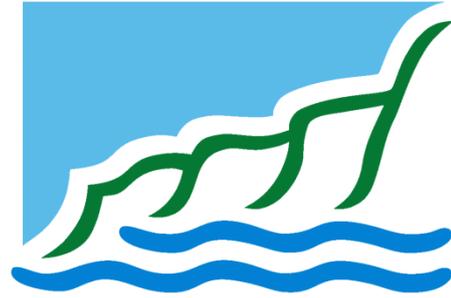


VALE of GLAMORGAN



BRO MORGANNWG

**SCRUTINY
ANNUAL REPORT**

2014/15

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Foreword

On behalf of my fellow Chairmen and Scrutiny Committee Members, I am pleased to present the 2014/15 Scrutiny Committees' Annual Report. This provides a valuable snapshot of the work of the Council's Scrutiny Committees for the year and provides an account of the progress made in the past year, including some of the key pieces of work undertaken along with areas under consideration for the next year.

May I begin by making special mention to Councillor Keith Geary, Member for Llantwit Major who sadly passed away at the start of 2015. Councillor Geary was an extremely well respected Member of the Council who made a valuable contribution to Scrutiny in the Vale and will be sorely missed.

On a happier note, I would once again like to thank all the Members of the Scrutiny Committees for their commitment and contributions to our work and also the officers who have supported us so effectively.

I have always stressed the importance for Scrutiny Committees to maintain an open and critical mind, to provide criticism in a constructive way and to offer genuine praise where appropriate.

It has been another busy year for the five Scrutiny Committees, in which we have seen the completion of a task and finish review into Assistive Technology and Dementia Care. Further details of the review are included in this report, and I know that the Members who took part found the work to be valuable and interesting. A range of recommendations have been identified which are intended to have positive outcomes for residents. I will be pleased to hear about the progress made over the coming year.

2014/15 once again saw the Committees grapple with some of the major issues affecting our communities and I would hope you will agree that we have tried to make a real difference to the formal decision-making process. By producing this report we hope to give you a flavour of the level of work undertaken and an understanding of the role played by the Scrutiny Committees.

Going forward, I would like to stress that the Scrutiny Committees will continue to monitor and evaluate service performance and will endeavour to be a "critical friend" in the delivery of the Council's priorities in the face of continued constraints on resources and a climate of unprecedented change.

Councillor Mark Wilson
Chairman - Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Group
and Chairman - Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources)

Introduction

Each year the Council produces an Annual Scrutiny Report. The document gives a retrospective insight into the work undertaken by each of the Council's five Scrutiny Committees.

The Annual Report details examples of Council policies, functions and activities that have been scrutinised over the past year and what may be looked at during the coming year. Members of the public wishing to put forward any suggestions for any of the Scrutiny Committees to consider can do so.

The form for this can be found at the back of this report or alternatively at the following link:

[\[http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/council/scrutiny/more_about_scrutiny.aspx\]](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/council/scrutiny/more_about_scrutiny.aspx)

What is Scrutiny?

Scrutiny is vital to the work of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and its partners. It offers reassurance to local people, helps to develop policy, improves the performance of the Council and holds the Executive to account for its decisions.

Scrutiny acts as a “critical friend”, standing back from the day to day decision-making to look at and review outcomes for local residents.

The core components for effective Scrutiny are:



Most of the decisions in the Council are taken by a small group of Councillors known as the **Cabinet** (also referred to as the Executive). Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet are known as Non-Executive Members. It is these Non-Executive Members that have opportunity to sit on a Scrutiny Committee.

Scrutiny Committees can make recommendations and scrutinise the policies, decisions and performance of the Cabinet. The Cabinet, in turn, consults with, and responds to, Scrutiny Committee recommendations.

How does a Scrutiny Committee undertake its role?

- By examining key decisions and actions taken by the Cabinet and other partner organisations to make sure that they are being taken in the best interests of residents;
- By evaluating the Cabinet's spending and budget plans to ensure that resources are used in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way;
- By inviting Cabinet Members and our partners to publicly declare their commitments to improving local people's lives and monitoring their achievements;
- By asking questions of decision-makers;
- By making comments and formal recommendations to key decision-makers, including the Cabinet and other statutory bodies such as Health and the Police;
- By scrutinising the Council's and partners' policies, strategy, service delivery and performance;
- By investigating and championing issues of poor performance or concern to local people; and
- By engaging and involving residents to make sure that local people have a say in the decisions that affect them.

The five Scrutiny Committees within the Vale of Glamorgan are:

- ❖ **Corporate Resources**
- ❖ **Economy and Environment**
- ❖ **Housing and Public Protection**
- ❖ **Lifelong Learning**
- ❖ **Social Care and Health**

Agendas, reports and minutes of these meetings can be found on the Council's website at the following link;

http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/council/minutes,_agendas_and_reports/minutes,_agendas_and_reports.aspx

Membership of the Scrutiny Committees

Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources)

Chairman: Councillor M.R. Wilson Vice-Chairman: Councillor Mrs. P. Drake
Councillors: K.J. Geary (deceased, 4th January 2015), H.C. Hamilton, K. Hatton,
H.J.W. James, P. King, R.A. Penrose, G. Roberts and A.C. Williams.

Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)

Chairman: Councillor Mrs. A.J. Moore; Vice-Chairman: Councillor E. Hacker;
Councillors: P.J. Clarke, G.A. Cox, Mrs. P. Drake, Mrs. M. Kelly Owen, P. King, A.G.
Powell, G. Roberts and S.T. Wiliam.

Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection)

Chairman: Councillor C.J. Williams; Vice-Chairman: Councillor J. Drysdale;
Councillors: J.C. Bird, Mrs. C.L. Curtis, Mrs. V.M. Hartrey, Mrs. A.J. Moore, Ms. R.F.
Probert, R.P. Thomas, Mrs. M.R. Wilkinson and E. Williams.

1 representative, in a co-opted non-voting observer capacity of the following
organisations: Shelter Cymru and Vale Housing and Homelessness Forum

plus 4 Representatives from Tenant Working Group / Panel.

Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning)

Chairman: Councillor N.P. Hodges Vice-Chairman: Councillor Ms. R. Birch
Councillors: Mrs. M.E.J. Birch, Mrs. C.L. Curtis, Ms. K.E. Edmunds, T.H. Jarvie, F.T.
Johnson, A. Parker, R.A. Penrose and E. Williams.

Also invited to attend as co-opted members:

Mr. P. Burke (Roman Catholic Church).

Father E. Counsell (Church in Wales).

Dr. C. Brown (Parent Governor - Secondary Sector).

Mr. L. Kellaway (Parent Governor - Primary Sector).

Also invited to attend as non-voting observers:

Mr. G. Beaudette (Primary).

Mr. D. Treharne (Welsh Medium Education).

Ms. T. Young (Secondary).

Vacant (Special).

Vacant (Headteachers).

Vacant (Free Churches).

Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health)

Chairman: Councillor R.L. Traherne; Vice Chairman: Councillor Mrs. M.E.J. Birch;
Councillors: R.J. Bertin, Ms. R. Birch, Ms. K. Edmunds, K.J. Geary (deceased 4th
January 2015), Dr. I.J. Johnson, Ms. R.F. Probert, J.W. Thomas and S.T. Wiliam.

Looking back over the past year.....Review of 2014/15

The 5 Scrutiny Committees have considered a wide range of topics and reviewed performance in all services across the Council.

Here are some of the highlights.

► **Assistive Technology and Dementia Care – Task and Finish Group of the Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health)**



During the year, the Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health) established a Task and Finish Group to examine the potential contribution Assistive Technology could provide in the development of a Dementia-Supportive Community in the Vale of Glamorgan through enabling people to live independently.

The Group's objective and purpose was to assess whether the greater use of Assistive Technology could enable people to live independently for longer and to consider the impact that this can have on the quality of life of those who care for those experiencing Dementia.

The Group's desired outcomes were to:

- Understand the daily issues faced by those experiencing Dementia
- Understand the effectiveness of Assistive Technology in maintaining the independence of those experiencing Dementia
- Improve the process of delivering Assistive Technology to those experiencing Dementia and their families/carers
- Analyse the range of products available
- Assess the cost benefits of sourcing a wide range of Assistive Technology systems.

Members of the Group were able to consider and review the following evidence from a wide range of sources. These included:

- the organisation and structure of the Telecare service
- a demonstration of equipment and devices available
- evaluation of the Telecare referral and assessment process

- assessment of the impact of TeleV+ packages
- changes to the Supported People Services
- understanding the perspective of carers
- Carmarthenshire County Council Telecare Service
- the use of ICT
- Reminiscence therapy
- Cardiff and Vale Local Health Board future development of Assistive Technology Strategy
- regional/collaborative working
- voluntary and private sector partnership business models
- analysis of evaluation into the effectiveness of Assistive Technology
- financial matters.

In addition, the Group was extremely fortunate in being able to meet with a husband and wife who had been directly affected by dementia. From this, the Group was able to receive invaluable first-hand knowledge and experience. The Group also undertook a site visit to the University Hospital in Llandough in order to review a form of reminiscence therapy carried out there.

During the course of the review, the Task and Finish Group was able to complete a thorough investigation of the potential for Assistive Technology to aid the independent living for people experiencing dementia. From this, a number of recommendations were made, aimed at improving the responsiveness of the service. The Group recognised that there was a requirement for further work before any major decisions can be taken in relation to the longer-term planning of the service.

The Group concluded that Assistive Technology could be of considerable help to people experiencing dementia and also to their carers. However, national research, information from partners and data from our existing service was not sufficiently clear to suggest that Assistive Technology was likely to deliver savings. In light of the significant budgetary pressures that the Council faces, the Group has made recommendations for improvements which it hopes are realistic and measured, and which identify the further work required to develop the service for the future. In total, the Group made 15 recommendations which have been translated into 23 individual improvement actions. All of these were agreed by Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee looks forward to these being progressed over the forthcoming months.

If you would like further information on care services available, please use the following link:

http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/social_care/adult_services/care_in_your_own_home/care_in_your_own_home.aspx

► Traffic Management Task and Finish Group - Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)



During 2013/14, the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) had undertaken a review to look at ways of addressing the impact of traffic on people within the Vale and an Implementation Plan was drawn up to monitor the progress around priority actions aimed at improving the local transport networks.

In April 2015, a year on from the completion of the review, the Scrutiny Committee received an update report. Some of the highlights for the Committee being:

- Progress on feasibility work for improvements to Biglis Roundabout in Barry and to the Merrie Harrier junction in the outskirts of Penarth;
- Funding from Welsh Government to produce an Active Travel Plan;
- Funding from Welsh Government for feasibility and design work around bus priority for the Culverhouse Cross to St.Athan and the Dinas Powys to Cardiff corridors;
- Approval for capital bids to improve access to Barry Island;
- Consultancy firm commissioned by Welsh Government to deliver improvements to five mile lane (A4226);
- A Feasibility study undertaken for a bus link over the Cardiff Bay Barrage to Penarth; and
- Devise a programme of engagement – a procedure to be put in place to notify Elected Members by email of any works commencing in any ward areas in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Other examples of highlight from the review include:

- Works on new future layout and crossing at roads around the Ship Hotel in Barry; and
- Keep clear boxes installed to improve access and egress from side streets (Henry Street and Laura Street, Barry)

Members will be updated on progress of these on an annual basis.

► Improving Educational Attainment - Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning)

The Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning), through the use of Panels, each consisting of three members, has continued with its program of monitoring underperforming schools.

During the previous year, where it was identified that pupil attainment and achievement needed to improve; Panel visits took place at St.Cyres, Llantwit Major, Barry and Bryn Hafren Secondary Comprehensive Schools. Each of these school's had been visited in order for a Panel to assess the School's plans and to identify any barriers that was holding up progress.

Following GCSE examinations in August 2014, improved results were published for all of the 4 schools. Sufficient improvement within St.Cyres and Llantwit Major was deemed to have been made and as such these have been removed from the list of schools requiring close monitoring.

