

DRAFT
Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Joint Scrutiny Committee

- a) The aim of the Gwent Public Service Board Joint Scrutiny Committee is to scrutinise the effectiveness of the *Regional Public Services Board*.
- b) The core statutory functions of the Committee are:
- To review or scrutinise the decisions made, or actions taken by the Board;
 - To review or scrutinise the Board's governance arrangements;
 - To make reports or recommendations to the Board regarding its functions or governance arrangements;
 - To consider matters relating to the Board as the Welsh Ministers may refer to it and report to the Welsh Ministers accordingly; and
 - To carry out other functions in relation to the Board that are imposed on it by the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- c) In addition to these functions the Committee can also consider:
- The effectiveness of the Wellbeing Assessment;
 - The effectiveness of the Wellbeing Plan;
 - The effectiveness of performance measurement arrangements;
 - The level of commitment from individual partners to the work of the Public Services Board;
 - The effectiveness of the Public Services Board in communicating its work, objectives and outcomes to its stakeholders; and
 - The effectiveness of the Public Services Board in addressing the issue of pooled funding to tackle priorities.
- d) To enable it to fulfil its scrutiny function the Scrutiny Committee will be provided with evidence in the form of:
- Assessment of local well-being;
 - Annual reports; and
 - Reporting on joint projects directed by the *Regional Public Services Board*.
- e) The Committee should recognise that the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 only allows there to be scrutiny of the 'corporate body' of the PSB, and not the individual members. The legislation states:
- "The committee can require any member of the board to give evidence, but only in respect of the exercise of joint functions conferred on them as a member of the board under this Act."*
- f) The success of the joint Scrutiny Committee will be built on the understanding that all officers, members of the committee and invitees are always treated with courtesy and respect.

2. **Support Arrangements**

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has been appointed as the host authority to undertake the administrative arrangements and provide dedicated support and advisers for the Scrutiny Committee.

(a) **The support arrangements include:**

- Arranging regular meetings of the Committee - meetings are held within appropriate timescales following meetings of the Public Services Board.
- Preparing agendas and papers for meetings using Modern.Gov - Agendas and papers are prepared and distributed in a timely manner.
- Inviting participants
- Managing attendance
- Provision of meeting venues
- Minute taking
- Working on the Annual Report – the Committee will be required to produce an annual report on the work of the committee
- Preparing evidence for Scrutiny
- Provide an advisory role to the committee

(b) **Expectations of Partners**

The PSB Scrutiny Committee is a joint venture between the five Gwent local authorities, ABUHB, GAVO, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. Blaenau Gwent Council will host the scrutiny committee; however, its success will only be achieved by working together.

- Individual organisations to brief their elected Members on the role of the PSB Board and Scrutiny Committee and committee papers
- Individual Organisations to arrange Pre meetings with their Elected Members prior to each Scrutiny Committee meeting
- To contribute to PSB Scrutiny Committee meetings as necessary
- Reports to be submitted by partner organisations to contribute to the work of the PSB Scrutiny Committee.

3. **Membership of the Gwent PSB Scrutiny Committee**

(a) The Joint Scrutiny Committee will comprise of an equal number of elected members from each local authority area, excluding Cabinet Members; and also nominated additional members from partner organisations.

- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council – 2 Elected Members
- Caerphilly County Borough Council – 2 Elected Members
- Monmouthshire County Borough Council – 2 Elected Members
- Newport City Council – 2 Elected Members
- Torfaen County Borough Council – 2 Elected Members
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board – 1 Elected Member
- Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations – 1 Representative
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service – 2 Elected Members

- Natural Resources Wales to be involved but no representative on the Joint Scrutiny Committee

(b) It is a matter for each Appointing Authority, from time to time, to nominate, or terminate the appointment of its nominated Member serving on the Joint Scrutiny Committee. Each Appointing Authority shall be entitled, from time to time, to appoint a deputy for its Member representative to the Joint Scrutiny Committee but such deputy shall only be entitled to vote at meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee in the absence of his or her corresponding principal member.

(c) The length of appointment is a matter for each Appointing Authority.

4. **Election of Chair**

The Chairperson to be appointed annually and rotated alphabetically by Local Authority / Organisation.

