

Local Authority: Monmouthshire		Meeting: Public Service Board Select Committee on 14 th March 2017		
A. Scrutiny Environment				
1. Scrutiny has a clearly defined and valued role in the council's improvement arrangements (based upon the observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
As this is still early days for the committee this was difficult to assess, however it appeared that there was value placed on the role of the committee by the authority but there appeared to be inadequate information supplied for scrutiny to have the evidence and assurances that it needed. It would have been useful to have draft PSB minutes and action sheets in advance of this meeting to prepare a questioning strategy.				
2. Scrutiny has the dedicated support it needs from officers (based upon the observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
The committee was supported by a DS officer rather than the Scrutiny officer who was on leave, therefore there may have been some lack of continuity. There was support from other officers providing information for the committee although no scrutiny specific research was evidenced.				
3. Scrutiny members appear to have effective training and development opportunities, evidenced through their questioning, listening and analysis skills and understanding of the subject under scrutiny				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
Members appeared to be well briefed and asked useful and challenging questions with good follow ups although a questioning strategy was not apparent.				
Conclusion: please consider which of the following applies: The score fell between these comments				
Arrangements are hindering improvement	Arrangements are partly supporting improvement	Arrangements are positively supporting improvement	Arrangements are playing a significant role in supporting improvement	

B. Scrutiny Practice				
1. Scrutiny takes into account the views of the public, partners and regulators, balancing the prioritisation of community concerns against issues of strategic risk/importance				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
There were opportunities for the public to take part and members took their views into account, evidenced by their championing of businesses and armed forces. The meeting was webcast as are all scrutiny committees which is a positive opportunity for public engagement.				

2. Overview and scrutiny meetings, activities and work programmes are well-planned (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
The meeting appeared to have been planned to some extent but the lack of good quality information from the PSB prevented some forward planning. Programme board minutes in advance would be helpful as will future opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny of the well-being plans. A pre-meeting was held which went some way towards establishing individual questions and areas of challenge.				
3. Overview and scrutiny meetings and activities are chaired effectively				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
The chair ensured that there were opportunities for all to speak, provided introductions and conducted a pre-meeting, all of which contributed to the effective running of the meeting. The chair might also consider driving the agenda so that it keeps to time and focusses on outcomes. Some of the lengthier contributions from officers could be curtailed, so that more time is available for members questioning. The layout of the room with some people having their backs to the chair may be unhelpful.				
4. Overview and scrutiny meetings demonstrate through their activities the best use of the resources available				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
The committee appeared to be resourced adequately. If the Webcasting arrangements permit it might be useful to employ a less formal meeting layout.				
5. Scrutiny operates non-politically and deals effectively with sensitive political issues, tension and conflict				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
The committee appeared to operate non-politically and to concentrate on issues rather than politics.				
6. Scrutiny builds trust and good relationships with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
There was evidence of positive relationships with officers providing information to the meeting and of engagement with representatives from NRW.				
Conclusion: please consider which of the following applies:				
Arrangements are hindering improvement	Arrangements are partly supporting improvement	Arrangements are positively supporting improvement	Arrangements are playing a significant role in supporting improvement	

C. Impact of Scrutiny				
1. Scrutiny engages in evidence based challenge of decision makers (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments It was difficult for Scrutiny members to challenge evidence as they appeared to lack the evidence they needed.				
2. Scrutiny engages in evidence based challenge of service providers (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments For the reasons outlined above.				
3. Scrutiny provides viable and well evidenced solutions to recognised problems (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments Some evidence was seen of this as the chair agreed to seek more access to information.				
4. Non-executive members provide an evidence based check and balance to Executive decision making				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments This was not evidenced at this meeting.				
5. Decision makers give public account for themselves at scrutiny committees for their portfolio responsibilities				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments There were no contributions from Cabinet members observed.				
6. Overview and scrutiny enables the 'voice' of local people and communities across the area to be heard as part of decision and policy-making processes				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments Many questions related to community concerns.				
Conclusion: please consider which of the following applies:				
Arrangements are hindering improvement	Arrangements are partly supporting improvement	Arrangements are positively supporting improvement	Arrangements are playing a significant role in supporting improvement	