Although improvements at GSCE levels had been made within Barry and Bryn Hafren, these did not meet the agreed performance targets. Panel visits were therefore held again to question further the School's Plans and to identify if there were barriers preventing rapid and sustained improvements within these schools. Results for August 2015 will be eagerly anticipated and further follow up monitoring visits will be held during the next municipal year.

In addition, a Progress Panel was established to monitor Eagleswell Primary School in Llantwit Major. This followed an inspection by Estyn which identified the school as requiring 'significant improvement'.

The Panel was able to visit the school in June 2014, and the Panel heard the School's plans to address the issues of underperformance and to assess progress. At that time, the Panel considered that it was too early to determine whether sufficient progress had been made and agreed for a follow up visit to be arranged, which took place during February 2015. At this meeting the Panel had judged that the school had made progress around achieving improvement and following an inspection by Estyn, it was deemed that the school had made 'strong progress' in a number of key areas. The Scrutiny Committee itself recognised the role of the Governors, the Acting Headteacher, the staff and pupils in the turnaround within the school, which is now in a more positive position leading up to the amalgamation with Llanilltud Fawr Primary School.

In taking this programme forward, it is hoped that Panels can also be established to visit the best performing schools in the Vale, as a way of identifying and sharing best practice. Also a "Lessons Learnt" exercise is being held annually to assess challenges facing schools, to evaluate improvement strategies and to flag up any aspects requiring more detailed attention.

► **Provision of Secondary School Education in Barry - Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources)**



With proposals aimed at transforming secondary education in Barry gaining momentum, Members of the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) and the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) were asked to consider Cabinet's plans around the re-organisation of Barry, Bryn Hafren and Bro Morgannwg Secondary schools.

Having considered several options, Cabinet had decided upon plans which sought to establish a new mixed English medium comprehensive school in Barry. This would be achieved by expanding Ysgol Bro Morgannwg and creating two distinct campuses for Welsh-medium and English-medium education.

This transformation will:

- Create a new 2,400 place mixed English-medium comprehensive community school through the amalgamation of Barry and Bryn Hafren comprehensive schools located on the two current campuses from September 2017. The amalgamation would involve the closure of both schools and the opening of an 11-19 school with an admission number of 390.
- Expand Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg from 1,151 places to 1,847 places from September 2020 to meet the increased demand for places. The admission number will increase from 189 to 300.
- From September 2020, subject to Welsh Government funding, relocate Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg and Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Talwg to a new Welsh medium campus on the current Bryn Hafren site and wholly relocate the new English medium comprehensive school onto one site currently occupied by Barry Comprehensive School, Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg and Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Talwg thereby creating a single English medium campus for the school.

Subject to the availability of sufficient Welsh Government funding, the Council's proposals would mean that the new English medium comprehensive school would operate on two sites between September 2017 and September 2020: this has been called the transition period. During this period, the governing body of the new school would decide how best to organise pupils and staff across the two sites.

Proposals were discussed at the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) and the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) during March 2015. At the Lifelong Learning meeting on 16th March, a number of guest speakers were invited. These included the Chair of Governors from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg Barry and Bryn Hafren along with a Union spokesperson from NASUWT.

The Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) unanimously agreed with the Cabinets recommendations but felt questions remained regarding the funding of the transformation project and the suggestion in the report that phasing could take place from 2017 – 2020. The Committee welcomed the undertaking of a consultation exercise and a further report informing Members of the results will be presented during the next Municipal Year. Similarly, the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) recommended that officers submit timely reports to the Committees to enable them to keep abreast of developments, including an assessment of the project's risks.

► **Diabetes - Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health)**

Concerned with the increasing problem of diabetes within our communities, on the 2nd February 2015, the Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health) received a presentation from Dr Aled Roberts, Consultant Diabetologist, Cardiff and Vale UHB Fiona Kinghorn, Consultant in Public Health Cardiff and Vale UHB/Public Health Wales.

The presentation provided Members with an overview of the effects and complications of type 1 and type 2 diabetes, along with an idea of its prevalence within the Vale. Some of the main causes of diabetes were also explained to the Members, as were forms of treatments. The Committee was keen to understand how the Council could assist in tackling this issues and the Committee heard how preventative strategies needed to be developed, in order to tackling underlying causes such as obesity, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and smoking.

► Barry Island Beach Huts - Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)



On the 20th May 2014, the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) considered the Council's plans and Rental Policy for the construction of two sets of twelve beach huts on Barry Island.

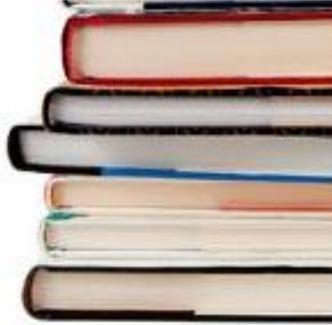
Available throughout the year, the Beach Huts were seen as a way to increase the attractiveness of the Eastern Promenade. 12 beach huts nearest the Eastern Shelter were larger in form with a size of 2.1m x 2.4m. The remaining 12 smaller huts would be 2.1m x 1.5m in size and had been designed as changing rooms for the beach.

Initially, Members of the Committee endorsed recommendations for the Council to retain the units and to control their marketing and rental arrangements. The Committee gave its support to the overall proposals, but was aware that the rental policy needed to be developed and that the trial over the summer season 2014 was essential in order to iron out any issues.

A year on from this, the Committee received an update report. This highlighted that following an extremely busy Easter weekend it had been identified that there was a need to improve the ease of booking the huts for the public. Also, the Council should consider developing an online booking system, along with an on-site facility for the huts to be hired by visitors. The Committee also referred to road signage, requesting that more appropriate signs be placed in strategic places on Barry Island, for example in the car park.

The Committee has suggested that if the scheme continues to prove successful the possibility of future beach huts being placed around the Vale was promising and the Committee looks forward to receiving further update reports.

► Review of the Library and Information Services - Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning)



In light of its importance among communities within the Vale, the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) has closely examined Cabinet proposals regarding the future of the Library and Information Service.

