council's IT function and use of digital.

Future challenges

Given its pre-decision function, the Committee's work programme needs to be fully aligned with that of Cabinet's so that sufficient time is built into the decision-making process to allow the Committee to undertake its work in a timely, informed way.

Elements of this process can still be improved particularly to ensure that scrutiny is given the time to explore proposals to the level of detail required so that any recommendations it makes are properly evidence-based.

Public engagement remains an area for improvement and the Committee is keen to hear from members of the public as part of its scrutiny work so that its evidence gathering provides a more rounded view of what matters most to people. As the Council continues to evolve and change over the next 12 months it is important that the Committee understands the potential impact on those affected by any proposed changes so that these can be factored into the Committee's considerations.

Finally, and as was noted in last year's report, the willingness of Cabinet Members to pro-actively seek to engage in the work of the Committee must be noted, and is a clear indication of the commitment to the process and an understanding of the value which is added through an effective scrutiny process. The positive relationships which have formed between Executive and non-Executive Members through scrutiny is a sign of improving governance arrangements in the Council and a recognition that working together supports better decision-making and in turn that effective, efficient services are provided for the people of Pembrokeshire.

5. Schools and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Role and remit

The role of the Schools and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise services delivered to improve outcomes for children and young people, youth support and other community based services including Adult Learning, and to support the raising of educational standards and outcomes for learners.

The remit and scope of the Committee includes the following:

- Educational outcomes for all ages, particularly at Key Stage 4
- School categorisation
- Education through Regional Working (ERW)
- Individual Schools (through a Schools Scrutiny Panel)
- Inclusion Services
- Youth support and other community based services
- Post-16 learning, skills and training
- Financial information relating to schools and learning
- Safeguarding in Education

Membership

The Committee has 13 Members and 4 statutory co-optees as follows:

CLlr John Davies, Chair (Independent)
CLlr Paul Rapi, Vice-Chair (Plaid Cymru)
CLlr Michelle Bateman (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Vic Dennis (Labour)
CLlr Mike Evans (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Paul Harries (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Stanley Hudson MBE (Conservative)
CLlr Mike James (Independent)
CLlr Ken Rowlands (Independent)
CLlr Mike Stoddart (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Viv Stoddart (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Alison Tudor (Labour)
CLlr Steve Yelland (Conservative)

Co-optees:

Reverend Brian Douglas Witt (Church in Wales representative)
Mr Paul White (Roman Catholic representative)

Mr Philip Williams (Parent Governor representative)

Vacancy (Parent Governor representative)

Work of the Committee in 2018-19

The Committee has scrutinised a broad and diverse range of topics related to schools during 2018-19 in addition to its recurring annual focus on Safeguarding in Education and ERW, and the work of the Schools Scrutiny Panel, which has undertaken visits to Greenhill School and Croesgoch School. Throughout the year, the Committee scrutinised the following:

June 2018

- Human Resources capacity to support schools
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18

July 2018 (Extraordinary Meeting)

- 21st Century Schools - English Medium Secondary School - Haverfordwest Site Selection

September 2018

- Memorandum of Understanding – Delivery of Post-16 Education in Pembrokeshire
- Early Entry into Examinations
- KS4 and 5 Performance 2018
- Safeguarding in Education

November 2018

- Mental Health Awareness
- ALN Reform update
- Estyn Self Evaluation
- School Budgets 2019-20
- Response to the National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People and Education Committee consultation on School Funding in Wales

January 2019

- Draft County Council Budget 2019-20 and Summary Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-20 to 2022-23
- ERW Support to Pembrokeshire Schools

- Pembrokeshire Music Service
- Schools Scrutiny Panel reports

April 2019

- School Meals Service
- School Staff Absence Data
- Supply Teaching
- Update on the new National Curriculum

For 2019-20, the Committee will receive regular updates on the Directorate Improvement Plan, which will be used to inform the Committee's Forward Work Programme for the coming year and to provide focus on development areas within the Children and Schools directorate.

What difference did the Committee make?

The Schools and Learning Committee has scrutinised a wide range of performance data during the year and the work of ERW continues to be monitored on an annual basis.

