

Scrutiny Service Plan 2015/16

Service:	Scrutiny
Service Manager:	Hazel Ilett
Directorate:	Local Democracy
Head of service	Tracey Harry
MCC Priority:	Not applicable
MCC Outcome:	All - Support Service
Single Integrated Plan (SIP) Outcome:	All MCC Contribution - Support Service

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to manage the scrutiny process effectively to ensure openness, transparency and accountability in the Council's decision-making. We provide support to elected Members to enable them to constructively challenge policy and decision-making, improving public service delivery to Monmouthshire citizens.

Our customers are wide ranging: elected Members, Officers within the authority, citizens, public sector organisations and external auditors. We ensure that the scrutiny function is the mechanism through which the public and key stakeholders can become involved in the work of the Council.

Our customers need to be satisfied that the scrutiny function is effectively performing its' role in ensuring the Council and partners deliver outcomes to Monmouthshire citizens.

Evaluation of performance during 2014-15

Objective	Progress	Impact	Evidence
<p>To deliver a bespoke Scrutiny Development Programme for Members that meets their needs and provides them with core competency skills to perform the Scrutiny Member role effectively.</p>	<p>A range of training sessions were provided and these were well attended by Members, with sessions repeated when necessary.</p>	<p>Members advised they found the sessions very useful and there has been a marked improvement in some areas of questioning and analysis of performance and financial information. Investing in Member development delivers a vital, yet intangible, return on investment (ROI) through more effective scrutiny.</p>	<p>The WAO peer evaluation study evidenced our “comprehensive training programme”. Study observations of scrutiny meetings reflected “excellent questioning skills by Members” and “effective chairing”.</p>
<p>To ensure that the Scrutiny Chairs Liaison Group plays a fundamental role in agreeing the direction and focus of future scrutiny development.</p>	<p>The group met every 6 weeks and assisted the Scrutiny Manager by agreeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ the Budget Scrutiny Process ✓ the Process for Scrutiny of the Risk Log ✓ Areas for joint scrutiny ✓ Consultation responses on Scrutiny matters ✓ The Scrutiny Handbook ✓ The development of the Scrutiny Webpage ✓ Amendment to the corporate report template 	<p>The scrutiny Manager has benefited from an agreed ‘way forward’ for different scrutiny tasks.</p>	<p>Chairs have advised that they have found these meetings very effective in terms of agreeing scrutiny processes and exchanging practice and experience.</p> <p>Amendment to the corporate report template to include ‘safeguarding implications’ was a recommendation of this group which was agreed by full Council.</p>
<p>To provide effective impartial and experienced support to Scrutiny Members.</p>	<p>Pre-meetings have been established for all Scrutiny Committees and guidance and encouragement is given to Scrutiny Committees to identify the intended outcomes of the meeting and to plan questioning strategies.</p>	<p>There has been marked improvement in the quality of the scrutiny activity following the introduction of pre-meetings. Members are well organised and lead the process. Behaviour is professional, which adds legitimacy to the scrutiny process.</p>	<p>The WAO peer evaluation report has referred to “well managed meetings” and the provision of “active support and advice during meetings”. The WAO peer evaluation report evidenced “excellent questioning with useful follow-up questioning”.</p>

Evaluation of performance during 2014-15

Objective	Progress	Impact	Evidence
<p>To ensure tangible and balanced scrutiny work programmes.</p>	<p>The Committees have been encouraged to prioritise topics for inclusion into their work programmes using the 'scrutiny topic selection criteria'.</p>	<p>This has ensured that scrutiny activity has added value to the strategic direction of the Council.</p>	<p>The WAO peer evaluation study evidenced a work programme that "clearly sets out reports on performance, policy development, pre-decision, challenge/monitoring performance and on-going monitoring of scrutiny's recommendations". Scrutiny can demonstrate clear examples whereby scrutiny work has added value to the direction of the Council - these will be evidenced in the Scrutiny Annual Report.</p>
<p>To guide Members to work apolitically and to 'constructively challenge'.</p>	<p>A "Scrutiny and Executive Protocol" has been developed to ensure clarity on the responsibilities of all parties involved in scrutiny. Members have been trained through the Scrutiny Member Development Programme to constructively challenge.</p>	<p>Members have demonstrated an improved ability to challenge and hold officers and the Executive to account in a fair and productive manner.</p>	<p>The WAO peer evaluation study evidenced "Members hold officers and the executive to account and scrutiny has made the Executive more aware of what is required of them". The study evidenced beneficial relationships, citing the "relationship between Executive Members, Chief Executive, Officers and Scrutiny Members was respectful and challenging".</p>
<p>To ensure there is effective Cabinet Forward Planning to ensure there are opportunities for pre-decision scrutiny.</p>	<p>Every Scrutiny Committee discusses the "Cabinet Forward Plan" at every meeting to identify relevant issues for scrutiny. The plan is also emailed to all Members weekly to ensure they have the opportunity to conduct pre-decision scrutiny.</p>	<p>There has been a reduction in the number of 'call-in' meetings as a consequence of better forward planning.</p>	<p>The WAO peer evaluation report refers to "legitimate call-ins which were challenged successfully" and highlights how scrutiny's efforts have led to "the Executive taking on board the issues".</p>

