

Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Friday, 8 July 2022

Notice of meeting

Public Services Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 18th July, 2022 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA
and remote attendance

Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of the committee.

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Election of Chair.	
2.	Appointment of Vice-Chair.	
3.	Apologies for Absence.	
4.	Declarations of Interest.	
5.	Public Open Forum. Select Committee Public Open Forum ~ Guidance Our Select Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council website If you would like to share your thoughts on any proposals being discussed by Select Committees, you can submit your representation via this form Please share your views by uploading a video or audio file (maximum of 4 minutes) or; Please submit a written representation (via Microsoft Word, maximum of 500 words)	

You will need to register for a [My Monmouthshire account](#) in order to submit the representation or use your log in, if you have registered previously.

The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

If representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the Select Committee meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting.

If you would like to suggest future topics for scrutiny by one of our Select Committees, please do so by emailing Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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|------------|---|---------|
| 6. | Discussion on the role of the Committee in Scrutinising the Public Service Board - presentation. | |
| 7. | Pre-decision Scrutiny of the Public Service Board Annual Report (report to follow). | |
| 8. | Forward Work Programme - To consider the Forward Work Programme Report and identify areas for future scrutiny, and in doing so, to agree a draft Forward Work Programme. | 1 - 14 |
| 9. | To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th February 2022. | 15 - 20 |
| 10. | Next Meeting: Monday 10th October 2022 at 2.00pm. | |

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Jill Bond	West End;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jan Butler	Goetre Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Steven Garratt	Overmonnow;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Penny Jones	Raglan;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Malcolm Lane	Mardy;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Dale Rooke	Chepstow Castle & Larkfield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Frances Taylor	Magor West;	Independent Group
County Councillor Armand Watts	Bulwark and Thornwell;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

Public Information

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Kindness: We will show kindness to all those we work with putting the importance of relationships and the connections we have with one another at the heart of all interactions.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting

1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues)
2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve?
3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this?

- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead
- Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why?
2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why?
3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why?
4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic?
5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service?
6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings?
7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives?
8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve?

Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? Do they believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works? Does the policy relate to an area where there is a lack of published research or other evidence?
6. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
7. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards?
8. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
9. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
10. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated?

General Questions:

Empowering Communities

- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
- Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?
- Is the service working with citizens to explain the role of different partners in delivering the service, and managing expectations?
- Is there a framework and proportionate process in place for collective performance assessment, including from a citizen's perspective, and do you have accountability arrangements to support this?
- Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out? If so, can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers provide members with copies and a detailed explanation of the EQIA conducted in respect of these proposals?
- Can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers assure members that these proposals comply with Equality and Human Rights legislation? Do the proposals comply with the Local Authority's Strategic Equality Plan?

Service Demands

- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
- Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?
- Have you identified and considered the long-term trends that might affect your service area, what impact these trends could have on your service/your service could have on these trends, and what is being done in response?

Financial Planning

- Do we have robust medium and long-term financial plans in place?
- Are we linking budgets to plans and outcomes and reporting effectively on these?

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?
- How are we maximising income? Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the actual versus desired workforce?

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

- Were the intended outcomes of the proposal achieved or were there other results?
- Were the impacts confined to the group you initially thought would be affected i.e. older people, or were others affected e.g. people with disabilities, parents with young children?
- Is the decision still the right decision or do adjustments need to be made?

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert,

members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...

Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report

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SUBJECT: SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

MEETING: Public Services Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 18th July 2022

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 Scrutiny Committees are required to agree an annual work programme to outline their work commitments for the year (Local Government (Wales) Measure 2010). The work programme should as far as possible be agreed at the beginning of each year, however, it can be updated during the year to accommodate urgent items if agreed by the Committee. This report recommends a 'planned approach' to developing the work programme to maximise the effectiveness of the scrutiny activity within the timescale.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Scrutiny Committees utilise the process outlined in Appendix 1 of this report to assist them in developing focussed work programmes, taking into account:
- (i) The respective remits of the four Scrutiny Committees and the need to avoid duplication.
 - (ii) The Committees' capacity/resources when prioritising topics for scrutiny and agreeing their inclusion into the work programme.
 - (iii) The need to demonstrate added value and to contribute to the Council's strategic direction.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 The Roles of Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Committees

- 3.2 Monmouthshire's scrutiny arrangements have recently been reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and enable members to effectively perform the statutory scrutiny roles expected of them. The new structure provides:
- Strengthened decision-making and informed policy development through engaging the public on major issues that affect them ~ People and Place Scrutiny Committees.
 - An involved and evidenced role in ensuring the Well-being of Future Generations, by identifying potential effects of decisions on the public before decisions are made ~ People and Place Scrutiny Committees.

- Clear accountability for the Cabinet/Executive and robust challenge ~ Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee.
 - Democratic accountability of partnership activity and collaborative service delivery to local people ~ Public Services Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3 The new Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (sections 39-41) places strong emphasis on public participation in decision-making and creates a duty to engage the public in the design of policy and the debate of major decisions that will affect them. Developments in live-streaming and the ability for people to send videos and contribute to meetings from their home or workplace serve as a reminder that the conventional public open forum, with residents sitting in the gallery of the council chamber, is no longer the most effective way to involve people in the democratic process.
- 3.4 Two 'Policy' Scrutiny Committees (People and Place) conduct pre-decision scrutiny on key topics affecting residents, seeking public participation as part of the decision-making process. These committees will typically scrutinise two topics per meeting to enable them to dedicate the necessary time to reflect on the views of the public and stakeholders. Whilst the public are welcome to attend scrutiny meetings and to submit audio, video and written contributions on subjects being debated at the committees, Members can also hold informal meetings in communities and hold conversations with service users, stakeholders and expert witnesses to gather their views.
- 3.5 The Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee is responsible for challenging the Executive/the Cabinet and holding them to account for the performance of all services, risk management and robust financial monitoring.
- 3.6 The Public Services Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising the effectiveness of strategic partnerships (including the Public Service Board) and other public service providers to ensure that services delivered in partnership with other bodies are accountable and deliver improved outcomes for residents. Given its partnership focus, this scrutiny committee also has responsibility for Crime and Disorder Scrutiny in line with the Police and Justice Act (2006) and Welsh Government Guidance published in 2010.
- 3.7 The Scrutiny Chairs hold regular meetings with the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee to discuss workstreams and to avoid duplication.
- 4.0 Determining Topics for Scrutiny**
- 4.1 The Scrutiny Forward Work Programme should be planned and reflect the Council's key priorities in the corporate plan and its strategic risks. This will ensure that scrutiny adds value to the Council's strategic direction and may mean that Scrutiny Committees choose not to scrutinise some things, in order to focus on topics where they can add value.
- 4.2 Topics for the work programme can derive from a wide range of sources, including:

- The Cabinet and Council Forward Plan – topics on the Cabinet Forward Plan can be considered by a Scrutiny Committee in advance to enable the committee to inform the Cabinet's decision by reflecting public opinion and making evidence-based recommendations. This would tend to be used for the People and Place Scrutiny Committees, who play a key role in considering the effects of decisions on the public in advance of decisions being made, taking into account the Well-being of Future Generations and equality impact assessments (Monmouthshire has an Integrated Impact Assessment which accompanies all decisions).
 - Suggestions made by: Committee Members, other members, officers, the public, partners and stakeholders – a topic may be identified for scrutiny because of changes to legislation/government guidance. A policy may be recognised as being in need of review, or a new policy or service is needing to be introduced.
 - The Corporate Plan and the Corporate Assessment which provide the Council's strategic direction and outline its key priorities.
 - The Risk Register – the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for considering key risks and, where appropriate, challenging the performance of the Cabinet/Executive and the actions being taken to mitigate the risks.
 - Performance monitoring and budget monitoring reports – the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee will undertake regular monitoring of the Council's performance and progress in implementing previously agreed actions.
 - Issues highlighted in audit and inspection reports.
 - Outcomes of public consultation.
 - Petitions by the public.
- 4.3 Members and Officers may suggest topics which they feel warrant scrutiny, however, it remains the committees' prerogative to set and agree the work programmes. Once a committee has assembled its work programme, it will be important for them to identify and agree the highest priority topics, which are those that will add most value through their work and deliver outcomes.
- 4.4 Topics requiring long and detailed examination can be looked at in detail via Scrutiny Workshops ~ these are scheduled for major topics that are complex and multi-faceted, requiring significant policy development over several months, complementing the formal scrutiny that takes place in Scrutiny Committees. The workshops enable officers to discuss the context with members, and members to suggest the strategic direction whilst officers lead on the delivery. They also enable members who do not sit on the hosting Scrutiny Committee to lend their expertise as a witness or to participate in scrutiny activity. Whilst the workshops are for members to engage in policy at a formative stage, external witnesses and stakeholders can be invited as necessary, and community engagement can be scheduled alongside the process.

5.0 PRIORITISING TOPICS FOR SCRUTINY

5.1 Some key principles for Members to consider when setting the work programme are:

- Topics should add value and support corporate priorities.
- The timing of scrutiny activity should achieve maximum impact.
- Where appropriate and possible, partners, stakeholders and the public should be involved.
- Allowing some flexibility in the work programme will enable urgent topics to be included if they arise.
- The aim should always be to seek improvement in service provision.
- The work programme should be achievable within available resources.

5.2 The criteria to determine topics for scrutiny (Appendix 1) is designed to assist the Committee in selecting appropriate topics for scrutiny by encouraging Members to consider the anticipated outcomes and impact of any scrutiny activity. Members are advised to ensure that there are clear outcomes for any scrutiny activity. Any topics chosen for an in-depth review via Scrutiny Workshops will be scoped by the Scrutiny Officers to assess their feasibility, the likely objectives, and potential lines of enquiry and Terms of Reference prior to their commencement.

5.3 The June / July scrutiny committee cycle will primarily focus on familiarising new Members with the scope and remit of their committees and discussing topics for inclusion into the forward work programme. Members are encouraged to think carefully about what the scrutiny role would be and to identify the intended outcomes of the scrutiny. The meetings will also include some reports which are timely and require scrutiny.

6.0 EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

6.1 This report offers guidance to committees to assist members in setting their work programme and as such, does not require an assessment of Equality, Well-being of Future Generations, Social Justice, Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting considerations.

7.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Not applicable.

8.0 REASONS:

8.1 The requirement to produce and publish a Scrutiny Forward Work Programme is a legislative requirement, however, it is also good practice.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no direct resource implications associated with this report.

10.0 CONSULTEES:

None.

11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1 ~ Determining Topics for Scrutiny Criteria

12.0 AUTHOR:

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager

13.0 CONTACT DETAILS:

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Determining Topics for Scrutiny

The following criteria can be used to determine whether topics are appropriate topics for scrutiny and which committee would be best placed to scrutinise them. It is the decision of the Scrutiny Committee as to what topics they will include in their work programme. Members and officers in suggesting items for scrutiny should consider:

Is there a role for Scrutiny?

Is this a new policy being developed or are changes proposed to an existing service?

➡ Such topics should be considered by either of the policy scrutiny committees, who can assess the impact on the public, service users and relevant stakeholders.

Is this a review of a service's performance? Are there resource issues or risks to consider?

➡ Such topics should be considered by the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee with the relevant Cabinet/Executive Member invited when necessary to attend and answer questions.

Does the topic relate to a service that is provided in collaboration with others?

➡ These topics should be scrutinised by the Public Services Scrutiny Committee.

Are elected members needing to be informed or updated about this topic?