Following a review of the Library Service that ended in March 2014, Cabinet on the 28th April 2014, had agreed in principal to implement a number of proposals which had been developed within the Library Strategy by a Library Review Group.

The strategy had three main strands:

1. Development of Community Libraries at Dinas Powys, Wenvoe, Sully and St.Athan.
2. Maximising funding and income generation.
3. Reduction in library opening hours.

Cabinet had approved these in principle and agreed to make a final decision on the strategy after considering the outcome by the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning). In addition, before implementation of any of the individual proposals, a consultation was undertaken which included staff, communities and relevant stakeholders.

The Committee's first consideration of these proposals took place on the 19th May 2014. At this meeting, the Members were able to hear the views of the Trade Unions representatives and members of the general public and also Elected Members not Members of the Scrutiny Committee. Upon debating the proposals, the Committee agreed for the second round of consultation and made a recommendation for the Council to look at the income generated by the Library Service and to seek opportunities for grant funding.

Following the completion of consultation with staff, communities and relevant stakeholders, Cabinet on 11th August approved fourteen recommendations. Eleven of these had already been approved and were in the process of being implemented.

A further three recommendations were put out for a third consultation exercise, which related to the following:

1. The development of community-led libraries in St Athan, Dinas Powys, Sully, Wenvoe and Rhoose.
2. Reduced library opening hours in Barry, Penarth, Cowbridge and Llantwit Major.
3. Relocating library services in St Athan.

Following this, a 'Call In' of the decision was made by Councillor K.Mahoney, Elected Member for Sully, and on the 8th September 2014, the Committee was provided with a further opportunity to discuss the library review and to also assess progress. Members welcomed the decision for further consultation and also recommended that data/information relating to footfall be considered in more detail.

Upon the completion of the third consultation exercise, during March 2015, Members of the Committee were able to consider a full analysis of the results.

In relation to part one of the consultation, around the introduction of community led libraries, results had demonstrated that the views of residents varied greatly across the Vale. This suggested that the viability of community libraries would also vary between communities. These results had indicated, that community led facilities would be viable in Dinas Powys, St. Athan and Wenvoe but such a facility would not receive significant support in Sully and would not be completely welcomed in Rhoose.

The second part of the consultation had proposed changes to library opening hours. Respondents had been asked to select one of four options and were also offered the opportunity to suggest any other ways that they considered library opening hours could be reduced. An analysis of the consultation responses had shown that there was a clear preference for reduced opening hours that provided varied opening and closing times to allow for at least one late evening a week at all libraries.

Responses to the third part of the consultation about the relocation of St. Athan Library had been inconclusive, 50% of respondents had stated that they supported relocation with a number of respondents making suggestions about alternative locations, but there was no consensus of opinion about an alternative location. It was proposed that future consideration of the location of the library in St. Athan be tied in with discussions with any groups expressing an interest in running a community led library in the area.

The Committee also invited a number of delegates and representatives to the meeting held in order to hear their opinions on this matter. These included Elected Members who were not members of the Scrutiny Committee, a representative from the 'Save Rhoose Library Campaign' and a Unison trade union member. All of these delegates expressed some form of reservation regarding the Council's proposals and these were ultimately passed onto Cabinet.

The Scrutiny Committee, after considering all the representations and discussing the issue in depth, accepted the proposals.

The key role played by Scrutiny was as follows:

- Provided an opportunity for a number of opposing views and opinions to be heard.
- Enabled the engagement with members of the public.
- Questioning whether the Consultation exercises had been carried out in a fair and equitable way.
- Querying whether full public consultation has been undertaken.
- Questioning whether all possible proposals have been adequately considered.
- Ensuring that all relevant information/data has been properly analysed as part of the review.
- Enabling the views of all Community and Employee representatives to be expressed and heard and for these to be considered by Cabinet.
- Allowing Cabinet to hear and reflect upon the possible negative impact of their decision.

► **Waste Management and Recycling - Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)**



The Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) had a busy year looking at and considering the Council's Waste Management and Recycling services.

Waste Collection

At the beginning of the Year 20th May, the Committee considered an item in relation to Waste Management and Collection. This followed a request for consideration from Councillor Dr.I.J. Johnson, regarding changes to the waste collection and recycling services.

For this, the Committee was provided with details of the saving proposals, these being:

- double shifting of existing Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs);
- taking the Household Bring Sites provision services in house and reducing the number of banks in service;
- the removal of a refuse collection 26 tonne (RCV) from the residual black bin bag collection service;

- the removal of small 'pick-up' collection vehicles;
- the removal of 26 and 7.5 tonne RVCs and replace with a single 15 tonne RCV from the residual black bin bag collection service;
- non-recruitment of one frontline Works Supervisor and Waste Awareness Officer within WM&C Team;
- limit the provision of kitchen food caddy liner bags to 3 per week to all participation households within the Vale of Glamorgan;
- the removal of a 'pick-up' vehicle from the street cleansing fleet;
- the removal a mechanical sweeper from the street cleaning service;
- the reduction of the street-care service by one vehicle; and
- the removal of a Food Waste RCV from the kitchen food collection service.

Upon evaluation of these proposals, the Committee heard that the 'double-shifting' proposal, would only apply to the green waste collection service which was of a seasonal nature. The only service impact in respect to this change was that householders would have their green waste collected later in the day.

Also, the introduction of a new Vehicle Tracking System would provide detailed information on vehicle use which would allow the Council to reduce its fleet by 20%. The Committee was assured that there would not be any impact on the existing service provision or on any householder and as a result Members were content to endorse these changes.

Restructuring of Municipal Recycling Bring Bank Sites

On the 2nd December 2014, the Committee assessed Cabinets recommendation to remove all but two of the Council's, Municipal Recycling Bring Bank Sites. Two Household Recycling Centres located in Barry and Llandow would remain with a greater emphasis placed upon improving kerbside collections. Members in understanding the rationale behind these recommendations were informed that these sites had been created before the Council's kerbside recycling arrangements and that issues of abuse, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping had been reported at all of the sites.