The information that the Committee has looked at will assist it to develop its work programme for the year ahead. The findings from the Schools Scrutiny Panel visit to Greenhill School identified an area of work for further scrutiny by the Committee in 2019-20 around behaviour management in schools and the visit to Ysgol Croesgoch enabled Panel Members to see for themselves the positive steps that the school has taken to move forward following a period of uncertainty and Members were assured by the commitment of the School's Governing Body to this journey. In both schools the Panel were impressed by the involvement of pupils in the life of their schools and the opportunities for pupils to have their say.

In September 2018 the Committee again had the opportunity to scrutinise the issue of early entry into examinations which was the subject of a public request for scrutiny in 2017-18, and to seek assurance that the number of pupils being entered for early examinations had reduced following changes to Welsh Government policy. In November 2018 the Committee also provided a response to a National Assembly for Wales consultation on school funding and outline some of their concerns in the way that funding is calculated.

Finally, whilst discussing the County Council budget for 2019-20 at their January 2019 meeting, the Committee made a recommendation that sufficient funding from any unallocated budget be utilised to support and maintain community youth groups for the next 12 months whilst alternative sources of funding and delivery are sought. This

recommendation was accepted by Cabinet and subsequently incorporate into the budget approved by Council, helping to secure the future of these valuable resources used by children and young people.

Through work programming and oversight of educational outcomes and other relevant data, the Committee will continue to provide assurance that there is appropriate Member oversight and challenge of school performance, educational standards and outcomes for all learners and that appropriate support is being provided to Pembrokeshire Schools by ERW.

Future challenges

In the year ahead the Committee will utilise the Directorate Improvement Plan, educational outcome data, Estyn Reports and information on Departmental priorities to develop and monitor its work programme.

In particular, there are two challenging areas of work which the Committee will address in the coming months. The first will be to scrutinise the preparations for the introduction of the new National Curriculum in 2022. The new curriculum will mean sweeping changes to the way pupils learn and an increased emphasis on equipping young people for life through focussing on their ability to learn new skills and apply subject knowledge more positively and creatively. The new curriculum will be a standing item on the agenda of the Committee whilst the process of implementation takes place.

Secondly, the Committee will be looking in more detail at the provision of school transport for post-16 learners. At present this is provided free of charge but the impact of budgetary pressures means that it cannot be guaranteed in the future, which could have an impact on the sustainability of sixth forms within Pembrokeshire's schools.

6. Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Role and remit

The Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews services delivered by the Council to its customers. To determine its priorities the Committee assesses the quality and performance of Council services using a range of management information including Service Transformation Plans, performance measures, business risk and external inspection / regulatory reports.

Specifically, the remit and scope of the Committee covers the following Council services (and divisions within them);

- Highways and Construction
- Environment and Civil Contingencies
- Housing
- Planning
- Property
- Public Protection
- Regeneration
- Cultural and Leisure Services
- Adult Care
- Children's Services

Membership

The membership of the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is as follows:

CLlr Rob Summons, Chair (Conservative)
CLlr Jonathan Preston, Vice-Chair (Plaid Cymru)
CLlr Jamie Adams (Independent)
CLlr Di Clements (Conservative)
CLlr John Cole (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Tim Evans (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Brian Hall (Independent)
CLlr Simon Hancock (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Stephen Joseph (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Phillip Kidney (Not affiliated to any group)
CLlr Thomas Tudor (Labour)
CLlr David Pugh (Independent)
CLlr Tony Wilcox (Labour)

Work of the Committee in 2018-19

The Forward Work Programme is an important tool for the Committee, helping it to prioritise its workload and ensuring that, as much as possible, the work of the Committee adds value to the work of the Council and contributes towards improved Council services for residents through appropriate and proportionate support and challenge.

During the past year the Committee has scrutinised a range of services during which were identified through the active monitoring of Service Performance information collected quarterly for all services within the Authority. Committee Members have access to this information to enable them to monitor up to date information outside of meetings and to bring emerging matters of concern to the Committee's attention.

Through looking at the performance of services over several months, the Committee identified a range of concerns regarding services or specific service areas and requested these be brought before the Committee, as follows;

June 2018

- Public Protection and Enforcement update

September 2018

- National Performance Measures 2017-18

September 2018 (Call-In)

- Purchase of the former Ocky White Department Store

November 2018

- Disabled Facilities Grants
- Public Protection Service

January 2019

- County Council Budget 2019-20 and Summary Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-20 to 2022-23
- Housing Revenue Account Rent and Service Charge Policy 2019-20
- Regeneration Service

April 2019

- Planning Service
- District Enforcement Private Enforcement Initiative

What difference did the Committee make?