➡ These topics should be discussed with all members via a 'Member Seminar'.

Public Interest Test

- Is this a "high profile" topic?
- Is there significant public interest?
- Is this an area where a lot of complaints are received and/or bad press?
- How will the scrutiny activity provide opportunities for local people to have their say?
- Is survey / research work required?

Impact of Scrutiny

- Will this review have a significant impact on the "well-being" of people in Monmouthshire?
- Does a local community or interest group have much to gain or lose?
- To what extent can we effect change? Is this a national issue?
- Would this make a big difference to the way services are delivered?
- Would this make a big difference to the way resources are used?

Determining Topics for Scrutiny

Performance issues

- Are the Council and other organisations under-performing in this area?
- Is performance poor compared to others and do we understand why this is the case?
- Are we performing well, but spending too much of our resources in this area?
- Are there local or national performance targets by which to measure our performance?

Influence of scrutiny

- Has this service been recently reviewed or inspected?
- Will this topic be part of an improvement review or external inspection in the next two years?
- If the service is to be reviewed or inspected soon, can a Scrutiny Committee make a positive contribution by focussing on specific aspects and making recommendations?
- Are there any current or future major changes forecasted which reduce the value of undertaking scrutiny?
- Are changes to this service planned and can Scrutiny positively influence change?

If scrutiny cannot add value by scrutinising a particular topic based on the above criteria, then the Scrutiny Committee should think carefully about whether to include it in their work programme. Requests from Members for updates on topics should be referred to a 'Member Seminar'. Similarly, requests from officers to brief Members on topics should be managed via 'Member Seminars'.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny

Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference	
Number of Committees:	4
Frequency of Meetings: (Additional meetings called as appropriate)	People Scrutiny Committee ~ 6 annually Place Scrutiny Committee ~ 6 annually Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee ~ 5 annually Public Services Scrutiny Committee ~ 5 annually
Committees and Terms of Reference:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two thematic Scrutiny Committees, 'People' and 'Place', engage the public in the design of policy and services, reflecting the public voice to the Cabinet in advance of decisions being taken. These committees are vehicles through which the public can voice their opinion on major decisions, assisting the committees in drawing conclusions and making recommendations to the Cabinet. Members may engage with their communities by holding informal face-to-face meetings in the community or conducting surveys in their local area. The public is also able to submit audio, video and written submissions to these Scrutiny Committees and attend their meetings. The 'Performance and Overview' Scrutiny Committee provides constructive challenge to the Cabinet, holding them to account for the performance of service delivery and risk management. It also conducts robust financial monitoring and scrutinises the Council's performance in delivering the corporate objectives outline in its Corporate Plan. The 'Public Services' Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the effectiveness of strategic partnerships (including the Public Service Board) and other public service providers to ensure that services delivered in partnership with other bodies are accountable and deliver improved outcomes for residents. Topics suggested for scrutiny are assessed against the 'scrutiny topic criteria' to determine the committee best placed to undertake the scrutiny. The Scrutiny Committees are role-based, so policy or service changes are scrutinised by the two thematic policy development committees, and performance reports or reports on risks or financial matters are scrutinised by the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. Work programmes are planned and agreed by the Scrutiny Committees. 	