Evaluation of performance during 2014-15

Objective	Progress	Impact	Evidence
<p>To implement an improved “Budget Scrutiny Process” to enable Scrutiny Committees to engage much earlier in the budget setting process</p>	<p>The Scrutiny Chairs Group agreed a revised process for scrutiny of the budget, focussing on key mandates of significant concern.</p>	<p>This proved to be a highly effective procedure for scrutinising the budget, Scrutiny Members working with officers to develop budgetary proposals and provide a clear steer on difficult financial decisions.</p> <p>Public engagement in scrutiny was highly successful, key stakeholders sharing their views with Scrutiny Committees and offering innovative budgetary solutions.</p>	<p>Several proposals developed by scrutiny Members were implemented as part of the Council’s final budget. Solutions developed through the scrutiny process demonstrate the ROI of scrutiny activity and justifies the ‘added value’ of the function.</p>
<p>To deliver a “Scrutiny Handbook” to provide a useful reference guide for Members, officers and the public on the role and value of scrutiny.</p>	<p>This was a key ‘area for improvement’ evidenced in the WAO peer evaluation report and has been delivered through the “Monmouthshire Scrutiny Action Plan” (Service Improvement Plan 2013-2016).</p>	<p>The Handbook had been developed and agreed by the Scrutiny Chairs Group.</p> <p>The Handbook appears on the Scrutiny Webpages and has been sent to new officers who have little understanding of the Council’s Governance Framework.</p>	<p>Initial indications are that the Handbook is useful and will assist the reader in gaining a basic understanding of the role of scrutiny.</p> <p>Some representations made to scrutiny Committees suggest the Handbook has been read by Members of the public and are looking to engage with scrutiny.</p> <p>The next local government election’s new Members are likely to benefit significantly from the Handbook.</p>

Evaluation of performance during 2014-15

Objective	Progress	Impact	Evidence
<p>To ensure Scrutiny Members add value to the Council's self-evaluation, performance management and improvement arrangements.</p>	<p>The four Scrutiny Committees received the Risk Assessment Log at each of their January meetings where in-depth challenge sessions with Cabinet Members and Officers were held.</p>	<p>The scrutiny process was able to challenge portfolio holders and key officers upon risk management, in line with the budget process. The closer alignment of scrutiny of risk and scrutiny of the budget mandates enabled Members to holistically evaluate each proposal and provide the appropriate challenge.</p>	<p>Scrutiny made recommendations in relation to the Strategic Risk Assessment process, re-drafting and re-prioritising key risks, which was accepted by the Council's Cabinet.</p>
<p>To ensure that information brought to Members is detailed and relevant and enables them to undertake effective scrutiny.</p>	<p>Estyn Inspection feedback had highlighted Members did not always have the necessary performance information to enable them to challenge constructively and that Members were receiving too detailed information in too many different formats.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Manager has worked closely with officers to address this. Performance reports are now combined and are drafted in conjunction with the Education Achievement Service to avoid duplication in reporting or inconsistency in messages being presented.</p>	<p>Members are being provided with high quality relevant information in a timelier manner.</p>	<p>Members have advised that report quality is improving and their ability to understand the information they are being presented with has increased.</p> <p>Estyn's suggestions have been implemented and this improvement should be evidenced in their next report.</p>

Evaluation of performance during 2014-15

Objective	Progress	Impact	Evidence
<p>To promote the role and value of scrutiny to the Executive and to Officers to ensure adequate understanding of the scrutiny role.</p>	<p>Training sessions have been undertaken at DMT's and SMT to assist officers in their understanding the scrutiny role and how to respond to both scrutiny requests for information and challenge at meetings.</p> <p>A 'Scrutiny Executive Protocol' has been implemented to clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to scrutiny.</p> <p>A Scrutiny Webpage and a Scrutiny Handbook are publicly accessible.</p>	<p>There has been an improvement in terms of Officer's understanding of scrutiny – requests to bring items forward for scrutiny are more frequent</p>	<p>There has been a reduction in the number of 'call-in' meetings following an increase in requests to table important issues to scrutiny ahead of Executive decision.</p>
<p>To undertake more focussed scrutiny work through holding additional scrutiny meetings as a full committee (not via Task and Finish Groups).</p>	<p>Over the course of the previous year, it became evident that whilst completed Task and Finish Groups could demonstrate clear outcomes, reviews were generally taking too long to complete, with the potential for "mistimed reviews" and scrutiny "missing the boat" in terms of impact. Member attendance at Task and Finish Groups was inconsistent, which slowed progress and hindered the ability to achieve real outcomes.</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committees are able to influence decision-making through conducting shorter sharper pieces of work as a full committee. The added benefit is that all meetings are accessible to the public and are live streamed to enable openness, transparency and accountability.</p>	<p>Scheduled additional meetings have proven to be better attended, with scrutiny work completed in a timelier manner. The approach allows greater flexibility for scrutiny to engage at the optimum point to achieve maximum impact and several pieces of policy development work such as the Car Parking Charging Policy evidence this improved way of working.</p>