Demonstrating tangible outcomes and improvements from scrutiny can be difficult as it is often best seen as one tool in a range of measures that bring positive pressure and challenge which ultimately result in improvement.

A good example of the positive influence the scrutiny process can have followed a Cabinet decision in September 2018 regarding the purchase of the former Ocky White Department Store in Haverfordwest. The decision was called in and discussed at an Extraordinary meeting of the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in late September 2018. Following a thorough and in-depth scrutiny session at which a broad range of evidence was considered and the views and concerns of a number of stakeholders were heard, the Committee resolved that the purchase price for the property did not offer good value for money and on the matter being referred back to Cabinet the purchase price offer to the Council was substantially reduced. While it is not possible to credit the Committee's intervention as the sole reason for this, there is little doubt that scrutiny made a positive contribution towards the Council achieving a better outcome and ensured the interests of Pembrokeshire's residents were served effectively.

The Committee has twice considered the Private Enforcement Initiative in its meetings, once in November 2018 as part of the Public Protection update and again in April 2019 as a specific item looking at performance and delivery of the new enforcement regime. It was agreed at this meeting that a short term working group be established to look at the current contract and also to consider complaints, performance and future suggestions for improvements. The work of this group will be fed into the contract review process, helping to develop a service which best suits the needs and expectations of Pembrokeshire's residents.

Through its work programming and oversight of all service performance information the Committee will continue to provide assurance that there is appropriate Member oversight and challenge of service performance and delivery.

Future challenges

In the year ahead the Committee will continue to use relevant service performance information to determine its work programme, with a particular focus on services that are seen to be underperforming. Also, with the Transformation Programme within the

Authority moving forward at pace there will be opportunities for the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have a wider remit in scrutinising and measuring the impact of service change brought about through the Programme and how these might affect the quality of services Pembrokeshire residents receive.

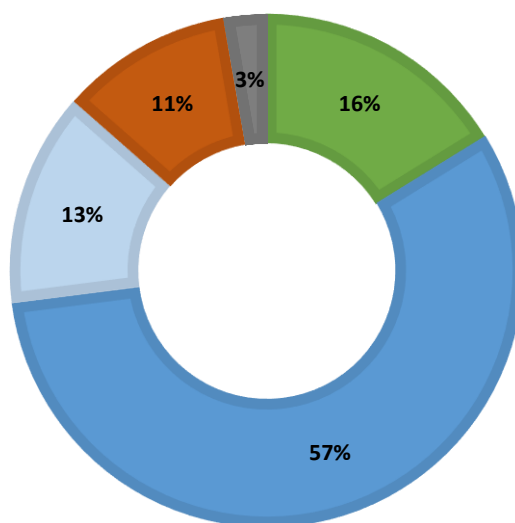
7. Member survey

For the first time, Members were asked this year to complete a survey covering a range of factors relating to the function and practice of Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The response rate to the survey was 65% which is a very positive return, and is reflective of the firm commitment of the majority of Members to continue to work towards strengthening scrutiny's effectiveness, and a recognition of the key role Members themselves have to play in the process.

The data from the survey is set out below along with a broad narrative gathered from some of the commentary Members included in their responses.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF SCRUTINY?

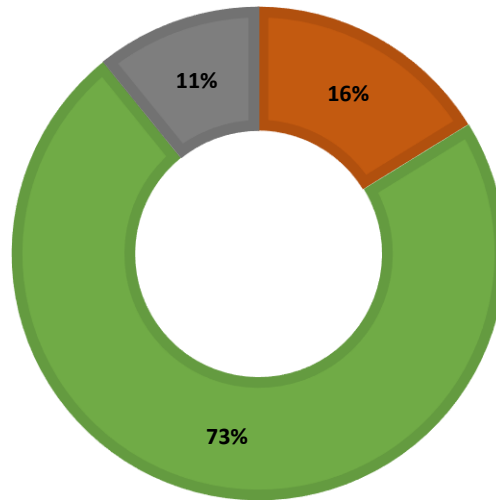
■ Very Effective ■ Effective ■ Neither ■ Ineffective ■ Don't know



73% of respondents consider scrutiny to be very effective or effective. 11% think that it is ineffective.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE NUMBER OF ITEMS ON O&S MEETING AGENDAS?