Monmouthshire Scrutiny

People Scrutiny Committee	Place Scrutiny Committee	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Public Services Scrutiny Committee
<p>To scrutinise policy and services delivered to adults, children and young people that promotes their health, education and well-being and can include scrutiny of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (schools and adult learning), Additional Learning Needs, Pupil Support Services, Learning Disability Services. • Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, children in care. • Family Support Services, support for carers and young carers, respite provision. • Social care and health; including domiciliary, residential, nursing home and community care, occupational therapy, reablement, assistive technology, Disability 	<p>To scrutinise policy and services delivered to residents that promotes community safety and well-being and supports sustainable, resilient communities.</p> <p>To ensure that policy and services are responsive to the needs of businesses and visitors and promote economic activity.</p> <p>This can include scrutiny of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing (Jointly with People Scrutiny Committee). • Public Health, Environmental Health and Trading Standards. • Community Safety • Highways, Transport and Traffic Management. • Street Lighting. • Grounds Maintenance. 	<p>To scrutinise the ongoing performance of all Council services and ensuring that the Cabinet is held to account.</p> <p>To scrutinise the Council's delivery against its corporate objectives, corporate risks and to conduct budget monitoring for all services.</p> <p>Scrutiny also includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Function: Building Control, Development Control. • Asset Management. • Corporate Procurement. • School Performance, Scrutiny of the Educational Achievement Service (EAS) • Management of Individual Schools Budgets, Schools Delegated Budgets, the 	<p>To constructively challenge (where powers allow) the work and effectiveness of strategic partnerships (including the Public Service Board) and other public service providers to ensure public accountability of collaborative services, value for money and improved outcomes for people in Monmouthshire.</p> <p>To influence the decisions, policy and practice of public service providers by gathering evidence to make recommendations on effective multi-agency action to improve public service delivery.</p> <p>This can include scrutiny of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key services provided in partnership to local communities, such as those

Monmouthshire Scrutiny

<p>Services, Community Meals Service and Sensory Impairment Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Services. • Homelessness prevention and housing. • Poverty prevention and Social Justice. • Youth Services. • Youth Justice and youth offending service. • Leisure services (in terms of health outcomes). • Welfare Rights. • Community Legal Service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countryside management. • Climate Change and Sustainability • Waste and Recycling. • Tourism and Destination Management • Public realm – Culture, libraries, museums, and theatre. • Economic growth, Place shaping and enterprise. • Local Development Planning, Economic Development Planning • Digital Infrastructure • Job creation and vocational skills. • Estates Management 	<p>Authority's Schools Individually Managed Budgets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Executive's Function. • Revenues, Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Finance. • Corporate Costs and Levies. • Facilities and Accommodation Management. 	<p>delivered by the Regional Partnership Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's interface with the Voluntary Sector. • Any collaborative initiatives, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared Resource Service (SRS) - Integrated Adults Services with Health Partners. - Domestic Violence Service, Drug and Alcohol Services. - Public health and well-being. • Crime and Disorder Scrutiny in line with the Police and Justice Act (2006) and Welsh Government Guidance published in 2010.
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The Scrutiny Chairs Group

The Scrutiny Chairs Group comprises the four Scrutiny Chairs and the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee and meets every 9 weeks to discuss forward Work Programmes to ensure a coordinated approach. The group will also consider periodically: Scrutiny Member Development, Scrutiny Self-evaluation, Public Engagement, Corporate Assessments, Corporate Planning, Risk Management, and other relevant scrutiny matters as appropriate.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny

Terms of Reference:

- To ensure clear purpose and role for topics being tabled to Scrutiny Committees;
- To co-ordinate scrutiny and audit workstreams to avoid duplication, whilst recognising scrutiny has a clear and distinct role in the accountability for performance and scrutiny of budgets from that of the Governance and Audit Committee.

Diarised Scrutiny Committee Dates

People	Place	Performance and Overview	Public Services	Scrutiny Chairs Group
12 th July 2022	30 th June 2022	16 th June 2022	18 th July 2022	8 th July 2022
27 th September (pm)	15 th September 2022	7 th July 2022	10 th October 2022 (pm)	20 th October 2022
15 th November 2022	10 th November 2022	29 th September 2022	28 th November 2022	8 th December 2022
10 th January 2023	12 th January 2023	15 th December 2022	20 th February 2023	9 th February 2023
28 th February 2023	2 nd March 2023	23 rd February 2022	24 th April 2023 (pm)	6 th April 2023
18 th April 2023	13 th April 2023	27 th April 2023		