Areas for Continued Focus:

- Despite efforts to ensure that information brought to Members is detailed and relevant, the Estyn Inspection feedback highlighted Members did not always have the necessary performance information to enable them to challenge constructively. The post-inspection “performance management framework for education” increased the amount of information presented to Scrutiny Committees and feedback from the ‘Ministerial Recovery Board’ suggested Scrutiny Members were receiving too detailed information in too many different formats. The Scrutiny Manager has worked with officers to revise performance reporting so that Scrutiny Members are provided high quality and relevant data in a timely manner, however, this remains an area for continued focus.
- Over the course of the previous year, it became evident that whilst completed Task and Finish Groups demonstrated clear outcomes, reviews were taking too long to complete, with the potential for “mistimed reviews” and scrutiny “missing the boat” in terms of impact. Member attendance at Task and Finish Groups was inconsistent, which slowed progress and hindered the ability to achieve real outcomes. To address this, Scrutiny Committees undertake more focussed scrutiny work through holding additional meetings, which are better attended, with work being completed in a timelier manner.
- Whilst scrutiny has been promoted internally to the Executive and to officers via presentations/training to Departmental Management Team meetings, there still appears to be a lack of understanding within service areas about scrutiny’s role within the decision-making process. There is a clear need to further promote the role and value of scrutiny. This has been developed via a scrutiny website – which was an acknowledged ‘area for improvement’ evidenced in the WAO peer evaluation report.
- There is a need to ensure the Scrutiny Website contains all relevant scrutiny information and is user friendly for Members, Officers and the general public. All training information could be made available on this website in due course.
- Whilst there is the opportunity for the public to engage with the work of Council via the public open forum at every Scrutiny Committee meeting, there needs to be systematic engaging with the public on every scrutiny item (which is a requirement under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2010).

Objective	Key Actions	Impact / Outcome	Strategy	Timescale	Funding	Officer	Q1 Performance appraisal	Q2 Performance appraisal	Q3 Performance appraisal	Q4 Performance appraisal
<p>To support Members in scrutinising the Strategic Risk Register and holding Cabinet Members and Officers to account for actions taken to mitigate risks wherever possible.</p>	<p>To work with the committees to identify follow-up actions arising from scrutiny of key risk areas and to schedule quarterly risk management into the work programmes.</p> <p>To ensure the scrutiny activity is clearly organised and that Cabinet Members and Officers are clear as to what is expected of them by clarifying roles and responsibilities and ensuring a clear timetable is in place for the scrutiny of key risks.</p>	<p>Those responsible for risk management are held to account</p> <p>Key risks going forward relating to the committees' remit are managed.</p>	Strategic Risk Assessment Process	Ongoing	None	Hazel Ilett	<p>I will assist Select Committees in scrutinising the Strategic Risk Assessment Process in 2015-2016 by:</p> <p>Organising the scrutiny of the risk assessment in line with the scrutiny of budget mandates to ensure there is proper alignment of budget proposals with the risk assessment.</p> <p>In order for scrutiny to robustly challenge cabinet members and officer on key risks, I will ensure the Committee meeting cycle provides an opportunity to focus solely on risk challenge. I will also refresh Members' training on risk management.</p>	<p>I am working with colleagues in Improvement Team to review the Risk Assessment process for 2015-16, giving thought as to how the current system of recording and reporting risk could be more effective and meaningful.</p> <p>I have arranged for each Select Committee to discuss the Risk Assessment process during their December/January meeting cycle. I will then programme future Risk Challenge sessions and will train Members on risk management.</p>		
							On Target	On Target	Not Started	Not Started
<p>To support Members in reviewing the appropriateness of new and existing policy.</p>	<p>To work with the Cabinet Support Officer to ensure the Cabinet Forward Plan is updated and is accessible to Members.</p> <p>To assist the chairs in identifying topics for pre-decision scrutiny and prioritising their work more effectively.</p> <p>To work with senior officers to encourage them to consider early pre-decision scrutiny of issues to avoid call-ins and the subsequent delays in decision-making.</p>	<p>New and existing policies are fit for purpose and meet citizens' needs.</p> <p>The right policies are scrutinised at the right time, to achieve maximum impact.</p> <p>Members have the appropriate information upon which to challenge policy.</p>	Constitution	Ongoing	None	Hazel Ilett	<p>I ensure Committees scrutinise all major new policy and review existing policy to ensure fitness for purpose. Where required, I ensure committees jointly scrutinise issues to ensure outcomes for citizens.</p> <p>I work closely with the Senior Democratic Services</p>	<p>In response to the problem of inadequate notice being given to table reports to scrutiny, I'm liaising with key officers regularly to identify issues at an early stage that may require pre-decision scrutiny. I'm encouraging Officers to engage with Scrutiny at the start of the</p>		