In light of the above, the Committee therefore endorsed the Cabinet's recommendations and a further update would be provided six months after the removal of the sites, detailing the impact of the Council's decision and to show the affect upon recycling performance.

Waste Charges – Collection of bulky waste

During March 2015, the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) considered Cabinets recommendation to approve a range of new charges for the collection of bulky household waste. This would see the following charges introduced from the 1st April 2015:

| <u>Number of Bulky Items Collected</u> | <u>Charge</u> |
|--|---------------|
| Up to 3 items | £15.00 |

Additional Items (maximum of 5)

£5.00

Residents would still be able to take bulky household items to either of the Council's two household waste recycling centres free of charge but another option that was being explored for the Council was to engage and support voluntary organisations to promote the reuse of redundant furniture in the community.

After hearing the proposals, the Committee endorsed the Cabinet's recommendations, but there were concerns regarding the need to inform the public of the changes and the use of vans and trailer permits for commercial waste being taken to the collection sites. The Committee made a formal recommendation that to ensure proper compliance, a CCTV monitoring system be established.

Upon consideration of the Committee's recommendation and concerns, Cabinet (27th April 2015) agreed that the use of CCTV or a number plate recognition system would be investigated further. Cabinet also agreed that to ensure that the proposed changes were effectively communicated to residents an advert would be placed in the press and on the Council's website and extra links placed on Facebook and Twitter.

► Regionalising Regulatory Services Project - Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) and Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection)

During July 2014, both the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) and the Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection), held meetings to discuss plans to create a shared Regulatory Service between Bridgend, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Councils. The Joint Regulatory Service will bring together services comprising Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing functions of each Council under a single management structure.

Both Committees were able to assess the impact on the delivery of Regulatory Services in the Vale prior to the full proposals being presented before Cabinet. Members for Housing and Public Protection considered it important to clarify how the public, without access to digitalised means would interact with the Shared Service. The Committee recommended that further work on flexible and mobile working arrangements for staff be undertaken.

Upon consideration of the plans, the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) endorsed the recommendations of the Members for Housing and Public Protection and also recommended that Cabinet consider using examples of best practice that had been identified by local authorities that have already implemented a shared service for regulatory services.

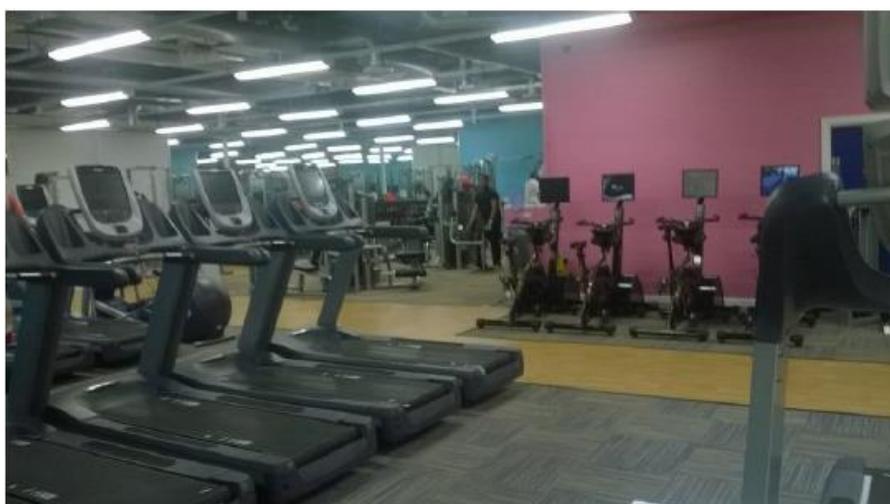
Both Committees formally supported the proposals and Cabinet requested that the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committees be implemented.

Shared Regulatory Service Committee Arrangements

Coming out of the creation of the Joint Regulatory Service was a proposal for a Joint Committee to monitor the performance of the shared service. The Committee will comprise two elected members from each Council and will be responsible for the functions delegated to it from the three Councils.

The Joint Committee held its first meeting on 20th April 2015 and was able to review the implementation of the new staff structure.

► Leisure Management Contract - Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)



The Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) received a report updating Members on the new monitoring arrangements for Year 3 of the Leisure Management Contract.

The Leisure Management Contract represents one of the most significant partnership arrangements for delivering a service that the Council had placed with and external organisation, namely Parkwood Leisure Limited. Following an audit of the contract, concerns were raised regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of the financial and quality monitoring arrangements surrounding the partnership working within the Leisure Management Contract.

As a result of these concerns, an action plan was devised setting out an approach to be followed when monitoring the contract. The Scrutiny Committee will play an important part in this monitoring and a training session around contract monitoring was arranged for Members of the Scrutiny Committee. This will allow the Committee to effectively delve into the more complex elements of the contract, such as insurance costs, energy consumption, contract price increases and the protection of assets and buildings.

Going forward the Committee will be receiving regular contract monitoring and performance reports and the Committee will be keeping a close eye on customer satisfaction levels and customer feedback. The Committee has also agreed for a group of Members of the Committee to undertake a review of the Leisure Centres on a quarterly basis.

► **Reviewing Council spending and performance monitoring – All Scrutiny Committees**

By regularly comparing budget expenditure and performance data, the Scrutiny Committees play a vital role in ensuring that the Council is achieving value for money and delivering service improvements in performance.

The following items are a selection of those considered in respect of Council spending and performance during the year.

- All Scrutiny Committees were given the opportunity to consider the Revenue and Capital budget for 2014/15 and initial budget proposals for 2015/16.
- Quarterly budget and performance monitoring linked to the 8 key corporate outcomes.
- End of Year performance for 2013/14 and target setting for 2014/15.
- Quarterly budget monitoring by the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) of the Council's Treasury Management investments and its Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- Performance report on Parkwood Leisure contract.
- The Council's Reshaping Services strategy.

Importantly the Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health) has kept a brief on the Social Services Budget programme. The Social Services Directorate faced another challenging year in regard to managing its budget which was combined with an increase in demand and diminishing resources.

