DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 16TH SEPTEMBER 2015

SUBJECT: SCRUTINY REVIEW 2015

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To outline the findings and recommendations identified from a review of scrutiny arrangements that was carried out to identify improvement to the operation of scrutiny. This was following the findings of the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 This report identifies the issues for improvement contained the WAO report identified by the workshop groups in relation to agendas, forward work programmes and witnesses, information and reports, task and finish groups, scrutiny support, the role of Cabinet and scrutiny members at committee and meeting organisation and chairing skills, and finally the external scrutiny role of local authorities.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 The Improving Governance Programme Board (IGPB) are responsible for overseeing the improvements to scrutiny recommended by the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', and are asked to consider the findings and recommendations identified during the review.

4.2 The Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015 has identified further improvements to scrutiny. The report recognised the work carried out under the scrutiny improvement action plan and the structural arrangements put in place. However, the report identified that the next stage is to develop the effectiveness of scrutiny and clarify its role.

4.3 The WAO's main findings can be summarised as:

- The Chairs and Vice Chairs of scrutiny committees have mixed views on the benefits of pre-meetings.
- Effectiveness of scrutiny's challenge role is limited.
- The role of scrutiny is confused.

- Meetings are long and agendas lack focus.
- 'For Information' agenda items could be handled more efficiently outside of the formal scrutiny process.
- The Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference are very wide which restricts the time available to discuss subjects in depth.
- Agenda items need to be prioritised and focused on the Council's priorities.
- Information provided to scrutiny is good, however, Chairs and Vice Chairs would like more use of qualitative, historical and comparative information.
- Task and Finish Groups should be used more frequently to review specific issues in more depth.
- Members want to continue to improve their scrutiny role.

4.4   In order to identify how improvements can be made a project group was set up to oversee the improvement programme, the members of the project group were:

- Gail Williams Interim Monitoring Officer & Head of Legal Services.
- Angharad Price Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- Councillor Hefin David Chair Scrutiny Leadership Group.
- Councillor Colin Mann Chair Democratic Services Committee .
- Councillor Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member HR, Governance and Business.

4.5   The aim of the improvement programme was to identify possible changes to improve the operation of scrutiny. In order to ensure that all interested parties were involved in discussing possible changes to scrutiny, four workshops were held over a two-week period and attended by 64 people. Each workshop consisted of mixed groups of Members and Officers made up of the Leader and Deputy Leaders, Scrutiny Leadership Group, Democratic Services Committee, Scrutiny Committee Members and Co-opted Members, CMT, Heads of Services and Third Tier Officers.

4.6   The purpose of the workshop was to discuss the WAO findings and to find a 'long list' of options to action those findings. The workshop groups were asked to consider the following statements:

- The Wales Audit Office stated that the effectiveness of scrutiny's challenge role is limited.
- The Wales Audit Office stated that the effectiveness and role of scrutiny is confused.
- The Wales Audit Office stated that agenda items need to be prioritised and focused on the Council's priorities.

Participants were then asked to consider the following questions:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- How can we do it?
- What are the benefits/constraints?

4.7   The feedback from the workshops has been grouped into subject headings, which is supplemented with background information and conclusions of the project group.

4.8   The workshops groups also identified some general scrutiny suggestions, as follows:

- Review terms of reference for all scrutiny committees.
- Review number of scrutiny committees.
- Review how & when scrutiny committees will be involved during policy development – develop guidance for officers.

4.8.1   The terms of reference for Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee have been considerably wider than the other scrutiny committees. The terms of reference for Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee was recently addressed by the Interim Chief Executive, albeit on a temporary basis, when

Public Protection was transferred to Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. This has reduced the burden on the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee and there is an argument for continuing this approach on a permanent basis, as the services provided by Public Protection have a close affiliation with the health agenda.

4.8.2   The workload of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee may be addressed through reviewing forward work programmes and how information is provided to Members. If these were implemented there would be no reason to change the terms of reference or increase the number of scrutiny committees in order to reduce the workload of the scrutiny committee.