Local Authority: Monmouthshire			Meeting: Strong Communities Select Committee on 6 th April 2017	
A. Scrutiny Environment				
1. Scrutiny has a clearly defined and valued role in the council's improvement arrangements (based upon the observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments There was evidence of policy development in respect of the HR review report and the committee had also been involved in reviewing public toilets on the County and sought an update of their previous recommendations.				
2. Scrutiny has the dedicated support it needs from officers (based upon the observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The Scrutiny officer had clear overview of the work of the committee, she was able to brief members on the background and current position of the report and recommendations of the task and finish group.				
3. Scrutiny members appear to have effective training and development opportunities, evidenced through their questioning, listening and analysis skills and understanding of the subject under scrutiny				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The questioning by some Members was good however difficult to say if this is as a result of training or because of the quality and interest of some Members. Some Members making statements as opposed to asking questions, however there was good understanding of the topics under discussion, supplementary questions were asked.				
Conclusion: please consider which of the following applies:				
Arrangements are hindering improvement	Arrangements are partly supporting improvement	Arrangements are positively supporting improvement	Arrangements are playing a significant role in supporting improvement	

B. Scrutiny Practice				
1. Scrutiny takes into account the views of the public, partners and regulators, balancing the prioritisation of community concerns against issues of strategic risk/importance				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The Select Committee agendas allow members of the public to put forward items for the committee to discuss, but on this occasion there were no requests made. The review of the public conveniences is clearly an issue of importance to the public and the committee were keen to see the recommendations brought to a conclusion.				

2. Overview and scrutiny meetings, activities and work programmes are well-planned (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The work programme included in the agenda pack demonstrates planning ahead and the committee highlighted items during debate that need to return and when. There was evidence that there had been a pre-meeting as the chair knew who wanted to speak on specific areas.				
3. Overview and scrutiny meetings and activities are chaired effectively				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The Chair made the observers welcome and explained the purpose of the visit. The Chair was strong in places but did allow the debate to stray off topic on occasion. He brought items to conclusion and summed up the views of the committee. The chair seemed to take over the discussion as certain times. It would have been helpful to have been introduced to the individual committee members, and the first witness.				
4. Overview and scrutiny meetings demonstrate through their activities the best use of the resources available				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The Committee met in the Council Chamber which allows meetings to be webcast, some of the sound and lighting in the room could be improved, as it was difficult to see and hear some people. Inconsistent use of microphones. The observers liked the layout of the room for observation purposes.				
5. Scrutiny operates non-politically and deals effectively with sensitive political issues, tension and conflict				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments There was no evidence of political tension or conflict; the committee treated each other with respect.				
6. Scrutiny builds trust and good relationships with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The witnesses at the meeting were treated with respect and courtesy by the committee members, there were external and internal witnesses who gave detailed responses to Members and where they were unable to provide detail offered to provide information at a later date.				
Conclusion: please consider which of the following applies:				
Arrangements are hindering improvement	Arrangements are partly supporting improvement	Arrangements are positively supporting improvement	Arrangements are playing a significant role in supporting improvement	

C. Impact of Scrutiny				
1. Scrutiny engages in evidence based challenge of decision makers (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments Unfortunately the Cabinet Members was unable to attend the meeting, the peer group were advised of this beforehand, and therefore are unable to comment.				
2. Scrutiny engages in evidence based challenge of service providers (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments There committee asked service providers questions and challenging the evidence provided.				
3. Scrutiny provides viable and well evidenced solutions to recognised problems (based on observation of this meeting)				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments The update of the public conveniences task and finish group demonstrated that the committee had investigated and reported on an issue, provided recommendations and were keen to check on the implementation of those recommendations, then setting a deadline for the implementation of the outstanding item.				
4. Non-executive members provide an evidence based check and balance to Executive decision making				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments Unfortunately the Cabinet Members was unable to attend the meeting, the peer group were advised of this beforehand, and therefore are unable to comment				
5. Decision makers give public account for themselves at scrutiny committees for their portfolio responsibilities				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments Unfortunately the Cabinet Members was unable to attend the meeting, the peer group were advised of this beforehand, and therefore are unable to comment				
6. Overview and scrutiny enables the 'voice' of local people and communities across the area to be heard as part of decision and policy-making processes				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Comments				
Conclusion: please consider which of the following applies:				
Arrangements are hindering improvement	Arrangements are partly supporting improvement	Arrangements are positively supporting improvement	Arrangements are playing a significant role in supporting improvement	