■ Too many items ■ About right ■ Not enough items

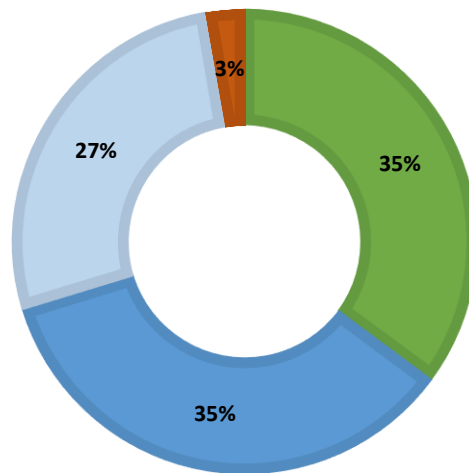


When asked about the number of items on Committee agendas, 73% of respondents think that these were about right, while 16% think there were too many items and 11% think there are not enough items.

When looking more closely at the comments it is clear that there is a general feeling that practice across Committees is inconsistent and variable, with the belief that some Committees have fuller agendas and work programmes than others. More work needs to be done to better prioritise scrutiny agenda topics and to ensure Committees are focussing on what matters.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE QUALITY OF REPORTS SCRUTINY MEMBERS RECEIVE?

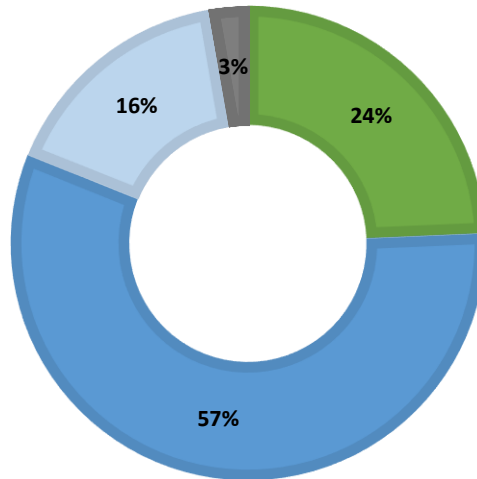
Very Good Good Adequate Poor Very Poor



In general, responses suggest that Members are happy with the quality of reports they receive to inform their discussions at Committees, with 70% saying that these are either very good or good. However, with 27% thinking that the quality of reports is only adequate it suggests that there is room for improvement in this regard and some of the comments support this, noting variance and inconsistency in the reports Members receive.

ARE MEMBERS PROVIDED WITH THE INFORMATION THEY REQUIRE TO SCRUTINISE EFFECTIVELY?

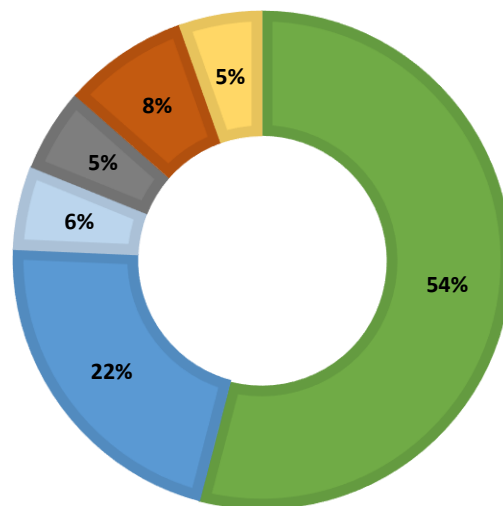
■ Always ■ Usually ■ Sometimes ■ Rarely ■ Never



Over 81% of respondents think that Members receive the necessary information in order to scrutinise effectively, a positive response given the importance of providing Members with the tools through which they can undertake the scrutiny role effectively. Some comments noted that should information be missing from reports then officers were helpful in providing clarity through questioning at the meeting or by following up through email after the meeting.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CHAIR?