4.8.3   The use of special scrutiny committee meetings has also been suggested in order to address the workload of some scrutiny committees. During 2013/14 additional MTFP scrutiny committees were held which increased the workload of both Officers and Members. The next few years may see the need to hold more special scrutiny meeting for the MTFP, therefore some control over the number of additional meetings needs to be considered, perhaps a limit of two per scrutiny committee per annum. This will ensure the workload upon Officers and Members is kept under control and special meetings are used more effectively. The effective management of forward work programmes should also assist in managing agenda sizes.

Agendas

4.9   The workshops groups suggested that we develop options for revised arrangements for scrutiny agendas, to include:

- Maximum number of items for discussion.
- Prioritise agendas to focus on strategic issues (risks, corporate priorities, external Audit, Inspection & Regulation reports, performance, finance) – link to Forward Work Programme.
- Revise arrangements for report requests – set up procedure to determine priorities (matrix) that can be determined by scrutiny committee.
- Consider other means to provide information to Members e.g. seminars.
- Scrutiny Committee to decide which pre-decision reports are added to agenda – from the Cabinet work programme.

4.9.1   The general consensus across all of the workshops agreed that scrutiny committee agendas are overloaded, particularly Regeneration & Environment and Policy & Resources. This has been alleviated in the short term by the change to the terms of reference of Regeneration & Environment by moving Public Protection to Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

4.9.2   However a long term solution is needed to ensure that scrutiny committees use their valuable time more effectively, by prioritising items to be included on agendas but also ensuring flexibility so that issues raised by Members, stakeholders and the public are considered for inclusion. A maximum limit on the number of items for inclusion on the agenda would help scrutiny committees to ensure that they have the time to consider all items effectively.

Forward Work Programmes (FWP) and Witnesses

4.10   The workshops groups suggested that:

- Scrutiny involved and engaged in developing work programmes - annual meeting to discuss year ahead to prioritise items for work programme.
- Scrutiny Committee to discuss FWP at each meeting and agree items to be added – including Member requests – need to reach consensus prioritising on key strategic issues vs. individual Member ward issues.
- Work programmes – to be balanced between interests of committee and the core function of scrutiny to hold executive to account.
- All FWPs to contain an overview of report and explain reason/outcome/objectives for scrutiny.

- Members decide if they want a Cabinet report to come to scrutiny – therefore Cabinet work programme needs to be available well in advance so that scrutiny can choose and contain narrative of the purpose and key issues.
- Use expert witnesses more – develop list of key organisations.
- Develop information and guidance on key witnesses further.
- Public/ Key Stakeholder engagement – develop strategy to manage, improve and support – linked to Welsh Government White Paper on work programming.
- Non-statutory co-optees have not been reviewed. Review what is their role, and appointment system.

4.10.1 To enable scrutiny committees to effectively manage their work programmes, each scrutiny committee could discuss their forward work programme at each meeting. This could be debated alongside the Cabinet forward work programme and requests for reports from Members, stakeholders and the public.

4.10.2 In order to allow the scrutiny committee to consider if a report on the Cabinet forward work programme should be added to the scrutiny committee forward work programme, a narrative would need to be included against each Cabinet report listed to identify key issues.

4.10.3 The previous Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan included a recommendation that Ombudsman reports should be referred to an appropriate scrutiny committee where the Report identified a serious failure in service delivery that would benefit from further consideration by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee. Since that time the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously agreed that this should be amended so that Standards Committee could in appropriate circumstances refer such reports to Audit Committee instead of the relevant Scrutiny Committee. The Standards Committee has no objection to this proposal. A mechanism for referral needs to be agreed. It is therefore suggested that following a decision to refer on by the Standards Committee that the Scrutiny Leadership Group is consulted on whether the referral should be to the relevant Scrutiny committee or Audit committee .

4.10.4 Scrutiny can invite any external witness in order to provide an additional perspective to an issue or report that is to be debated. This practice varies across the scrutiny committees, with Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee for example inviting Trade Union representatives to speak on personnel policies and Caerphilly Homes Task Group, tenant representatives, invited to speak on WHQS matters.

4.10.5 Following the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Welsh Government issued guidance to local authorities on involving the public and stakeholders in scrutiny. The guidance advised councils to develop protocols on its engagement procedures particularly around forward work programmes. Following this a guide to scrutiny was published on the council website and a protocol to explain how requests to speak would be dealt with. The forward work programmes are published on the website every quarter and circulated to key stakeholders. The aim is to highlight topics and identifying potential witnesses, however to date there has been limited interest from the public to participate in scrutiny but it has raised awareness among some stakeholders of topics that are due to come forward.

