

Committee: **Council**
Date of Meeting: **25th March 2021**
Report Subject: **Annual Scrutiny Report 2019/20**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr N Daniels, Leader / Executive Member
Corporate Services**
Report Submitted by: **Gemma Wasley, Service Manager Performance and
Democratic
Elizabeth Thomas, Scrutiny and Democratic Officer**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	04.03.21						25.03.21	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present to Members of Council the Annual Scrutiny report 2019/20 in accordance with the Council's Constitution (attached at Appendix 1).

2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 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'.

The Annual Scrutiny Report 2019/20 sets out the key areas of work that has been undertaken by each Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20.

Locally, we have a scrutiny action plan in place that sets out the improvements we intend to make over the coming year.

The approval and publication of the Annual Scrutiny Report has been delayed owing to the emergency response to COVID 19 and prioritising activity through the democratic process.

The 2020/21 Annual Scrutiny Report is currently being drafted and will be reported early in the new Committee cycle 2021/22.

3. **Options for Recommendation**
 - 3.1 **Option 1:** That Council approve the 'scrutiny activity' that has been undertaken by each Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20, and agree that the report is published on the Blaenau Gwent website.

Option 2: That Council suggest amendment to the Annual Scrutiny Report 2019/20 prior to publication on the Council's website.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

The submission of an Annual Scrutiny Report is a statutory responsibility under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no direct financial implications linked to this report.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Scrutiny has a pivotal role in promoting improvement, efficiency and collaboration across public services and in holding those responsible for delivering services to account.

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.

5.3 ***Legal***

There are no legal implications linked to this report.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

There are no direct human resource implications linked to this report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

There is a Scrutiny action plan in place which is monitored by the Democratic Services Committee who recommend to Council.

The service monitors and collects performance data, examples of which are included in the Annual Scrutiny report (Appendix 1).

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

Pre decision scrutiny aims to improve the needs and requirements of local people via the policy work and service area developments that the scrutiny committees undertake; on behalf of the local community, members consider, challenge and make recommendations for consideration by the Executive Committee or Council prior to decisions being made.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

As part of ongoing Scrutiny development there is a priority within the Scrutiny Action Plan to encourage public involvement within scrutiny meetings.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The Annual Scrutiny report includes development areas looking forward to ensure that the Council's Scrutiny arrangements continue to be developed, monitored and reviewed so that it continues to be part of the Council's robust governance arrangements.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Scrutiny Committees consider policies and procedures in order to recommend improvements for the future, taking a preventative approach to planning.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Peer learning and support from other local authorities is used to continue to develop the approach to Scrutiny.

6.7 ***Integration(across service areas)***

The internal evaluation arrangements that involve both Members and Officers are ongoing throughout the meeting cycle. Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny meetings are held regularly throughout the cycle to support the implementation of the scrutiny arrangements.

6.8 ***EqIA***

It is anticipated that there would not be any negative impact on the protected characteristics in relation to this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The Scrutiny support arrangements are monitored by the Democratic Services Committee who recommend to Council via the Democratic Arrangements Report. This report also includes actions and updates regarding Member Development and Managing and Modernising.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20