The Committee received detailed monthly analysis of capital and revenue expenditure, together with a review of savings targets. Members have devoted considerable time and thought to these difficult issues, providing constructive challenge and support. The volatile nature of the 'Children's Placement Budget' and 'Community Care Packages budget' has resulted in significant additional pressures and challenges. Even so, a balanced budget was achieved.

The Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) has kept a watchful eye on the Council's investment strategy and has played a significant role in assessing the overall proposals for budget settlement for the forthcoming year (2015/16).

► **Reshaping Services Strategy – All Scrutiny Committees**

In August 2014, Cabinet agreed in principle to developing a Reshaping Services strategy and change programme. This represents an important aspect of the

Council's response to a period of unprecedented financial pressure in the public sector.

The Reshaping Services Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 3rd November 2014 and this provides a framework for the Council to work within over the next three to five years. A key objective is to consider and where appropriate, promote alternative delivery models for services across the Council. This means exploring a range of solutions such as: joint provision with other public sector bodies; provision by external partners; provision by Council-owned companies either through joint ventures, local authority trading companies or community owned companies and 'co production' with early involvement of communities in the design and delivery of services.

Considered by each Scrutiny Committee during September 2014, with all Committee's agreed to Cabinet's decision to begin the strategy.

► **Extra Care Housing - Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health) and Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection)**



Extra Care Housing is the term used to describe purpose-built housing which includes access to flexible support and personal care, including waking night support. This form of accommodation is a popular choice among people living in such schemes for a range of reasons, including:

- the increased capacity for maintaining independence within a home which is their own;
- the availability of comprehensive on-site support;
- greater opportunities for social interaction; and
- a physical environment which is specifically designed to meet the needs of older people.

During the year, both the Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health) and the Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection) were able to visit the first Extra Care facility in the Vale of Glamorgan. This facility has been named Golau Caredig (or Kindly Light if translated into English) and has been built in the centre of Barry town. Hafod Housing is responsible for the scheme on behalf of the Council.

The scheme provides supported accommodation in forty-two affordable homes for rent by people over the age of 55 living in the Vale of Glamorgan and needing care and support. It includes a restaurant, laundry, hairdresser and a multi-use activity/atrium space. The front staircase incorporates a feature glass facade designed by an architectural glass artist.

Following their visits, both Committees were impressed with the modern self-contained flats and the facilities and support available to residents. Both Committees gave a “thumbs up” to this scheme and looked forward to further schemes of this type being developed in the Vale.

► Delivering Disability Facilities Grants - Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources), Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection) and Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health)

Members of three Scrutiny Committees have placed a great deal of importance in scrutinising the amount of time it has taken the Council to deliver Disability Facility Grants (DFG). The purpose of these grants is to enable people with a disability to make changes to their homes so that they have better freedom of movement into and around their homes, and to give access to essential facilities within their home.

The key challenges for the service during 2014-15 remained unchanged i.e. reduce the delivery time for DFGs and maintain the improvement seen in previous years. Key to achieving further improvement would be the introduction of the contractors Framework. This should further streamline the DFG process by removing the need to go out to tender on each individual application and therefore would significantly reduce the average delivery time for adaptations to all applicants.

In January 2015, the three Scrutiny Committees noted further improvement in the average delivery time for a DFG, which had been reduced to around 200 days. All the Committees praised the efforts for the staff involved for the improved performance and each committee will be kept apprised of developments as the service strives to improve the time to deliver a DFG further.

► Housing Improvement Programme - Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public)

During the year, the Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection) received two updates relating to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) improvement works in council housing in the Vale of Glamorgan.

It was evident that, overall, operational performance continued to improve in both terms of delivery times and customer satisfaction while complaints monitoring was also being undertaken on a regular basis. The Tenant Liaison team continues to support tenants through the upheaval of works and ensure that they are informed at an early stage of the complex nature of the work being undertaken. Officers from

both Housing and Building Services and Property Services would continue to work together to seek appropriate forms of respite for those tenants that are unable to live in their home whilst the works are being undertaken.

Looking forward the Committee will continue to monitor this programme.

► **Housing and Building Services Restructure - Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public)**

Throughout the year, the Scrutiny Committee (Housing and Public Protection) has been kept informed of plans around restructuring the Housing and Building services.

In discussing these plans, the Committee noted that the desire is to enhance the service provided to tenants and to ensure that resources are in place to meet internal and external challenges. Importantly, these plans will improve the way that the two areas of service work together and the Committee were pleased to hear that the restructure had acted as a 'catalyst for positive transformation'.

► **Requests for Considerations referred to in the 2013/14 Annual Report dealt with during 2014/15**

As referred to in the Annual Report (2013/14) the following requests were dealt with in 2014/15:

❖ Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment)

- Loss of sand from the Vale's beaches as a result of extreme weather events during the winter of 2013/14.

In discussing the issue of loss of sand on our beaches, the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) considered that the erosion and shifting of sand was inevitable. The Committee noted that the purpose of the monitoring regime was to provide a robust evidence base from which the Council could use as a basis for undertaking its role as a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authority. If it was established that works to prevent erosion were not feasible or justified, data would be used to inform affected parties of the likely rate of erosion and potential impacts.

The Committee subsequently requested to receive a report on an annual basis, detailing the progress of coastal monitoring in the Vale and any issues identified.

- Proposed changes to Waste Collection and Recycling in the Vale of Glamorgan. See page 17 for further information.
- The Vale of Glamorgan's one year environmental protection trial with XFOR.

XFOR had commenced enforcement patrols in respect of litter and dog fouling in the Vale on the 30th July 2012. It had continued 'no tolerance' enforcement work with varying staffing levels for approximately 10 months. The trial ended on the 20th May 2013. During the trial XFOR issued a total 1,665 Fixed Penalty Notices to individuals guilty of offences of littering or dog fouling.

In assessing the benefits to come out of the trial, the Committee noted that it appeared that the private sector could provide this type of enforcement on a more cost effective basis than the Council. The Committee requested for a further future report be presented detailing the full costs of all available future options.