							<p>Officer to ensure that the Cabinet Forward Planner features on all ordinary Select Committee agendas and to ensure that Members are emailed an updated version on a weekly basis. This ensures Members are aware of forthcoming decisions and that I can identify key issues for scrutiny at an early stage.</p> <p>Inadequate notice from officers of items requiring decision by Cabinet or Council does not enable the scrutiny process to be factored in. This is a recurrent problem despite external training having been provided to SMT and SLT in January 2015.</p> <p>I will continue to periodically attend meetings of SMT and DMT to discuss the impact of poor planning on the scrutiny function and on Members ability to perform their role effectively.</p> <p>I have produced a guidance note on agenda despatch deadlines which has been emailed to all staff to ensure awareness of reporting timescales.</p>	<p>decision-making process to secure Member 'buy in' and this is reducing the number of decisions being called-in.</p> <p>I'm ensuring that Members are consulted via email if there is a specific interest in a subject area, which also avoids decisions being called-in because further information is required. This has alleviated the heavy workload of scrutiny committees, as not all issues that Members should be consulted upon require being taken through the scrutiny process.</p> <p>To help promote the role and value of scrutiny to officers, I now offer direct assistance to those who may be unfamiliar with scrutiny or the political arena. I meet the officers, explain the process and discuss potential lines of inquiry so that their reports are in return, clear and concise and answer Members' questions. Member Feedback is that report quality is improving, whilst Officers say they</p>		
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								welcome the guidance / advice.			
								On Target	On Target	Not Started	Not Started
<p>To support Members in holding the Executive and Officers to account for decisions they have taken / will take in the future.</p> <p>To offer support to scrutiny Members to enable them to hold the Cabinet and officers to account for performance on major initiatives and collaborative activity.</p> <p>To gather information, organise key witnesses, assist with lines of inquiry and ensure a clear 'way forward' for future scrutiny activity.</p>	<p>To assist Members at pre-meetings by setting the context for discussion and offering guidance on questioning technique.</p> <p>To work with the Improvement Officers to ensure that DMT's nominate a relevant officer to attend select committees to respond to any challenge.</p> <p>To liaise with the relevant Cabinet Member to ensure clarity of purpose and responsibility and rationale for their attendance at select meetings.</p> <p>To work with the chairs of select committees to ensure the Committee agrees a "way forward" at every scrutiny meeting, to ensure there is a clear outcome of the scrutiny.</p>	<p>The decisions taken are the right decisions and meet the needs of the citizens.</p> <p>The best use is made of resources, to realise project aspirations. The longevity, performance and risks associated with the projects are managed, ensuring value to the public purse.</p>	Constitution	Ongoing	None	Hazel Ilett	<p>I have assisted Members in undertaking pre-decision scrutiny of several major policies which have resulted in changes to those policies.</p> <p>Several major decisions have also been 'called-in' which have resulted in changes to how those decisions are presented and reported to Cabinet.</p> <p>I have established arrangements for scrutinising collaborative initiatives such as the Shared Resource Service and CMC2 to ensure they are accountable for their performance and service delivery. Scrutiny Committees will continue to scrutinise the appropriate topics to ensure delivery against key outcomes. Recent scrutiny of both the SRS review and the business plan for the Community Interest Company have ensured both services deliver outcomes and are held accountable for their service delivery.</p> <p>I have assisted</p>	<p>I'm undertaking a more proactive approach to preparing Officers and Cabinet Members ahead of scrutiny to ensure expectations are clear. My rationale for this is that Members' 'challenge ability has improved and as such, there have been numerous occasions where Members have been disappointed with reports presented to them. I have also requested early sight of draft reports to enable me to suggest any amendments before being tabled to scrutiny and this has also improved the quality of reports being presented to scrutiny.</p> <p>I'm continuing to assist Members in preparing key questions for meetings and I'm maximising the opportunity during pre-meetings to ensure roles and responsibilities of various officers, cabinet members and partners are clear.</p>			

