

Report

Council



Part 1

Date: 28 February 2023

Subject Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22

Purpose To present the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22

Author Scrutiny and Governance Manager

Ward All

Summary The Scrutiny Committees are required by the constitution to submit an Annual Report each year to Council, to review how Scrutiny has operated in the last 12 months.

It is difficult to measure the impact of Scrutiny using traditional performance measures, which count the outputs from the Scrutiny Committees but do not measure the outcomes of our work, or show whether improvements have been made as a result. The Annual Report is a more useful tool in reviewing the effectiveness of Scrutiny, providing an opportunity to reflect properly on how Scrutiny has operated in the last year, and to identify upcoming challenges against which future performance can be judged.

Proposal To agree the content of the annual report as a basis for the work of the Scrutiny Committees in the coming year.

Action by Leanne Rowlands, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
- Head of Law and Standards
- Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Head of Finance

Signed

Background

- 1 The Scrutiny Committees are required by the constitution to submit an Annual Report each year to Council, to review how Overview and Scrutiny has operated in the last 12 months.

Reviewing Scrutiny's Performance

- 2 The Annual Report is a key part of the performance management cycle for Scrutiny. It is difficult to measure the impact of Scrutiny using traditional performance measures, which count the outputs from the Scrutiny Committees but do not measure the outcomes of our work, or show whether improvements have been made as a result. The Annual Report is a more useful tool in reviewing the effectiveness of Scrutiny, providing an opportunity to reflect properly on how Scrutiny has operated in the last year, and to identify upcoming challenges against which future performance can be judged.
- 3 As well as providing a commentary on scrutiny activity in the past year, the report is structured to review performance on the targets set last September, and agree priorities for the next 12 months (which will be used as the basis of our performance review next year).

Financial Summary

- 4 There are no specific costs to the adoption of this report. Support for Overview and Scrutiny is undertaken within the budget allocation.

Risks

| Risk | Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L) | Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L) | What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect | Who is responsible for dealing with the risk? |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| An ineffective scrutiny function could undermine the Council's corporate governance arrangements and lead to poor quality decision making | M | L | The Annual Report informs the Council of the efforts made to strengthen the role of scrutiny in Newport and how the Committees will work to help develop policies and hold the executive to account in an open and transparent manner. | Democratic and Electoral Services Manager |
| Lack of progress in enhancing the role of scrutiny will impact on its effectiveness and esteem within the Council | H | L | The Chairs of Scrutiny are working together to oversee the development and progress of scrutiny in Newport; sharing best practice and driving forward the programme for improvement. Regular meetings are also held with senior members of the Executive to help develop that relationship and strengthen the position of scrutiny within the authority. | Democratic and Electoral Services Manager |

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

6 The Scrutiny function has an important role in helping the Council to achieve its expressed aims under the Corporate Plan 2017-2022 in place during the reporting period:

- To make our city a better place to live for all our citizens
- To be good at what we do
- To work hard to provide what our citizens tell us they need

Options Available

7 The Council's constitution requires the production of an Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report. Submission of this report is required in order to meet this requirement. The Council may accept the report, reject it, or ask for further work to be undertaken.

Preferred Option and Why

8 The report provides a summary of progress last year and a plan of action for improvements this year. It is recommended that the report is adopted.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications arising from this report, with the activities of Scrutiny committees and the actions contained within the report being funded from within existing budgets.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Council is required to establish arrangements for effective overview and scrutiny in accordance with Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government Measure 2011. In accordance with the reporting arrangements set out in the Constitution, an Annual Report is presented to full Council regarding the way in which the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements have operated during the preceding 12 months. The Annual report itself raises no legal issues. Each report to and from the Committees during the year has included Monitoring Officer comments on any legal implications. The Annual Report shows that good progress has been made in delivering the targets and objectives set out in last year's Report. This work will continue throughout the current year, with a view to further strengthening scrutiny arrangements.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

The report notes the emphasis of scrutiny on ensuring that the Council acts in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Scrutiny members continue to have training to develop their understanding and consideration of the Act when undertaking scrutiny activity.

The report also notes that the Council's scrutiny function is also responsible for scrutinising the performance of OneNewport. This function is performed by the Scrutiny Performance Committee – Partnerships and feedback is also considered by the partnership.

There are no direct HR implications arising from the report.

Local issues

N/A

Scrutiny Committees

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee reviewed the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 before it was presented to Council.

Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment:

N/A

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) empowers scrutiny to analyse how joint leadership behaviours affect joint delivery.

In this reporting period, the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships has scrutiny of the Public Services Board (PSB) and One Newport Partnership within its remit, which considers the effectiveness of the Partnership and its associated plans. This is reflected within the Annual Report in the summary of the Committee's work this year.

The report also shows the new emphasis of scrutiny on ensuring that the Council acts in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Equality Act 2010 and Socio-economic Duty

N/A

- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

In this reporting period, the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships has scrutiny of the Public Services Board (PSB) and One Newport Partnership within its remit, which considers the effectiveness of the Partnership and its associated plans. This is reflected within the Annual Report in the summary of the Committee's work this year, showing continued work with a wide range of partners to raise the profile of the Welsh language in Newport and particularly of the work the Council delivers with One Newport stakeholders.

Consultation

N/A

Background Papers

Agenda and minutes of the Scrutiny Committees 2020/21

[Newport City Council - Committee details - Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee](#)

[Newport City Council - Committee details - Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships](#)

[Newport City Council - Committee details - Performance Scrutiny Committee - People](#)

[Newport City Council - Committee details - Performance Scrutiny Committee - Place and Corporate](#)

Dated: 22 February 2023