Monmouthshire Scrutiny

Role Description for a Scrutiny Committee Chair

Leadership outside the Committee:

- To be familiar with the key issues facing the Council, its priorities, and its responsibilities to be able to inform the work of scrutiny.
- To understand the performance management framework and the Scrutiny Committee role in ensuring ongoing performance evaluation.
- To build effective relationships with the Chief Executive, Cabinet, service areas and stakeholders that is mutually trusting, so that scrutiny is respected and viewed a resource to the organisation.
- To develop realistic and balanced work programmes which address the key risks facing the Council and ensure a balance between policy development and the 'holding to account' role. To monitor progress of Scrutiny Workshops, and to ensure that agreed topics are given the necessary time to enable effective scrutiny.
- To undertake the necessary preparation prior to Committee meetings to lead the Committee effectively, ensuring the objectives of the meeting are fulfilled and that scrutiny is outcome-focussed.
- To involve users of services and key stakeholders in the business of Scrutiny Committees to effectively challenge the Council's performance.
- To represent scrutiny at meetings of the County Council and Cabinet on behalf of the Committee and to feedback to the Committee on the outcomes of such meetings.
- To determine arrangements for special meetings of the Committee.
- To ensure that the work of Scrutiny Committees is publicised and communicated to build understanding of its role both within and outside the Council.
- To contribute to the continuing development of scrutiny in Monmouthshire through learning from best practice elsewhere.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny

Leadership at the Committee:

- To manage the meeting to ensure the objectives of the meeting are fulfilled and that the scrutiny is outcome-focussed.
- To provide leadership to the Committee, recognising the varied contributions of individual Members of the Committee to ensure a positive group dynamic.
- To ensure effective questioning of the relevant Cabinet Members, officers, service providers and stakeholders on policy and performance relating to areas within the Committee's remit.
- To lead the Committee in commissioning research, gathering evidence, questioning internal and external witnesses to ensure that scrutiny recommendations are robust and evidence-based.
- To define and manage appropriate member and officer conduct at the meeting to ensure effective scrutiny.
- To ensure clear actions are agreed through Chair's 'summing up' to enable the work of the Scrutiny Committees to make a timely and relevant contribution to the Council.
- To ensure that the scrutiny process is transparent and that the Committee's obligation to engage with service users, the public and key stakeholders is reflected in the way the Committee undertakes its' business.
- To lead and oversee the proper process of call-in in accordance with the constitution.
- To ensure Standing Orders are applied impartially.

Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Public Services Select Committee held at County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance on Tuesday, 8th February, 2022 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor T. Thomas (Chairman)

County Councillors: P. Jordan, R.Roden, J.Treharne, S. Woodhouse and P. Jones

Officers in Attendance

Sharran Lloyd, LSB Development Manager

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager

Richard Jones, Performance Manager

Phil Diamond, Service Manager, Gwent Regional Partnership Board

APOLOGIES: Councillors D. Batrouni and S. Howarth

1. To elect a Chair.

Councillor Thomas was proposed by Councillor Roden and seconded by Councillor Jordan.

2. Apologies for Absence.

3. Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Public Open Forum.

No public submissions were received.

5. Population Needs Assessment

Phil Diamond delivered the presentation and answered the members' questions, with additional comments from Councillor Penny Jones and Richard Jones.

Challenge:

Regarding Disabled Facilities Grants and their take-up, can you further explain the diagrams on p49?

We have been guided by elected members to look at the regional impact of the DFGs, which are available to any resident to adapt their home to enable people to live in their own home longer. But the cost of building materials has increased, while their availability has decreased. We've also seen the effect of fewer Occupational Therapists,

who normally visit people in their own home to assess what modifications are needed. Again, this is an impact on the workforce; with fewer OTs available, we have seen increased waiting times for those assessments.