5. **Election of Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chairperson to be appointed annually, rotated alphabetically from a different Local Authority / Organisation to the Chairperson.

6. **Quorum**

The quorum necessary for a meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee is at least 7 of the 14 Joint Scrutiny Committee Members, present at the relevant time.

7. **Voting**

All Joint Scrutiny Committee Members shall have voting rights.

8. **Invitations to the Joint Scrutiny Committee**

(a) The Committee may request any member of the PSB to attend a committee meeting to assist with issues under consideration.

(b) When the Committee wishes to invite members of the PSB, officers, Cabinet Members, or another individual to a meeting, it will:

- Offer a minimum notice of 6 weeks' notice;
- Clearly outline the reason and the likely areas for questioning;
- Identify whether any paperwork is to be produced.

9. Rules of Procedure

- (a) The Joint Scrutiny Committee will operate in the same way as other Council Scrutiny Committees but will hold the PSB to account rather than the Cabinet. Arrangements for pre meetings and post evaluation meetings will be established as part of the committee arrangements.
- (b) The scrutiny procedure rules, 'call in' processes and arrangements for declarations of interest will apply to all meetings of the Joint PSB Scrutiny Committee.
- (c) The Committee is to be treated as a committee of a principal council for the purposes of Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972(1) (access to meetings and documents of certain authorities, committees and sub-committees).

10. Access to information rules

- (a) Meetings of the Committee will be subject to the same access to information rules as other public meetings of the council.
- (b) The Chair will adhere to the access to information rules of his/her respective Authority.

11. Confidentiality of Information

In accordance with Members' respective Authority's Code of Conduct, members (Elected Members and Co-opted Members) of the Joint Scrutiny Committee must not disclose any information considered 'exempt' in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

12. Openness and Transparency

- (a) All formal meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee will be open to the public unless it is necessary to exclude the public in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- (b) All agendas, reports, minutes and recordings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee will be made publicly available, unless deemed exempt or confidential in accordance with the above Act.

13. Meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee

- (a) Meetings will be held aligned to the Public Services Board with a schedule of meeting dates circulated and agreed at the start of each municipal year. Extra meetings may be called where 50% of the Elected Members identify the need.

- (b) Meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee will be held on a Wednesday, with the pre meeting commencing at 1.30pm, and the formal meeting following at 2.00pm.
- (c) Meetings of the Joint Scrutiny Committee shall be offered on a hybrid basis, with the option to hold the meetings in other LA areas, with the proviso that the support arrangements for the use of systems within that LA are provided by the democratic services staff of that council. The Multi Location Meetings policies of each local authority will be followed when utilising their facilities.

Schedule of Meetings

- Public Service Board Meeting – 16th March 2023
- **Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 29th March 2023**
- Public Service Board Meeting – 27th April 2023
- **Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 7th June 2023**
- Public Service Board Meeting – 22nd June 2023
- **Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 6th September 2023**
- Public Service Board Meeting – 21st September 2023
- **Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 8th November 2023**
- Public Service Board Meeting – 14th December 2023

14. Forward work programme

The Joint Scrutiny Committee will establish an annual Forward Work Programme to identify what issues the Committee intends to focus on during the course of the year. The Forward Work Programme is a fluid document and can be amended throughout the year:

- The terms of reference of the Committee are to be reviewed on an annual basis and to be incorporated into the Committee's Work Programme.
- The forward work programme should provide a clear rationale as to the purpose of considering a particular topic, and to the methods by which it will be investigated.
- The Committee must have regard to The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Local Government and Elections Act.
- Consideration should be given to the key priorities for each individual Local Authority area.
- A degree of flexibility should be incorporated in order for the Committee to consider issues on an ad-hoc basis.

At each meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee, the Forward Work Programme for the following meeting will be discussed and agreed as part the agenda.

15. Task and Finish Groups

- (a) The Committee can establish task and finish groups to undertake specific time bound work and any Member may sit on these groups if they have a specific interest or knowledge and are invited to do so, and if there are no prejudicial interests.
- (b) A task and finish group template would need to be completed for each task and finish group and approved by the Joint Scrutiny Committee.
- (c) Any report or recommendations made by a Task and Finish Group of the Committee is subject to approval by a resolution of the Committee.