4.10.6 The Welsh Government White Paper Devolution, Democracy and Delivery proposes that Local Authorities strengthens 'Scrutiny Committees' forward planning further by requiring them to make reference to 'key decisions' and corporate plans, as well as setting out what they intend to scrutinise and who they will engage with in doing so.'

4.10.7 Therefore it may be appropriate to pre-empt this proposal and make changes to our work programmes by developing both Cabinet and Scrutiny forward work programmes to highlight key issues and for scrutiny committees to identify potential external witnesses.

4.10.8 The role and appointment of co-opted members was discussed at the workshops. At present there are non-statutory co-opted members sitting on Education for Life Scrutiny Committee and Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. All non-statutory Co-opted members do not have voting rights. Cabinet agreed the appointment of Education for Life

Scrutiny Committee Co-opted Members in January 2000. Council agreed the appointment of Health Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Co-opted Members in 2001. These co-optees have not been reviewed since they were appointed.

4.10.9   There are four non-statutory co-opted members on Education for Life Scrutiny Committee; these co-opted members are representatives of the following organisations:

- Caerphilly Governors Association
- National Union Teachers (NUT)
- National Association Head Teachers (NAHT)
- National Association of School Masters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)

4.10.10   It should be noted that there are no other trade union representatives sitting on other scrutiny committees and not all teaching trade unions are represented.

4.10.11   There are four non-statutory co-opted members representing the Users and Carers Forum who sit on the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, however this forum no longer exists, so there is no formal role in respect of reflecting views of a recognised group and no group for them to feed back to. These members have provided a helpful dimension to meetings and broadened debate for the committee, however this is limited to their specific areas of expertise.

4.10.12   There has also been a representative from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board on Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee since 2001. This has proved useful in terms of creating a link with the health board and the scrutiny committee. The co-opted member has facilitated requests for information and is able to provide a helpful perspective at meetings.

4.10.13   However a more flexible and practical arrangement would be, to develop a list of expert witnesses both individuals and organisations that each scrutiny committee could call upon to give evidence on individual topics. This would give scrutiny committees and wider range of opinion and expertise and ensure that evidence provided at scrutiny is specific to the topic under debate.

Information

4.11   The workshops groups suggested that:

- Review how information is made available to members.
- Information reports – use other methods to inform members such as seminars, email, intranet, website or Members' portal – video/podcasts.
- Officers to make themselves available for a surgery 1 hour before Council & Scrutiny for Members to drop in with concerns etc.

4.11.1   The feedback from the workshops indicated a general agreement that there needed to be an effective solution(s) to providing information to Members. It was felt that the burden on scrutiny agendas could be alleviated through reducing the number of report requests that were sometimes parochial ward issues or had no specific purpose or outcome.

4.11.2   Consideration could be given to developing and improving information for Members by developing some of the ideas suggested by the workshops. Further development of the Members' portal to include organisation charts and contact details for officers and investigate using Video/Pod casts to explain complex issues or to give an overview of a service. Continue to use Seminars and provide training on accessing information on services on the website. Consider holding individual service drop in sessions prior to council meetings where members can speak directly to Officers – this could be focussed on a different service area before each meeting.

Reports

4.12   The workshops groups suggested that:

- Scrutiny Committees to do less things but well, Members requests to be considered against a prioritisation matrix.
- Using a matrix should prevent 'for information reports' and ensure forward work programmes become more focused and strategic.
- Use checklist of other methods to resolve issues (see Crime & Disorder CCfA) as evidence that request is last resort.
- The matrix for reports written for Officers as well as Members.
- Remind Members of other means to resolve issues for example by contacting officers directly or via email – need to develop contact lists for issues/services on Members' portal or intranet.
- Minutes for all committees highlight action points when referring items to scrutiny.
- Review report structure:
    - Include key points to focus on in the report.
    - Develop summary section of report further.
    - Recommendations on front page.
    - Covering reports, short and snappy with key points.
- Review timescale for receipt of reports before meetings, can they be circulated earlier to Members – particularly large reports with detailed appendices, to allow members time to digest.
- Use exception reports for performance management.

