

<u>BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</u>	
Report to	The Chair and Members of the Democratic Services Committee
Report Subject	Annual Scrutiny Report 2017/18
Report Author	Gemma Wasley, Corporate Performance Manager
Report date	13th April 2017
Directorate	Corporate Services
Executive Portfolio	Leader / Corporate Services
Date of meeting	2nd May 2018
Date signed off by Monitoring Officer	N/A
Date signed off by Section 151 Officer	N/A
Date signed off by Chair	23rd April 2018
Key words	Scrutiny Committees Annual Report Members

Report Information Summary

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of the report is to present to Members the Annual Scrutiny report 2017/18 in accordance with the Council's Constitution (attached at Appendix A).
2.	Scope of the Report
2.1	The Annual Scrutiny Report (Appendix A) outlines the key areas of work that have been undertaken by each Scrutiny Committee during 2017/18.
3.	Contribution to the National Well-Being Goals – Detail attached as Appendix 1
4.	Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CLT/Committees/Other groups
4.1	The report was presented to and agreed by CLT on 17 th April 2018.
5.	Recommendation/s for Consideration
5.1	It is recommended that Members consider the options set out in paragraph 6.1 of the main report and recommend their preferred option to Council for approval.

Why this topic is a priority for the Council?						
Single Integrated Plan (SIP)	Council's Well-being Objectives	Performance Management Improvement Framework (PMIF)	Operating Model	Transforming Blaenau Gwent (TBG Programme)	Relevant legislation	Other (please state)
	X	X				

Reporting Pathway							
Directorate Management Team (DMT)	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)	Audit	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny	Executive	Council	Other (please state)
	17.4.18		01.05.18			24.05.18	

Main Report

1.	Background and Context
1.1	The Annual Scrutiny Report has been produced in accordance with Section 7.4.3 of the Council's Constitution which states that 'The Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the Full Council on their workings with recommendations for their future working programme and amended working methods if appropriate'.
1.2	The Annual Scrutiny Report 2017/18 sets out the key areas of work that has been undertaken by each Scrutiny Committee during 2017/18.
1.3	Both nationally and locally there has been a drive to improve scrutiny and get the public more involved with local authority scrutiny committees.
1.4	Locally we have a scrutiny action plan in place that sets out the improvements we intend to make over the coming year. This action plan also includes proposals for improvement that have been established by the WAO both nationally and Blaenau Gwent specific. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Study - Good Scrutiny? Good Question! (national study) • Local Study - WAO Governance Review with a focus on Scrutiny (Blaenau Gwent specific) • National Study – Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future (national overview report and local report, awaiting both)
1.5	The Scrutiny action plan is monitored by the Democratic Services Committee who recommend to Council. This year, the Plan has been enhanced to also include actions regarding Member Development and Facilitating the Democratic Process.
2.	Performance Evidence and Information
2.1	There is a Scrutiny action plan in place which is monitored on a quarterly basis via the Democratic Services Committee who recommend to Council.
2.2	The additional proposals for improvement from the WAO local study have been included in the Scrutiny Action Plan. Most actions have been completed:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider holding meetings between the chairs of scrutiny committees and the Chair of the Audit Committee meeting to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthen the planning of, and links between, the forward work programmes of scrutiny committees and the Audit Committee; and • consider future officer reporting of follow-up actions resulting from reports of external review bodies. • Review the Council’s Scrutiny Arrangements Action Plan to ensure that the actions are SMART and define the BRAG rating to help members monitor progress. <p>The remaining actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the impact of member support and training to improve the quality of chairing and questioning at scrutiny meetings. • Evaluate the impact that the Council’s scrutiny function has on improving outcomes for local people. • Evaluate the effectiveness of the Council’s scrutiny function in engaging with the public.
3.	Risk Implications
3.1	Scrutiny has a pivotal role in promoting improvement, efficiency and collaboration across public services and in holding those responsible for delivering services to account.
3.2	Scrutiny is an important element of the governance and democratic arrangements of the Council and is often reviewed externally by Audit, Inspection and Review Bodies. If Scrutiny is considered to not be working well this will then have a negative impact on the reputation of the Council as well as on the governance arrangements of the Council.
4.	Financial Implications
4.1	There are no direct financial implications linked to this report.
5.	Staffing/Workforce Development Implications
5.1	There are no direct staffing / workforce implications linked to this report.
6.	Options for Consideration
6.1	<u>Option 1</u> That Members note the information contained in the Annual

	<p>Scrutiny Report and recommends to Council for approval the key areas of work that have been undertaken by each Scrutiny Committee during 2017/18, as well as the work that is planned to be undertaken throughout 2018/19 and agree that the report is published on the Blaenau Gwent website.</p> <p><u>Option 2</u> That Members suggest amendment to the Annual Scrutiny Report 2017/18 prior to approval by Council and publication on the Council's website.</p>
7.	Impact Assessment Against Proposals / Options
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking for the long term The Annual Scrutiny report includes information to plan for the future by ensuring that the Council's scrutiny arrangements continue to be developed, monitored and reviewed so that they continue to be part of the Council's robust governance arrangements. • Taking an integrated approach The internal evaluation arrangements involve both Members and Officers and are ongoing throughout the meeting cycle. Chairs and vice chairs of scrutiny meetings have also been established with terms of reference to support the implementation of the scrutiny arrangements. • Taking a preventative approach Scrutiny Committees consider policy information in order to recommend improvements for the future, taking a preventative approach to planning. • Collaborating Peer learning and support from other local authorities is used to continue to develop the approach to scrutiny. • Involvement As part of ongoing scrutiny development there is a priority within the Scrutiny Action Plan to encourage public involvement within scrutiny meetings.
7.2	<p>Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) No negative impact on people from the protected characteristics is anticipated.</p>
8.	Conclusion
8.1	<p>The work undertaken by the Scrutiny Committees highlights the role of Scrutiny and demonstrates the contribution that it has made towards the work of the Council.</p>

Assess how well your project / activity will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals.		
Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p>A prosperous Wales An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<p>The Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee has established a Task and Finish Group to consider options for members to move towards working in a paperless environment.</p>	
<p>A resilient Wales A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>The Environment, Economy and Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee receives regular reports to support environmental issues, e.g. promoting recycling of waste appropriately, RESILIENT project (an energy research & development project) and Air Quality reports.</p>	
<p>A healthier Wales A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>	<p>In March 2017 a report was accepted by the Social Services Scrutiny Committee and approved by Council, for the Council to work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Council.</p>	

Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p>A more equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>	<p>The Education, Active Living and Learning Scrutiny Committee receives an annual report to monitor the Inspire 2 Achieve / Inspire 2 Work project. The project aims to support young people within education or training at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).</p>	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</p>	<p>The Council has a three year Customer / Digital Transformation programme which aims to improve access to services and receive feedback on issues for the members of the community. Regular updates are presented to the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The committee also receives monitoring reports on CCTV.</p>	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>	<p>A Task and Finish Group was established as part of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee to assist in the development of a draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. The committee will also receive an annual report on the Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>The Council is a partner of the Aneurin Leisure Trust and therefore, the Education, Active Living and Learning Scrutiny Committee receives quarterly monitoring reports from the Trust, i.e. performance information on arts, cultural and sporting activities.</p>	
<p>A globally responsible Wales A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	<p>From January 2017, any report presented to a Scrutiny Committee must identify how the project will contribute to the well-being goals.</p>	