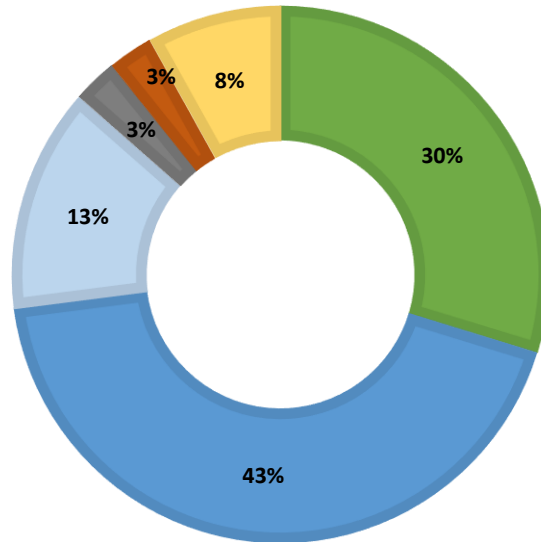
Very Good Good Adequate Poor Very Poor Prefer not to say



While 76% of respondents stated that the performance of the Chair is either very good or good there were a number of caveats applied to many answers in terms of consistency across Committees and that some Chairs are seen to be more far more effective than others in their role. 19% of Members think that the Chair is either adequate, poor or very poor and given the importance of the role in terms of leading the work of the Committee, and establishing the right conditions in meetings for effective scrutiny, this does raise some concerns.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE CONTRIBUTION OF CABINET MEMBERS?

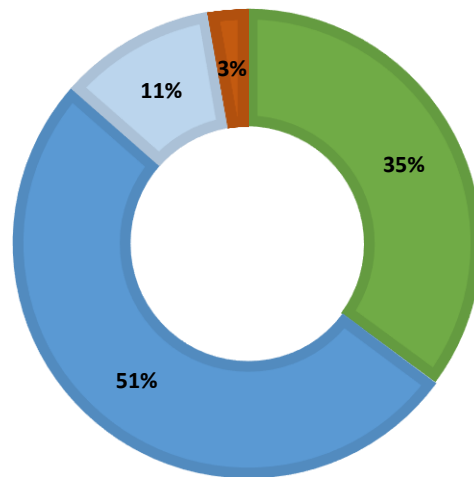
Very Good Good Adequate Poor Very poor Prefer not to say



73% of respondents state that the contribution of Cabinet Members in the scrutiny process is either very good or good. This is a positive response and there has been a definite shift over the past couple of years where we have seen Cabinet more pro-actively engage in the work of Committees, particular in terms of presenting reports and being the first port of call for answering questions.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE CONTRIBUTION OF OFFICERS?

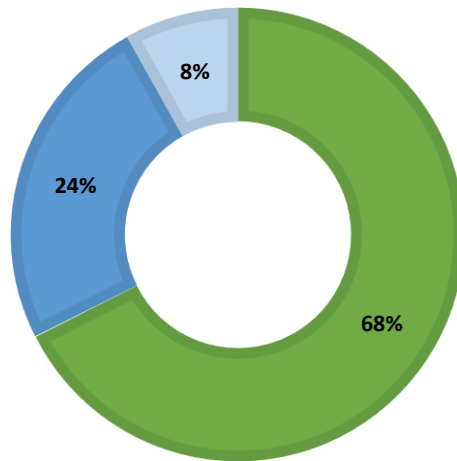
■ Very Good ■ Good ■ Adequate ■ Poor ■ Very Poor ■ Prefer not to say



An overwhelming majority of respondents (86%) think that the contribution of officers at scrutiny meetings is either very good or good.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE SUPPORT PROVIDED TO MEMBERS BY THE SCRUTINY SUPPORT TEAM?

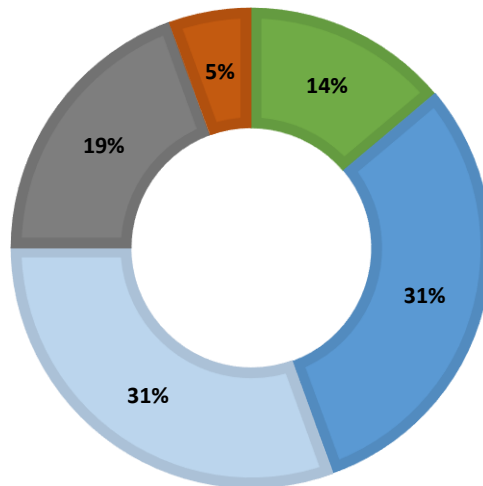
■ Very Good ■ Good ■ Adequate ■ Poor ■ Very Poor ■ Prefer not to say



92% of respondents think that the Scrutiny Support team provides very good or good support to the work of Committees, and the remaining 8% of respondents consider that support to be at least adequate.

WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS SCRUTINY MADE OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS?

■ A great deal ■ A lot ■ A moderate amount ■ A little ■ None at all



45% of respondents think that scrutiny has made a great deal or a lot of difference over the past year, while 50% think scrutiny has made a moderate or a little difference. 5% think that scrutiny has made no difference.