4.12.1 It was highlighted during the workshops (as mentioned under forward work programmes) that there needs to be a manageable process to consider requests for reports. To allow the scrutiny committee to balance requests against the demands upon the work programme and allow time to focus on less issues and in more depth.

4.12.2 A prioritisation matrix can help scrutiny committees decide which requests should be added to the work programme. This method is already used by some local authorities across Wales and can help to determine which are the most important issues. The process involves the Member defining what the issue is, what action has been taken already, and the reason for the request. The request should also include what expectation there is upon scrutiny.

4.12.3 The request is then scored against a matrix of key issues, such as risk, performance, budget, corporate priority, previous reports, strategic, public interest etc. The scrutiny committee would then decide if the request is should be added to the work programme when judged against other priorities.

4.12.4 When the scrutiny committee is considering requests from Members, the public and stakeholders, the request should include details of the request, reasons and what action has been taken to date. The scrutiny committee would then consider if it is appropriate to add the item to the work programme and what impact and outcome could be achieved. This would need to be considered alongside competing priorities to ensure agendas are not overloaded.

4.12.5 There should be provision that if a request is not added to the work programme that the issue is dealt with through other means and the scrutiny committee should seek satisfaction that an officer will contact the Member.

4.12.6 The minutes of committees, such as Audit and Standards committee should highlight as an action point when reports have been referred to scrutiny for consideration.

4.12.7 The format and content of reports to scrutiny committee was a common theme across all workshop groups, with a number of suggestions for improvement. The main areas for improvement could be managed with the existing report structure, such as highlighting the main issues in the summary section and focussing performance on an exception-reporting basis.

4.12.8 Other changes would require changes to the current format, such as moving the recommendations to the front page, this would not impact on officer time and could be achieved relatively easily. However introducing a short summary report would involve additional workload for officers and would need to be investigated further to determine if the resources are available to produce these reports.

4.12.9 The final suggestion was to circulate larger detailed reports earlier, or make them available earlier. This would depend on the nature of the report and at what point the report is available prior to the meeting.

Task and Finish Groups and Scrutiny Support

4.13 The workshops groups suggested the following:

- Develop strategy for managing and supporting task and finish groups – maximum numbers, resources etc.
- Agree support arrangements for scrutiny going forward.

4.13.1 The general consensus amongst all workshop participants was that task and finish group work is an effective means of scrutinising topics in depth and developing Members understanding of issues. There was some concern that any reduction in resources for scrutiny will impact upon the support for task and finish group work and for developing the use of external witnesses at scrutiny committee meetings.

4.13.2 In order to ensure that task and finish groups can continue it is proposed that a limit is set on the number that will be established per scrutiny committee and a maximum of two that can run at the same time. In addition a protocol is developed on how they will be managed and supported in future.

Cabinet Members & Scrutiny Members Role & Skills

4.14 The workshops groups suggested:

- Training for Cabinet Members on their role and interaction with scrutiny.
- Questioning skills – mandatory training for scrutiny skills.
- Each scrutiny committee to have training delivered together and include Cabinet members, Directors and Heads of services.
- Carry out a Members' skills and interests audit following local government election, and appoint to scrutiny according to interest and skills.
- Carry out peer review after scrutiny review changes have settled in.

4.14.1 Cabinet Members attend and contribute to scrutiny by giving a verbal statement at scrutiny meetings outlining their recent activities and the strategic direction of their portfolio, which are then open to questions. The feedback from the workshops suggested that Cabinet Members needed to play a more active role at scrutiny committee meetings and be more accountable for policy direction. Members asked that the Cabinet Member(s) written statement is sent in advance of the meeting to all scrutiny committee members with copies available at the meeting.

4.14.2 There are options available to increase Cabinet Members participation, through specific scrutiny training courses or Cabinet Members may find peer observation useful by visiting other local authorities to observe Cabinet Members at scrutiny committees. The Senior Councillor Development Programme commenced on 15th July 2015 for those Members who hold or aspire to Senior Office and wish to develop their leadership practice.