							<p>Scrutiny Members by preparing questions to pose to key witnesses to ensure the scrutiny is robust and focusses on key areas of concern. This involved me scheduling many meetings with various staff in order to devise relevant key lines of inquiry that would ensure the scrutiny is fair, meaningful and delivers outcomes. An example of successful scrutiny that has led to a specific outcome is the work undertaken by the Adults Select Committee in conjunction with the health board on 'end of life care', which has led to the committee working closely with health on a future project and potentially Monmouthshire becoming a pilot for the project. Further joint scrutiny of specific topics such as housing and of key decisions such as the solar farm business case will take place in July.</p> <p>Challenge of the Education Achievement Service has been highly successful and has resulted in marked improvement in their performance in several key areas identified by Estyn:</p>	<p>The increase in scrutiny's workload has been significant (is likely to increase with new Future Generations responsibilities). Select Committees are holding additional Committee meetings rather than establishing Task and Finish Groups which take too long to complete. This has led some Officers and Cabinet Members to question the outcomes being delivered by Select Committees. To address this, I'm preparing quarterly reports for Cabinet detailing scrutiny's recommendations. Whilst this is a new intervention, I believe it will assist in reassuring the Executive that Scrutiny is playing a critical role in decision-making.</p> <p>To further address this I'm working with the Scrutiny Chairs to ensure recommendations are communicated to Cabinet Members in writing. In May 2015, I revised the Scrutiny minute template to ensure clearer summing up by the Scrutiny</p>		
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							Individual Pupil Tracking, Financial Management including the proposed use of underspends and the consistency of Challenge Advisors. My role in supporting the select committee in preparing questions and ensuring Members are properly informed of key areas of concern has enabled a high degree of challenge.	Chair and to ensure a concise recommendation can be captured in the minutes. Feedback from Members and Officers confirms that the changes made to how Members determine the 'Way Forward' are helping to clarify the Committee's specific stance on issues.		
							On Target	On Target	Not Started	Not Started
							On Target	Select Progress	Select Progress	Select Progress
To support Members in analysing performance information to enable them to hold responsibility holders to account for performance and outcomes.	<p>As far as possible, to ensure the content of reports and presentations is clear and pitched correctly.</p> <p>To ensure further information requests are coordinated and acted upon.</p> <p>To work with officers in education to strengthen the level of scrutiny of schools, the EAS and the Council through holding regular meeting to identify areas of underperformance and to identify key issues for scrutiny.</p> <p>To work with the improvement officers to establish a rolling programme of training on performance monitoring in order to develop a more in-depth understanding of performance data and encourage more probing questioning.</p>	<p>Cabinet and Officers achieve satisfactory performance and continuous improvement in line with targets and performance indicators set nationally.</p> <p>Schools perform at a high level and continuously improve.</p> <p>The EAS raises educational attainment in schools and delivers value for money for the Council in terms of school improvement.</p>	<p>Constitution</p> <p>Performance Management Framework</p>	Ongoing	None	Hazel Ilett	<p>The Children and Young People's Select Committee have scrutinised the Estyn Report and from July 2013 onwards, are frequently monitoring the intended delivery of Estyn's recommendations.</p> <p>Head teachers of the 4 comprehensive schools have attended the Committee to account for school performance and further visits to schools will be made if necessary to delve deeper into key areas.</p> <p>EAS are also being scrutinised by the Children and Young People's Select Committee to ensure the delivery of</p>	<p>I am liaising more frequently with colleagues across the organisations who prepare performance reports to ensure that reports convey clear messages and avoid confusion amongst Members. This is a direct response to feedback from Estyn that reports contained mixed messages and provided too detailed information, which hindered effective scrutiny.</p> <p>I'm ensuring that bodies such as EAS, SRS and CMC2 attend scrutiny committees to account for their performance in delivering our outcomes.</p>		

							<p>individual outcomes for the county. They will be invited to attend scrutiny late summer to account for school performance.</p> <p>The Chair of the CYP Select Committee and the Scrutiny Manager have met with the Internal Monitoring Board and the Ministerial Recovery Board in order to discuss the appropriate level of scrutiny of education matters and ways in which the scrutiny can be improved.</p> <p>I have worked very closely with service area officers and external organisations to ensure that the information being brought to scrutiny is clear and of a high quality and there is improvement in this regard. A training seminar for officers from CYP was held in June on political report writing and the political process.</p> <p>Ensuring the work of various external auditors is clear and timely is proving difficult, given that several auditors may choose to inspect and report on a single theme, thus duplicating work and on occasions, sending mixed</p>	<p>Member questioning has substantially improved, so I have concentrated my efforts on ensuring scrutiny members recognise the various roles and are able to clearly identify where challenge should be levied. This area has progressed, with challenge being more appropriately directed.</p> <p>I am guiding Members to probe deeper into issues to ensure there is evidence behind statements made: For example, pre-decision scrutiny of Future Play Models raised concern amongst Members as to how safeguarding would be ensured. I'm encouraging Members to satisfy themselves that that the appropriate arrangements are in place and are working effectively through evidence, rather than relying on officer assurances. This is leading to a deeper level of scrutiny, which requires officers to demonstrate and evidence activity. This ensures that scrutiny is an</p>		
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							<p>messages to elected Members as to how the Council is performing. I am attempting to build good working relationships with these organisations to ensure that reporting is timely and that recommendations are focussed and consistent in presenting key messages and describing the journey ahead.</p> <p>Scrutiny Members Received considerable Scrutiny training through 2014's Scrutiny Member Development Programme and following successful training with members in January and also with officers is part of the rolling programme of development.</p>	<p>effective 'critical Friend' and is leading to more robust decisions being made as a consequence.</p> <p>I am assisting scrutiny Members to work more closely with regulators in identifying performance issues at an early stage. The Children and Young People's Select Committee in particular have requested that regulators meet with the Chair in advance of inspections and prior to reviews being published so that scrutiny can play a more active part in identifying areas of concern.</p> <p>I will continue to train Members in line with the rolling programme of training developed through 2014-15 and will also target Member who did not attend previous sessions.</p>		
							On Target	On Target	Not Started	Not Started
To enable effective scrutiny of the Budget Proposals: the Medium Term Financial Plan.	To continue the implementation of the redesigned "Budget Scrutiny Process 2014-15".	Scrutiny of the Council's budget is transparent and democratic. Early consideration of budgetary decisions allows public debate to seek innovative financial solutions.	Constitution	Ongoing	None	Hazel Ilett	I have developed a new budget scrutiny process which enabled robust scrutiny of budget proposals together with scrutiny of risk, to ensure alignment of budget and risk. This also provided an	I secured the opportunity for early scrutiny of budget mandates for 2015/16 during October/November 2015, which enabled scrutiny members to engage in decisions		