In comments, Members generally referenced working groups (e.g. Waste Working Group) as having added value, as well as citing specific topic-based scrutiny around issues such as the flooding in Milford Haven and the purchase of the Ocky White building.

8. Looking ahead towards 2019-20

The Council has put a significant amount of targeted effort into improving the scrutiny function over the last few years. Despite the real improvements and good progress we have seen in many areas there still remains work to do to continue to strengthen and embed the role of scrutiny in the Council in order to meet current and future challenges and to reach our aspiration to be seen as among the best performing in Wales.

Over the next 12 months our focus to improve will be concentrated in the following related areas:

Implementing the revised scrutiny model

The Council's current Overview and Scrutiny Committee model was implemented on a pilot basis in September 2016 and a consultant from the Centre for Public Scrutiny was commissioned by the Council to support the implementation and evaluation phase of this new scrutiny model. Council considered the outcomes from the review of the pilot phase in December 2018 and agreed in principle to make some revisions to the scrutiny model. The most significant of these proposed changes saw the cessation of the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee and for it to be replaced by a new Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee from May 2019 onwards.

This process of developing the revised model has been led and owned by elected Members through a Scrutiny Working Group which was tasked with undertaking the detailed exploratory work in terms of identifying and defining the remit, scope, and terms of reference of each Committee as well as taking into account any other relevant factors, such as the statutory duty to scrutinise the work of the Public Services Board and where that should sit. The Scrutiny Working Group's report and recommendations were considered by Democratic Services Committee in April 2019 and agreed by Council in May 2019.

The introduction of the Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee provides parity in terms of Member scrutiny with that of Schools and Learning and responds to previous Member concerns that the social care agenda did not have a sufficient profile or focus under the existing model. Given that the Social Care and Schools and Learning directorates are by some margin the most significant with regards to Council expenditure and include the delivery of many of its key statutory services, it is only right that Members are provided with the opportunity to scrutinise these areas in great detail.

The other main change resulting from revisions to the scrutiny model relates to the statutory duty on the Council to scrutinise the work of the Public Services Board (PSB).

With the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee coming to an end, this responsibility has been incorporated within the remit of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the function will be undertaken (initially on a trial basis) through a standing Partnerships Panel which will report to its parent Committee on its outcomes scrutinising the PSB as well as the Community Safety Partnership.

The revised model agreed by Council in May brings to a conclusion a period of review, pilot phase and evaluation of scrutiny structures which has been ongoing for a number of years. It is important that the revised model is now given time to bed in and that our collective effort can begin to shift from focussing on structures towards a concentrated effort to improve practice and the overall effectiveness of the function.

Delivering the Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan

Various strands of scrutiny improvement activity have been consolidated into a single Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan thereby incorporating work in respect of the following:

- actions in response to 'vision' work undertaken by the consultant from Public Governance Wales
- actions to prepare for implementing the revised model from May 2019
- actions in response to the proposals for improvement set out in the WAO's "Fit for the future?" report
- outstanding actions from previous scrutiny improvement work

The action plan is designed to improve scrutiny effectiveness and centred on the four key themes of Culture, Practice, Structure (completed) and Engagement. Some of the key priorities in the plan focus on strengthening the shared ownership of scrutiny improvement across the Council (Cabinet, scrutiny members and CMT) and supporting Chairs and vice-Chairs to improve their individual and collective performance as champions of good scrutiny within the authority.

Democratic Services Committee has oversight of the Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan and monitors the progress in enhancing scrutiny's effectiveness through the delivery of the plan on a regular basis.

9. Getting Involved

Citizen engagement is an essential element of effective Scrutiny as it enables the 'voice' of local people and communities to be heard as part of the decision and policy-making processes.

There are a number of ways that people who live and work in the County can get involved. Forward work programmes are available on the Overview and Scrutiny pages of the Council's website and are updated following each round of Committee meetings so that members of the public are kept informed of the work of the Committee. Residents are able to bring views on any topic under consideration by Scrutiny to a Committee's attention.

Forms are available on the website to enable people to submit their views on any matter already due to be considered by a Committee or to suggest topics for consideration by a Committee. A protocol for speaking before a Committee is also available for those invited to attend to present their views.

Contact the Partnership and Scrutiny team if you would like to find out more:

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