4.14.3 The workshops identified a number of issues in respect of Scrutiny Members role and skills and there has already been significant investment in developing scrutiny skills and knowledge. The Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan resulted in training for a large proportion of scrutiny

members in questioning & listening skills, chairing skills and the purpose of pre-meetings. This could be built upon further by offering training to the scrutiny committee as a whole, and include Officer and Cabinet Members, to focus on the role and purpose of scrutiny. Once the training has been carried out an internal peer observation and self-evaluation could be carried out between scrutiny committees to give feedback on the impact of the training.

Meeting Organisation & Scrutiny Chairs

4.15   The workshops groups suggested that:

- Pre-meetings review, days and times – consider if each scrutiny committee should determine its own arrangements for pre-meetings.
- Further training on making the most out of pre-meetings.
- Challenge Members who are late for pre-meetings or do not attend – through political groups.
- Training Chairs and review periodically their performance to ensure consistency.
- Training to improve chairing skills and better pre-meeting organisation.
- Chair to monitor and challenge attendance of scrutiny committee members.
- Appointment of Chairs – review current procedure.

4.15.1 The majority of Members who took part in the workshops expressed satisfaction that scrutiny committee pre-meetings were working well, helping to organise questions and providing a challenge. However a minority did not feel they were working effectively and there was some dissatisfaction that some Members were not attending pre-meetings.

4.15.2 There is a need to develop further training on the purpose of pre-meetings particularly on how to get the best out of them. When pre-meetings were originally introduced, Council decided that they would all be held at 5pm followed by the scrutiny meeting at 5:30pm. Some Members have commented that this has resulted in meetings finishing later, although analysis of meetings held during 2015 showed that meetings averaged 2 hours in length. The following table outlines the average number of meetings and duration during 2014:

Scrutiny Committee	Number of meetings	Average Time per meeting
Crime and Disorder	2	1.45
Education for Life	9	2.20
Health Social Care & Wellbeing	9	1.15
Policy and Resources	13	2:15
Regeneration & Environment	13	2.10

4.15.3 There is an argument for allowing each scrutiny committee to determine its own arrangements for a pre-meeting within certain parameters. This would give some flexibility to the individual scrutiny committees' circumstances and membership.

4.15.4 This could be decided at the first scrutiny meeting following the Annual General Meeting, the scrutiny committee could decide what time and day it wishes to hold its pre-meeting and for how long (with a set minimum time). This could decided by a majority vote and then would apply until the first meeting following the next AGM. Then if the majority decide to hold the pre-meeting at 4:30pm, the formal meeting time could return to 5pm. There may be some scrutiny committees that decide they want to hold their pre-meetings on a different day, thereby giving them more time to prepare for the meeting.

4.15.5 Democratic Services Committee have asked that staff trial monitoring members attendance at pre-meeting, not for publication but to give the Chair information to challenge members should their attendance be poor.

4.15.6 There was some feedback which suggested that Chairs needed to ensure they were consistent in their management of pre - meetings and formal meetings, challenging Members performance and attendance. Training has been suggested for the whole scrutiny committee and the role of the chair could form part of this training. As stated above a Senior Councillor Development Programme has already started for those Members who hold or aspire to Senior Office and wish to develop their leadership practice.

4.15.7 There were some minority comments regarding the appointment of chairs in one workshop group, but this was not reflected across any other groups. Therefore it is not proposed to suggest any changes to the present system.

External scrutiny

4.16 The workshops groups suggested:

- Explore possibility to set up Joint Scrutiny Committees for strategic overview of public sector organisations.

4.16.1 Local authorities have the power under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 to set up joint scrutiny committees with other local authorities. The Welsh Government (WG) White Paper, Devolution, Democracy and Delivery – Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People commented on the limited uptake of the power to set up joint scrutiny committees where regional services have been commissioned.

4.16.2 Public sector bodies such as Health Boards are expected to consult with local authorities, which can be burdensome to organisations such as Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. For example ABUHB are co-terminus with 5 local authorities so can attend 5 meetings to present the same information, such as their Annual Performance Evaluation.

Scrutiny Leadership Group

4.17 Scrutiny Leadership Group was set up as part of the changes made under the Scrutiny Improvements Action Plan and the terms of reference and membership of this group were agreed by Council in October 2008. It is suggested that it may be appropriate to review the terms of reference and membership of SLG to take into account any changes to scrutiny that are agreed in this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council's committee report template includes Section 5: Equalities Implications as a standard heading in order to allow Councillors the opportunity to see relevant Equalities related information as part of their scrutiny and decision-making roles.