Recent Welsh Government guidance has introduced a financial assessment. Unfortunately, this is putting some people off – they feel that the assessment might affect them in other ways. But it is just meant to ensure that the right people have access to the DFGs. All of this compounds the issue and leads to a fear that fewer people will apply for the grants. It will be harder for those who don't apply to live in their own homes, possibly leading to increased falls and hospital admissions. Across the region we are linking in with the 5 commissioning leads within social services and looking at the Welsh Government funding available to us to help with the larger homes' adaptations i.e. those in excess of £36k. Because the pandemic is a backdrop to this work, other issues and challenges are likely to come to the fore over the next 12-18 months. Once mapping and impact analysis has been conducted across the 5 authorities, that could come back to this committee for a wider discussion.

One of the emerging priorities in Item 6, under Mental Health, includes “an increased understanding and awareness of mental health among the public to reduce stigma and help to seek support earlier.” How do you propose to achieve this?

Following publication of the PNA, we will be required to produce an action plan response, so all of the emerging needs will be highlighted and through an area plan we will set the actions to address them. The first place to start is children and young people – educating and informing at an early age about mental health. So, there is a huge amount of work going on in schools, particularly in Monmouthshire through the healthy schools agenda. In general, it is a case of public awareness. We have developed a website with the health board, called Melo, with information for the public about services and steps that they can take. Increasingly, people are more comfortable admitting that they are struggling with their mental health – a charity working with the Welsh Dragons is an example of a positive shift. We are working with schools and the third sector to get out as much information as possible and convey the message that help needed for mental health should be seen the same as help needed for physical health.

For continuity, Monmouthshire is purple on the graphs in the reports, but not consistently.

That's a very helpful observation, thank you.

There is increasing pressure on carers, and demand for them, which seems to be unsustainable. How can Gwent cope in the future? Is funding similar in the 5 councils?

Yes, it does seem unsustainable. There is a focus through Welsh Government, specifically, a £1m carers grant that is distributed across Wales each year that enables us to look at regional solutions. We have a regional carers board, chaired by a director of social services, on which sit representatives from health, community sector, and carers themselves. The key point is that in order to support carers, we need to listen to them. We know that respite for carers is critical, which will require investment. People want more adaptable and flexible solutions. For example, a carer might only need to step away for two hours. So, the voice of the carer is paramount, and respite is the number one issue that keeps coming up. Access to information is also important. A single individual providing care for over 50 hours a week is unsustainable, so it's a question of how we can support that. Welsh Government and the carers national strategy is very much focussed on this problem, as are regional boards, but it is not a problem that is likely to be solved in the immediate future.

Is there a possibility to look for respite volunteers amongst the family and community of those with dementia, particularly for small amounts of time?

Definitely. 'Befriending' is the term widely used for solutions of this sort and is something that the Alzheimer's Society has taken on, for example. Some communities do this automatically. Some who retire want to give back to the community, so we have an opportunity with our ageing population to increase volunteering. Peer-to-peer support with carers is also important: dementia-friendly cafes, for example, have previously provided this sort of wider support.

Has the evidence been fed into the Gwent Well-being Assessment? How will it be used by the PSB to determine future priorities?

We have worked very closely for a number of years to ensure that there is alignment and synergy between the assessments. For example, the needs of carers will come up through the well-being assessment engagement exercises, but there's no need for the WBAs to include information on carers because there is a statutory duty in the PNA to look at their well-being. But there will be signposts in the documents for where the information can be found, rather than duplicating it. The collaborative approach should lead to a collaborative response, so that overlap and duplication of efforts are minimised. In the PNA, there are highlighted boxes to signpost relevant areas in the well-being assessment. The colour schemes and font etc. are also consistent between the two so they are almost two parts of the same document. Comments from today will be fed into the final PNA when it goes to Council for sign-off. How we respond to the

issues identified will present opportunities to work between what is now the Gwent Public Services Board and Gwent Regional Partnerships Board.