							<p>opportunity for members of the public to engage with the council through the process. This process will commence in Autumn 2015.</p>	<p>early in the budget process. The early consideration of ideas enabled Members to shape the Council's budgetary direction and to make recommendations on those proposals.</p>		
							On Target	On Target	Not Started	Not Started
<p>To perform the general functions of the Scrutiny Manager role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive the wider scrutiny agenda • Manage the scrutiny workload • Provide advice on scrutiny to Members and officers • Manage the operational aspects of the scrutiny function • Coordinate and deliver scrutiny training 	<p>To work with the Select Chairs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure proper implementation of the Scrutiny and Cabinet Protocol to support the interface between Scrutiny and Cabinet. • To review the Terms of Reference of the Select Committees to ensure they are relevant and take account of changes to scrutiny's responsibilities. • Produce a Scrutiny Handbook that compiles all relevant training material. • Produce a 'witness guide' for those attending scrutiny committees (both internal and external) • Continue to refine the Scrutiny Website to provide easy access to scrutiny information to Members and to the public. 	<p>To ensure an efficient well organised scrutiny function that supports elected Members in ensuring openness, transparency and accountability in decision-making.</p>	Constitution	Ongoing	None	Hazel Ilett	<p>The scrutiny arrangements were assessed during 2013 by the WAO national peer evaluation study. The study concluded that effective scrutiny arrangements are in place and that scrutiny is performing well in terms of the expectations of external regulators and against its peer local authorities. The report was tabled to the Council's Audit Committee who examined it in conjunction with this service plan to ensure the actions contained in the service plan address areas for improvement outlined in the WAO final self-evaluation report. Delivery of this Service Plan is monitored annually by the Council's Audit Committee.</p> <p>I have revised the 4 Select Committees'</p>	<p>In November 2015, I have produced a response to the WAO of my ongoing actions in implementing the recommendations made to all Welsh authorities on scrutiny as part of the WAO 2013 Review. My response to the WAO will then be reported to the Council's Audit Committee by January 2016.</p> <p>I will present the updated Scrutiny Service Plan (which is the Council's WAO Scrutiny Action Plan) to the Audit Committee by December 2015 to ensure they are satisfied with the arrangements in place.</p> <p>I will continue to work with the Scrutiny Chairs Liaison Group to reflect on the scrutiny functions' effectiveness and we will conduct a</p>		

							<p>terms of reference and with the Scrutiny Chairs Liaison Group, which were agreed by the Democratic Services Committee in Summer 2014. I have recently included the partnership work stream of the Single Integrated Plan. I will be working with the Scrutiny Chairs Group in Summer 2015 to establish a Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel to hold them to account for the delivery of partnership outcomes.</p> <p>The scrutiny webpages are in place and will be further developed to provide an online resource for elected Members, Officers.</p> <p>Following the Gwent Scrutiny Challenge, I have worked closely with the Centre for Public Scrutiny, officers of the other former Gwent Authorities and also the Council's Scrutiny Chairs Liaison Group to develop a programme for peer review that could be supported and facilitated by the CFPS with the outcome being an agreement of future training needs that</p>	<p>self-evaluation based on the "Characteristics of Good Scrutiny" in the Spring of 2016.</p> <p>The proposal to establish a Scrutiny Panel to hold the Local Service Board to account (planned for summer 2015) has been overtaken by the progress of the Future Generations Act through the Welsh Assembly. The draft guidance on implementing the Act has been published (November 2015) and this has direct implications for Monmouthshire's scrutiny function, in terms of the obligation to ensure the Council complies with the Act and the specific duty to scrutinise the work of the evolving Public Service Board. I'm preparing a report for Council decision (21st January) to establish the appropriate scrutiny arrangements, which will be in place by 1st March 2016 (as early adopters of the FG Act).</p> <p>Further work is being undertaken to improve the scrutiny website to</p>		
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							could be delivered individually or jointly where appropriate. The programme commenced with a workshop in March 2015, to be followed by peer observation activity and potential observation of other Councils in the UK.	provide an online resource of training material for elected Members with an expected completion by May 2016. The programme for peer review programme with Gwent Authorities has been delayed, primarily due to the completion of the Welsh Government's contract with the Centre for Public Scrutiny to provide the support for the programme. It is not yet clear whether this work will continue. The Scrutiny Manager will make further inquiries to determine the way forward.		
							On Target	Behind Target	Not Started	Not Started

