



SCRUTINY REPORT

Date Written	24 th March 2021
Report Author	Scrutiny Section
Committee Division	Scrutiny
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	12 th April 2021

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Forward Work Programme 2020/21

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Committee with its work programme for consideration and to prepare in advance of the next scrutiny committee meeting.
- 1.2 To remind Scrutiny Committee members that they need to consider the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in all aspects of scrutiny work.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The Committee considers the attached Forward Work Programme to reflect on the topics scrutinised throughout the year.
- 2.2 The Committee discusses development of the Committee's Work Programme for 2021-2022; confirming the approach to be taken to develop this.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The attached Forward Work Programme identifies the topics and issues under consideration by the Scrutiny Committee and allows an opportunity for additional subjects to be identified and included on the programme.
- 3.2 Scrutiny committees are required to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 3.3 The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires each Public Service Board (PSB) and Council to work with their communities to develop local objectives.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) and the Cwm Taf PSB have acted on this.

- 3.4 MTCBC has four local Wellbeing Objectives, each having clear outcomes that will help the Council to respond to local community needs and contribute to the seven national wellbeing goals. The four Wellbeing Objectives are:-

BS Best Start to Life - Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals.

The key outcomes for Best Start to Life are:

- Children live in a nurturing and stimulating home environment
- Children have access to high quality pre-school and school education
- Improve the educational outcomes for all children and young people
- Children and young people have good health and wellbeing

WL Working Life - People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure, which makes Merthyr Tydfil as an attractive destination.

The key outcomes for Working Life are:

- Merthyr Tydfil realises its full economic potential, with a skilled workforce and better employment opportunities;
- People value and enjoy the built and natural environment, protecting and enhancing our cultural assets for current and future generations;
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

EW Environmental Wellbeing - Communities protect, enhance and promote our environment and countryside.

The key outcomes for Environmental Wellbeing are:

- Environmental damage is minimised by preventing pollution
- To maximise the amount of materials and resources recycled in line with the waste hierarchy;
- Merthyr Tydfil has good quality, biodiverse and connected green infrastructure and open spaces; and
- The use of renewable and low carbon energy is increased.

LW Living Well - People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.

The key outcomes for Living Well are:

- People live safe and independent lives within their communities;
- Children and adults are safeguarded from harm and feel safe; and
- Children and young people live safely with their family or close to home and have transitioned well into adulthood.

- 3.5 The Scrutiny Committee is encouraged to identify issues that reflect these priorities that are within your remit and/or are a priority for local people and communities. If a matter is a recurring issue for the people you, as Councillors, represent, the likelihood is that it is something that the Committee should consider. The more relevant the issue is to local communities then the greater the likelihood of engaging those communities in the scrutiny process and of producing outcomes that will be visible to those communities you represent.
- 3.6 MTCBC has developed an 'Our Shared Vision' document. This makes the connections from the seven national Wellbeing Goals through to the local objectives and political priorities. This document is contained within one page and acts as an easy to understand guide. When considered with service area strategies and operational plans a thread is created that can be extended down to individual tasks. This helps staff members see how they are contributing to the Act and the 'Wales We Want', and will assist Scrutiny members better understand the connections with the Act.
- 3.7 The work programme is a dynamic document and is reviewed at every meeting of the Committee to ensure that its contents are still relevant and will add value to what the Council and partners are doing. At each meeting the committee will agree the agenda items for their next meeting and in preparation may in advance wish to ask itself the following questions.

Q) Why has the item been placed on a Scrutiny Work Programme?

- a. Does this item/ topic contribute to the delivery of the Council's wellbeing objectives?
- b. Does this item/ topic contribute to the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities/ objectives?
- c. Is this item/ topic relating to service performance concerns?
- d. Is this item/ topic of significant public interest?
- e. Does the item/ topic have any budgetary implications?
- f. Is this an item/ topic where Scrutiny involvement will make a significant difference and achieve tangible outcomes?
- g. Can effective Scrutiny of this issue be delivered from within available resources?

Q) What is the specific role of the Committee?

This will depend on the item – for example the role could be:

- a. to determine if performance levels are acceptable in relation to a particular department;
- b. to determine if a specific policy is fit for purpose;
- c. to satisfy itself that the Authority is working well with its partners in tackling a major issue;
- d. to gather the views of specific stakeholders as part of an on-going scrutiny investigation/ review;
- e. to explore possible solutions to an issue.

Q) What outcome is the Committee seeking from the consideration of this item?

- a. To comment on the proposed budget and make suggestions to cabinet regarding the proposed budget's ability to deliver the priorities of the council
- b. Identification of any causes for concern and note successes.
- c. To receive an overview presentation.
- d. To gain an understanding of and to comment on a policy/ strategy
- e. To explore ideas around the setting of budgets while considering the pressures facing each service. This also helps provide an overview of the policy frame work.
- f. For the scrutiny committee to gain an overview and refresh their knowledge of the wellbeing objectives/ other plan/ other strategy.
- g. Improvement in service delivery

Q) What information does the Committee need to fulfil this role/ achieve this outcome?

What is the Committee trying to do? You might be trying to do some or all of the following i.e. establish facts; gather opinions; or explore new ideas/ solutions.

Q) Who should be invited to the meeting to provide the information?

Depending on the information you need you might want to hear from a range of witnesses – e.g. Cabinet members, Senior Officers, Service users, and External partners – e.g. Police, Strategic Partners etc

Q) Does the Committee need to ask for written representations?

The Committee may wish to pose some questions to the Directorate/ Cabinet Member/ External Partner etc. prior to the meeting. This may help in instances when the Committee is looking for something specific to be addressed. This will assist whoever is attending to ensure that they have the information/ answer ready for the meeting.

Q) Which meeting format/ venue would be most appropriate for the item and for the witnesses that will be invited to attend?

Due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 global pandemic, all scrutiny committees are to be held via Microsoft Teams at least for the time-being. This decision has been taken to ensure the safety of our members, officers and all others in attendance. Currently, there is no clear indication of when hybrid meetings will be appropriate; and this will be reviewed in line with any updates and advice from U.K. and Welsh Government.

Even under normal circumstances, meetings do not have to be held in a formal committee room environment. You may wish to hold occasional meetings in community location settings e.g. community centres, sports facilities etc. It depends on the subject. Some people find the formal setting intimidating. Site visits for example may be more appropriate to see first-hand what the committee is investigating/ obtaining information on e.g. waste sites, regeneration projects etc.

Q) Method of Scrutiny?

Once Members have identified the matters they wish to scrutinise, consideration should be given to scoping the subject in more detail including the timing and method of scrutiny to be used. Support in this process will be given by the Scrutiny and Support Manager and Officer. Members may wish to:

- a. Consider an item at a single meeting;
- b. Consider an item over a series of meetings;
- c. Allocate the work to a small working group of Members (Task & Finish group) to investigate the issue over a period of 2-3 months (this may involve visits to see how services are working in practice);
- d. Undertake an Inquiry Day (or days);
- e. Undertake joint scrutiny with members of another Scrutiny Committee;
- f. Invite expert witnesses to give their views;
- g. Seeking the views of service users/ carers and/ or the general public (public calls for evidence)

**Performance and Scrutiny Department
MTCBC**

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Statement of Wellbeing & Focus on the Future: Wellbeing in our Community	4 th April 2018	MTCBC Website Full Council 4 th April 2018
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No