Chair's Summary:

Thank you for the comprehensive presentation on an important piece of work. Education in schools to remove stigma from mental health issues is key. There has already been a great improvement compared to previous decades. Councillor Penny Jones reiterated the importance of this work and called attention to the Carers Strategy group that works across all agencies and supports carers. Welsh Government is now much more aware of their role. More respite facilities are clearly required. The increase in the age groups of the over 65s and over 85s is surprising and will engender much more support being delivered. The care issue is ongoing, bringing a huge strain on providers. Career structure and pay are key drivers for whether people choose to enter that profession.

6. Gwent Well Being Assessment

Richard Jones and Sharran Lloyd delivered the presentation and answered the members' questions:

Challenge:

Monmouthshire's rurality makes it different from the other 4 counties. In Appendix 3, in Q3, "What things are important for you and your family", broadband is a low priority. Does this indicate that there should be separate rural and town data, reflecting different priorities?

While the Gwent assessment will look at well-being across Gwent as a whole, there is also the duty to assess local areas within Gwent. Hopefully, how we have assessed the five areas within Monmouthshire, and assessed well-being in the county as a whole, will give some assurance that we are considering evidence at a more local level. This can influence and feed into how the PSB takes that into account in its Gwent well-being assessment and taken into account, where needed, within the local delivery group and partnerships that have been mentioned. A key reason behind completing the Monmouthshire level assessment was to understand those differences between and within communities for well-being.

We know that broadband is an issue. Although we worked very hard to get as many engagement responses as possible, we recognise that there were some limitations. We got over 500 responses, which is a strong evidence base, but it's important that we

consider them alongside other feedback, evidence, data and information that we have about the county. So, people's views are important, but in the case of broadband we will also look at things like what the coverage is, who has access to super-fast broadband, in what areas, etc., which we can put alongside what people are saying. In the assessment we have looked in more detail at this matter.

The least important thing in Q3 is Welsh, which is remarkable, given the 10% spoken rate across the county as a whole (higher in particular areas such as Abergavenny). Why does the data not reflect the efforts made with the language in Monmouthshire? Does the way we gather the data need to change?

While the great deal of work that has been done to promote the language has not come through so strongly in the responses to Q3, there were some responses relating to it when asked what they would like their community to look like in the future, for example. Again, we will sit the evidence from this exercise alongside feedback from other consultations with community groups and other organisations working in the county. In the assessment you will see that we have drawn on other evidence and data concerning the role played by the Welsh language in our communities, and the role it could play in the future.

Chair's Summary:

Thank you for the work that has gone into this. Welsh is slowly increasing, with 16% now in Abergavenny (some of whom moved in from elsewhere) and the school burgeoning. It takes time, and the third school coming in Monmouth will move things along further. I would have expected more about broadband too, given that it is now a fundamental requirement. It is difficult to gather the information at county level but particularly then at lower regions, given the county's diversity. Its size makes public transport a pressing problem. It is good to see that officers are picking up information at a more local level and feeding it in to the regional PSB. This is then very difficult, given the difference in needs between someone in Monmouth and Newport, for example.

We need to tackle the causes of health inequality, which is a major concern, and to recognise that poverty and inequality are different things – a clear distinction is needed. It would be good to achieve carbon-neutral initiatives on a regional scale, such as the Gwent Green Grid. Monmouthshire no doubt has a higher carbon footprint because of the reliance on cars, as well as farm vehicles. Substance abuse is a major problem, as are mental health problems and domestic abuse, which is very high in certain areas. We need to think about how well-placed the CAMHS service is to deal with demand which has increased since the start of Covid. Social Care reform also needs consideration; the

focus has been on the Real Living Wage but it's broader than that. It is very hard in children given the stark dichotomy between those on high and low incomes, for example in Abergavenny.

7. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th July 2021.

The minutes were confirmed and signed as an accurate record, proposed by Councillor Roden and seconded by Councillor Woodhouse.

8. To consider the Select Committee's Forward Work Programme.

9. Date and time of the next meeting: to be confirmed