A balanced scorecard to measure service performance / impact (Some standard measures of performance on staff, finance and customers have been included that all services must report)

Staff (Key infrastructure)										
Indicator	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Actual 2014/15	Wales Av 2014/15	Target 2015/16	Actual 2015/16 Q1	Actual 2015/16 Q2	Actual 2015/16 Q3	Actual 2015/16 Q4	Context/ Comment
Sickness	17 days	Nil	Nil							2012-13: 1 instance of sickness
Budget (Key infrastructure)										
Indicator	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Actual 2014/15	Wales Av 2014/15	Target 2015/16	Actual 2015/16 Q1	Actual 2015/16 Q2	Actual 2015/16 Q3	Actual 2015/16 Q4	Context/ Comment
N/A										N/A
Processes (How Much and How Well?)										
Indicator	Actual 2012	Actual 2013	Actual 2014	Wales Av 2014/15	Target 2015/16	Actual 2015/16 Q1	Actual 2015/16 Q2	Actual 2015/16 Q3	Actual 2015/16 Q4	Context/ Comment
Number of Scrutiny Meetings held in a year:	<u>39</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>52</u>							<p>The workload of scrutiny committees has increased significantly and additional meetings are being held to accommodate a greater workload.</p> <p>The number of call-ins per year has reduced during 2014 which may be due to more pre-decision scrutiny being undertaken.</p> <p>In line with the action plan, I am working to reduce the number of 'call-in meetings' by ensuring advance notice of decisions, which affords Members the opportunity to have early sight of reports.</p> <p>The workload of the 4 Select Committees is varied with some committees being more policy focussed, however it is clear that the Children and Young People's Select Committee has been largely performance driven, due to a greater emphasis on holding to account following the Estyn Inspection in November 2012. The Select Committee work programmes for 2014/15 show clear requests for new policy e.g. The need for an Events Strategy, an Enterprise Strategy and a People Strategy. This work has come to fruition, so the figures for 2015 will show an increase in pre-decision scrutiny and policy development.</p>
Ordinary Meetings:	<u>26</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>40</u>							
- Adults	6	7	7							
- Children and Young People's	6	7	11							
- Economy and Development	6	9	13							
- Strong Communities	8	7	9							
Special Meetings:	<u>9</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>10</u>							
- Adults	2	4	1							
- Children and Young People's	4	6	5							
- Economy and Development	3	4	2							
- Strong Communities	0	3	2							
Call-ins	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>							
- Adults	0	1	0							
- Children and Young People's	1	1	0							
- Economy and Development	0	0	0							
- Strong Communities	3	2	2							
Number of policies presented for pre-decision scrutiny:										
- Adults	4	3	5							
- Children and Young People's	3	2	1							
- Economy and Development	4	2	3							
- Strong Communities	7	4	9							
Number of Crime and Disorder referrals via the Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Process:	0	0	0							

Number of topics suggested for scrutiny by the public:	0	1	3							

Customers (Outcome / Is anyone better off?)

Indicator	Actual 2011/12	Actual 2012/13	Actual 2013/14	Wales Av 2013/14	Target 2014/15	Actual 2014/15 Q1	Actual 2014/15 Q2	Actual 2014/15 Q3	Actual 2014/15 Q4	Context/ Comment
Public involvement in scrutiny meetings.										We do not require members of the public to sign an attendance register or to provide us with their personal details. Observations of select committees indicates public attendance at scrutiny meetings is increasing, with members of the public wishing to speak formally at meetings upon issues that interest or concern them. In 2015, a Member of the public submitted a report to a Select Committee which required a meeting be arranged to consider the proposals there in.
% attendance at Select Committees	N/A	N/A	N/A							
% attendance at Scrutiny training	N/A	N/A	N/A							There is no concrete information to support these indicators to date; however, the new Modern.gov system should enable future collection of this data. This will assist in drawing assumptions as to whether Members are engaged in scrutiny, whether training is reaching all members and how interested the public are in the work of scrutiny.
Number of YouTube views	N/A	N/A	N/A							
Number of public open forum items	N/A	N/A	N/A							