❖ Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning)

- Use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) by schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The purpose of the grant is to provide additional support to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Scrutiny Committee wished to ensure that this money is used effectively and to consider best practice and high impact strategies amongst schools in the deployment of the fund. It was noted that school had put the PDG to a wide range of uses such as whole staff development activities, intervention activities for individual pupils, effective tracking systems, working with parents and carers, pupils' Meta cognition (learning to learn).

The Committee will continue to receive regular update reports on the PDG funding and this has been identified in its work programme.

'CALL-IN' Scrutiny use of the Call-In System

One of the powers of scrutiny is that non-executive (scrutiny) members are able to "call-in" an executive decision made by the Cabinet, should they have concerns about that decision. If valid (meeting certain criteria laid out in the constitution) the relevant Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to discuss and evaluate the merits of the decision. It also provides an opportunity to ask the decision-makers to reconsider their decision - if Members think this is necessary.

During the year, Scrutiny Committees received 1 "call-in" which was from Councillor K. Mahoney.

▶ **Library Review –**

As previously described on page 15, following a 'Call In' of Cabinet proposals, on the 8th September 2014, the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) was asked to discuss proposals following a review of the Library and Information Service. In considering the issue around the potential number of volunteers required, Members welcomed Cabinet's decision for further consultation and also recommended that data/information relating to footfall be considered in more detail.

Requests for Considerations 2014/15

During the year, the Scrutiny Committees were able to discuss a number of topics received through Requests for Considerations. In addition, shown on pages 24 / 25 are Requests for Considerations from 2013/14 that were dealt with during 2014/15.

In summary

Scrutiny Committee Requests for Consideration May 2014 - April 2015 – Total - 6

Total Number of Requests from 2013/14 - 4

| Scrutiny Committee | Requests for further report | Requests noted / accepted by Committee | Date referred to Cabinet | Recommendations noted / accepted / agreed by Cabinet |
|---|--|---|--------------------------|--|
| Economy & Environment (2) (1) Use of LED lights as Street Lights (2) Eastern Promenade Project Requests c/fwd from 2013/14 (i) Loss of sand from beaches (ii) Changes to Waste Collection (iii) XFOR environmental protection trial | Further report Request withdrawn due to Agenda item on Barry Island regeneration. (i) Regular report on annual basis (iii) Further report | Noted/Agreed (i) Noted (ii) Noted | 14/07/14 | Noted and agreed |
| Lifelong Learning (1) (1) School Swimming Initiative Requests c/fwd from 2013/14 (i) Use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant | (i) Regular updates | Noted/Agreed (i) Noted | | |
| Social Care & Health (3) (1) Association of the Director of Social Services conference (2) Closure of 1st Grade Care (Day Service) (3) Future of the Meals on Wheels Service | Regular report on annual basis Further report | Noted/Agreed Noted Noted/Agreed | 23/03/15 | Noted |

Scrutiny Member Development Activities

Member Development activities for Scrutiny Members focus on generic skills and knowledge which are useful to Members in their role to effectively scrutinise performance. For this a number of workshop, visits and training sessions were organised.

The Scrutiny Committee (Social Care and Health) held a workshop for Members to better understand the make-up of the Social Services Budget to gain an increased awareness of the main funding streams that make up the budget for this vital Council service. Members of this Committee also undertook a workshop in order evaluate the Director of Social Services' Annual Report.

With the introduction of a Vehicle Telemetry System, Members of the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) and the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) received a demonstration of this new piece of technology which will help the Council better understand its transport needs as well as helping to reduce waste and inefficiencies.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee (Economy and Environment) undertook training regarding contract monitoring aimed at helping Members to closer scrutinise the contract for Leisure Services. Further monitoring training to all Members of the Council and Cabinet is to be arranged.

Finally, as previously mentioned, site visits to the new Extra Care facility were arranged along with a visit to see the new facilities at Redlands House in Penarth.

► **Wales Audit Office Report – ‘Good Scrutiny? Good Question!’**

During the year, we have seen the Auditor General for Wales, published his report entitled ‘Good Scrutiny? Good Question!’. This report followed a study to evaluate the effectiveness of Scrutiny across the whole of Wales and it included a total 9 recommendations for improvement, all but one related to how councils undertake scrutiny. The recommendations were as follows:

- R1 Clarify the role of executive members and senior officers in contributing to scrutiny
- R2 Ensure that scrutiny members and specifically scrutiny chairs, receive training and support to fully equip them with the skills required to undertake effective scrutiny
- R3 Further develop scrutiny work programming to:
 - Provide a clear rationale for topic selection
 - Be more outcome focused
 - ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired
 - Align scrutiny programmes with the council’s performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements
- R4 Ensure that scrutiny draws effectively on the work of audit, inspection and regulation and that the activities are complementary with the work of external review bodies
- R6 Ensure that the impact of scrutiny is properly evaluated and acted upon to improve the function’s effectiveness; including following up on proposed actions and examining outcomes
- R7 Undertake regular self-evaluation of scrutiny utilising the ‘outcomes and characteristics of effective local government overview and scrutiny’ developed by the Wales Scrutiny Officers’ Network
- R8 Implement scrutiny improvement action plans developed from the Wales Audit Office improvement study
- R9 Adopt Participation Cymru’s 10 Principles for Public Engagement in improving the way scrutiny engages with the public and stakeholders

In response to this report and to address the areas highlighted for improvement, an Action Plan is being devised that should help ensure that the Scrutiny in the Vale is operating as effectively as possible. A workshop between Members of Scrutiny and the Cabinet will be held during the summer 2015 to discuss the Action Plan and its implementation.

The Council will also consider formalising its arrangements for public speaking at Scrutiny meetings in a draft protocol currently being drawn up.

Looking forward to next year – 2015/16

The work of Scrutiny should add value to the democratic process and have a positive impact for the residents of the Vale of Glamorgan. In line with recommendations from Wales Audit Office regarding Scrutiny, when considering items to their Work Programmes, Scrutiny Committees now more than ever will have to ascertain the likely value and impact gained from any report or review. This will need to be carefully balanced against the time and resources required to undertake the activity.