5.2 The Council, through the Equalities and Welsh language team, also provides support on these issues to elected members through briefing papers, annual reports and member awareness sessions.

5.3 The Council also ensures that all Councillors are fully consulted about changes so that any individual requirements can be met wherever possible. The Council has also been working with the Diversity in Democracy Group which is chaired by the WLGA.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications not contained in the report.

7.   PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1   There are no personnel implications not contained in the report.

8.   CONSULTATIONS

8.1   There are no consultation responses not contained in the report.

9.   RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1   The Project Group has developed its recommendations based on the issues raised by both Members and Officers and considers that these recommendations will address the issues raised by Wales Audit Office. The recommendations to Council are as follows:

9.2.   That a limit of no more than 4 items is placed scrutiny agendas.

9.3   That there is a limit placed on the number of special scrutiny meetings held per scrutiny committee, of two additional meetings per annum, with priority for MTFP.

9.4   Cabinet and scrutiny forward work programmes to include brief narrative on key issues to be covered in the Reports.

9.5   Scrutiny committees will discuss their forward work programmes at each meeting.

9.6   Scrutiny Leadership Group will recommend whether referrals of individual Ombudsman reports from Standards Committee should be referred to Scrutiny Committee (and if so which Committee) or Audit Committee or whether they will be kept as information for all Members.

9.7   The positions of non- statutory co-opted members (without voting rights) of Health Social Care and Wellbeing & Education for Life Scrutiny Committees are removed and a list of stakeholders and external witnesses is developed for each scrutiny committee and maintained and agreed by Scrutiny Leadership Group. These can be called upon for specific agenda items to give evidence.

9.8   An expert witness protocol to be developed to ensure that witnesses are fully briefed and in accordance with good practice to ensure that evidence provided to the scrutiny committee is balanced and fair.

9.9   Information items are removed from scrutiny agendas and instead are placed on the Members' portal in consultation with Democratic Services Committee.

9.10   A prioritisation matrix is developed for requests for reports from Members and the public.

9.11   Comments from the workshops about report content and responses to services requests or requests for information are fed back to the relevant Directors. The quality of Reports will be reviewed and monitored by Scrutiny Leadership Group for 6 months from implementation of the new arrangements.

9.12   A protocol is developed for task and finish groups and agreed by Democratic Services Committee with a limit of two task and finish groups to run at a time, to ensure that the burden on limited resources is managed appropriately.

9.13   The Members' training programme is further developed to incorporate relevant comments from the workshops including developing Cabinet members' role to be monitored by Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet Member with responsibility for HR, Governance and Business.

9.14   That guidance on the format and content of the Cabinet Members' written statement is developed. A new protocol developed to provide that the statement is in writing and is shared ahead of the relevant meeting with Scrutiny committee Members and placed on the Members' portal, in advance of the scrutiny meeting. The protocol will give advice on the type of information to be included in the statement.

9.15   Good practice for pre-meetings is shared amongst Scrutiny Leadership Group including peer observations.

9.16   Minutes of joint committees and other information about relevant outside bodies will be placed on the Members' portal.

9.17   Hold a dedicated performance management meeting for each scrutiny committee once per annum.

9.18   The protocol for External Audit, Inspection & Regulatory Bodies interface with scrutiny to be presented to Council to consider for adoption once it is completed.

9.19   Review the terms of reference and membership of Scrutiny Leadership Group to take into account any changes required as a result of the scrutiny review.

9.20   Carry out a self-evaluation of scrutiny arrangements within 12 months of changes being agreed.

9.21   Allow the Monitoring Officer to amend the constitution in line with the above recommendations.

10.   REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1   In order to respond to the recommendations in the follow up of the special inspection and reports in the public interest.

11.   STATUTORY POWER

11.1   Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2   Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

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Background Papers:
- Democratic Services Committee 17th March 2015 – Scrutiny Developments
- Wales Audit Office Report – Follow up Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest January 2015
- Scrutiny Leadership Group 29th October 2014 – Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan Update