Risk Register 2015-18

Risk	Strategic Operational	Reason why identified (evidence)	Risk Level (High, Medium or Low) Based on a score assessing both probability & impact		Responsible Officer	Actions proposed to mitigate the risk	Progress & impact of actions 2015/16 Q1	Progress & impact of actions 2015/16 Q2	Progress & impact of actions 2015/16 Q3	Progress & impact of actions 2015/16 Q4
			Year	Level						
Potential that the Scrutiny Function performs so ineffectively that it becomes a risk to the Council.	O	The Council's Scrutiny Function has previously been considered a high risk area due to its ineffectiveness.	2015/16 2016/17 2017/18	Low Low Low	Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager	The Scrutiny Function has been reviewed by the Scrutiny Manger twice in 3 years and also by the Wales Audit office 3 times in 7 years. Recommendations made by both reviews were accepted by the Council and progress has been made to achieve these and ensure continuous improvement in terms of how the function operates and what 'added value' it can deliver.	The 2013 WAO peer review of MCC's Scrutiny Process concluded scrutiny was performing satisfactorily. It also highlighted key actions that will further improve performance and these are contained within the Scrutiny service plan. Performance monitoring of the delivery of the service plan will be undertaken by the Scrutiny Chairs.	As discussed within the plan, we have responded to each recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office and can evidence that we have actioned all of recommendations. The service strives to continuously improve and feedback from Members, officers, partners and inspectors informs whether it is progressing in the right direction. The function self-evaluates annually using the 'Characteristics of Good Scrutiny' as a benchmark.		
Potential that the Scrutiny Function fails in terms of its key responsibility to ensure the Council performs effectively, particularly in relation to the statutory roles to safeguard children and protect vulnerable adults.	O	It relates specifically to the responsibility of Scrutiny Members and is therefore volatile.	2015/16 2016/17 2017/18	Low Low Low	Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager	The appropriate Select Committees review the performance within their remits on a quarterly basis to ensure any concerns are highlighted at an early stage. The Council's Annual Reporting Framework allows a joint presentation to Scrutiny upon the performance within Social Services as a whole, which seeks to prevent issues falling between the remit of the	Improvements to the way in which Select Committees monitor risk (quarterly as opposed to annually) should ensure that performance is monitored more frequently and robustly to ensure that actions are taken to mitigate key risks that fall within the remit of their committees.	Following the Estyn inspection, the Council has revised its Safeguarding Policy, which has been scrutinised several times over the last 2 years and the Children and Young People's Select Committee receive quarterly reports on safeguarding practice.		

						scrutiny committees.				
Potential that Members fail to challenge effectively and hold Cabinet Members, Officers and Partners to account for decision-making and performance.	O	It relates specifically to the responsibility of Scrutiny Members and is therefore volatile.	2015/16 2016/17 2017/18	Med Med Med	Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager	The Scrutiny Manager has provided 2 training sessions during June/July 2014 with colleagues from the Performance and Improvement Team and the Finance Team to encourage greater challenge amongst Scrutiny Members. Attendance at training sessions was fairly low despite active encouragement from senior leadership.	The Scrutiny Manager has developed a Scrutiny Member Development Programme which consists of a rolling programme of training specifically designed for MCC's Scrutiny Members. Some of the training is to be provided in-house and some by external providers and Scrutiny Members will be encouraged to attend all sessions.	The Estyn Inspection has transformed the way in which we scrutinise performance and hold officers and the Executive to account. We no longer rely on reassurances, but seek evidence to collaborate statements made about our performance.		
That the increased role and responsibilities for the Scrutiny Function arising from the Local Government Measure will place significant burden upon the function in terms of allocating it wider responsibilities and specific duties for which it will not be directly funded or supported.	S	The legislation will enhance the Scrutiny role, but will place additional duties and responsibilities on Scrutiny Members to scrutinise the wider public sector. Due to time and capacity constraints this will undoubtedly influence the focus of scrutiny which has to date been 'in-house' to accommodate the duty to scrutinise externally and may pose future resource implications.	2015/16 2016/17 2017/18	High High High	Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager	The Scrutiny Manager at the present time cannot speculate the ramifications of the legislation recently passed at this early stage. The Scrutiny Manager will keep a watching brief and advise as and when necessary.	The Scrutiny Manager through the National Scrutiny Officers Network has highlighted the need for the Welsh Government to define guidelines for the scrutiny of designated persons. This would assist in highlighting potential pitfalls and would prepare partners who will be subject to scrutiny on their role and responsibilities. The Scrutiny Manager will provide training for scrutiny members when the guidance has been produced.	The Future Generations Act has progressed through the Assembly's legislative process and the guidance has been published which confirms new duties for local government scrutiny to hold the Public Service Board to account. The new responsibilities will have significant implications for the scrutiny function, requiring a designated appropriate arrangement to be established. This will have implications for Members in terms of their capacity and for officers who support scrutiny: in terms of the requirement to service the new function (Democratic Services) and to		

								<p>ensure it is effective and operates in line with the expectations of the Auditor General for Wales (the Scrutiny Manager). The Scrutiny Manager is preparing a report for Council on 21st January 2nd to request their agreement to establish the necessary Public Service Board Scrutiny Arrangements.</p>	
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