Scrutiny is most effective when it is focused on a limited number of in-depth topics and to priorities it may need to ask if the item is:

- Relevant and a current issue
- Of particular concern to residents
- A corporate priority
- An area where performance can be improved
- New legislation that will effect a particular service
- An area where an element of risk has been identified
- Where better value for money could be achieved

Some of the specific topics that the Scrutiny Committees will closely consider will include:

- Close monitoring of child and adult safeguarding arrangements;
- Constructively assessing the impact of the financial savings that the Council has to achieve;
- Understanding and Scrutinising the implications of further reduction in resources on the Council's Corporate Plan and reviewing the Corporate Plan itself;
- Evaluating proposals around services that will be come out of the Council's Reshaping Services project;
- Exploring the potential for shared services or joint/working arrangements in delivering services;
- Assessing implications of implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014;
- Continue to monitor the attainment levels of our pupils and to assess challenges facing schools;
- Looking at plans for the transformation of Secondary Schools in Barry;
- Update on the progress of the Action Plans developed from the Task and Finish group reviews into Traffic Management and Assistive Technology;
- A progress report around the implications of the Welfare Reform Agenda;
- Consideration of the performance of Leisure Services and the monitoring of the contract with Parkwood Leisure;
- Assessing the demand for Family Support Services;
- Looking at The 21st Century Schools Programme in Barry;
- Civic Parking Enforcement; and
- Regeneration.

How can I find out more about Scrutiny?

Should you wish to find out more about the work of Scrutiny, you can do so at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk where you can look at the reports the Committees have considered, the minutes of the meetings and future work programme schedules for each of the five Scrutiny Committees.

Scrutiny meetings are open to the public (unless there are items of a confidential nature to be considered). Most meetings are also held in the Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry.

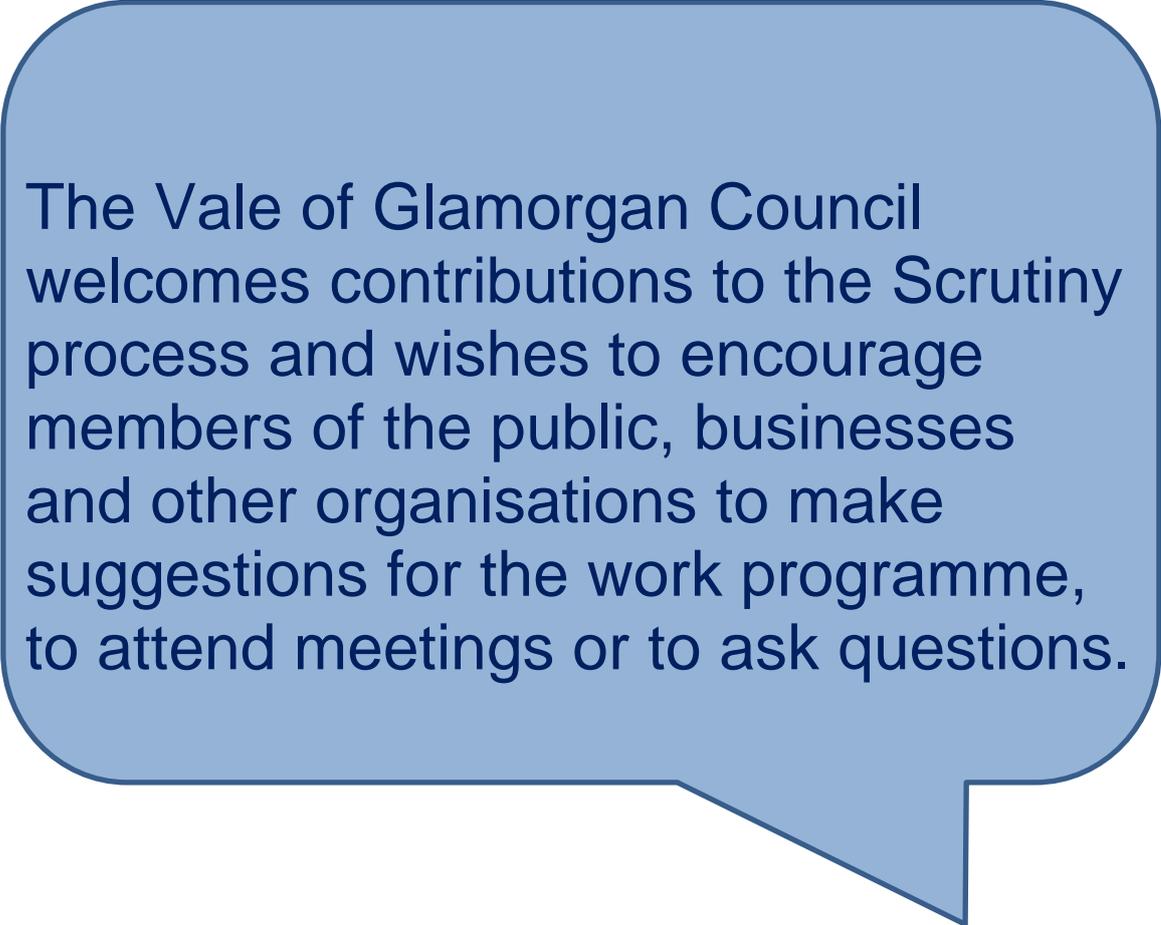
Please look at our website to see the dates, times and venues of forthcoming Scrutiny meetings [http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/council/minutes_agendas_and_reports/minutes_agendas_and_reports.aspx].

Alternatively you can contact Democratic and Scrutiny Services at the address below:

**Democratic and Scrutiny Services
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices
Holton Road
Barry, CF63 4RU**

Tel no : (01446) 709413

**Email: democratic@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
Website: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk**



The Vale of Glamorgan Council welcomes contributions to the Scrutiny process and wishes to encourage members of the public, businesses and other organisations to make suggestions for the work programme, to attend meetings or to ask questions.