

Ten Ways We Made a Difference

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010-11



Foreword

Cllr Rob Speht (Chair)



Cllr John Newbury (Vice Chair)



We are delighted to be able to present this annual report which highlights some of the work done by Overview and Scrutiny between May 2010 and April 2012. With this year's report we have made an extra effort to keep it as short as possible. In this way we hope it will be easier to read and more accessible. What we have done is picked out what we think are our top ten achievements for the year. Of course these achievements reflect only a small proportion of the work that was done and if you would like to find out more then please take a look at our WebPages and our blog.

We would like to thank all of the councillors who worked so hard to make scrutiny a success throughout the year and all of the officers from right across the council who provided so much valuable support. We are particularly grateful to those members of the public who contributed to various pieces of work and we hope that more people can be involved in future.

Councillor Rob Speht and Councillor John Newbury

Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Business Committee

Ten Ways Overview and Scrutiny Made a Difference

1. Better ways of involving the public in recycling

The Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Board spent a significant amount of time last year investigating the issue of waste minimisation and recycling in Swansea; including eight separate evidence gathering sessions over a period of several months.



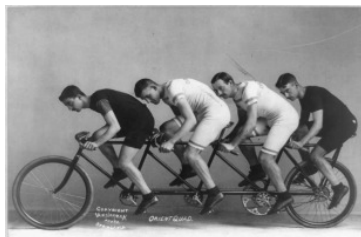
Proposals that will go forward as a result of the review include; reviewing the provision and availability of information to the public on recycling and refuse services, ideas for further work with schools such as a recycling competition, extending partnership working with community recycling organisations and addressing the problem of lack of storage space for recycling.

2. New ways to help older people maintain their independence

The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Board produced a major piece of work on how communities could better support older people to live independent lives. The Board visited and researched a number of different projects and heard evidence from officers from the Council, health board and the voluntary sector.

The Board's ideas, subsequently taken up by Cabinet, included; identifying under usage of community resources and buildings that could be offered at low or no cost to support groups and networks; learning from previous projects; increasing community development projects; and ensuring better joint working across the council.

3. Improving how we share services with partners and other councils



The Performance and Finance Overview and Scrutiny Board did a major piece of work on how the council can make the most out of sharing some of its services with other organisations. They did research about good practice and heard evidence from a number of key people involved in this across Wales. The Board also spoke to local partners and heard the views of council officers and those who have already been involved in this type of work locally.

The report proposes a number of ways in which the Council's approach to shared services might be improved including picking the right types of services for projects, building formal relationships with partners and neighboring councils and being absolutely clear about costs and benefits at the start of each project.

4. Improving councillors' corporate parent role for children in care

Against a backdrop of a dramatic 50% rise in looked after children across Wales over the last 12 years, the Child and Family Services Overview and Scrutiny Board tackled the question of 'how can we be better corporate parents'. The work, which included nine separate evidence gathering sessions, took in the views of staff, foster carers and councillors.

As a result of this work the Council will raise the profile of corporate parenting amongst councillors and strengthen the role of the Council's Corporate Parenting Forum. One of the most significant achievements was the production of a practical guide by the Board to help councillors to meet their responsibilities as corporate parents and improve the lives of children in care.

5. A range of new ways of improving literacy in schools

During the course of this review, councillors on the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Board spoke to literacy advisors, head teachers, school governors, local teacher training colleges and parents. They looked at performance data, local policies and national strategies and many examples of good practice.

Cabinet has now agreed to take forward all of the Board's proposals including the development of a broader strategy for literacy that stretches from early years into adulthood and to encourage schools to develop partnerships with parents, carers and families by providing information about how they can help to develop their child's literacy skills.

6. A national award for the scrutiny of Child and Family Services

In June of this year the Child and Family Services Overview and Scrutiny Board received a national award for their contribution to improvement in Child and Family Services in properly protecting and supporting vulnerable children. The award of 'Team of the Year' came from the Centre for Public Scrutiny – a national body that promotes effective scrutiny at all levels of government.

The award reflected the innovative ways of working introduced by the Board as well as the high levels of commitment shown by all the councillors involved. As well as contributing to improvement across the service as a whole, the Board was able to make specific contributions around the restructuring of social work teams, support for disabled children and the provision of residential homes.



7. Using social media to increase public awareness and engagement

Over the course of the year we have been making increasing use of social media such as blogging, twitter and facebook in our work. The purpose has been to raise awareness of overview and scrutiny as well as encourage greater public engagement. We are, as far as we know, the first scrutiny team in the UK to set up a dedicated blog and a dedicated twitter feed.

Over the course of the year over 1,200 different people visited our blog, which is about ten times more than the number that downloaded our online newsletter. We also have 300 followers on twitter. Overall we feel that social media has both helped us to communicate with a wider audience and to communicate better.

8. Contributing to the development of the Community Safety Strategy

The Community Safety Strategy was due to be renewed by April 2011 and the Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee were on hand to help shape it. The Committee set aside a meeting to hear a presentation from South Wales Police and to give members of the public and representatives of relevant groups a chance to ask questions and make comments.

Issues raised at the meeting ranged from CCTV to the powers of police support officers, from information sharing to the role of private landlords. All of the issues raised were formally fed into the development of the strategy which has since been published. This piece of work was a good example of two ways that overview and scrutiny can make a difference; helping policy and development; and involving the public.

9. Councillors and staff say scrutiny is making more of a difference

The statistics that we collect for overview and scrutiny every year showed an improvement both in the level of activity and in the perceptions of councillors and council staff that overview and scrutiny is making a difference. The stakeholder survey we conduct every year also showed that levels of awareness of overview and scrutiny also improved. This was probably down to a combination of better communication and the higher profile that came from the Child and Family Overview and Scrutiny Board winning a national award. The stakeholder survey, which had responses from 42 councillors and 138 members of staff, had the following results:

- **88%** – Councillors who agree that O&S has a positive impact on the business of the Council (85% last year)
- **67%** - Staff who agree that O&S has a positive impact on the business of the Council (55% last year)
- **93%** – Councillors who agree that they have a good understanding of the work of overview and scrutiny (90% last year)
- **70%** – Staff who agree that they have a good understanding of the work of overview and scrutiny (52% last year)

10. Continuing to improve what we do

Last year's annual report set out four challenges that overview and scrutiny have been working on during the course of the year:

- **Budget:** Whilst all of the Boards have kept a keen eye on budget issues during what are very challenging times, the Performance and Finance Board undertook additional work to provide challenge before the new budget was agreed in February.
- **New Arrangements:** The Business Committee have reviewed the new overview and scrutiny arrangements that were introduced in May 2010 and reported their conclusions to Council.
- **Community Strategy:** For the first time in 2010/11 a scrutiny mechanism was introduced for the community strategy. This was the Partnership Evaluation Panel which included scrutiny councillors and members of the Health Trust, Police Authority and Council for Voluntary Services. It met in October 2010 and made recommendations to the Better Swansea Partnership all of which were subsequently accepted.
- **Local Government Measure:** The National Assembly for Wales agreed this measure in 2011 and, whilst it did not have an impact on the work of overview and scrutiny in 2010-11, it will mean changes in May 2012.

Looking forward, these will be the challenges for overview and scrutiny during 2011-12:

- **New Overview and Scrutiny Structure:** The implications of the Local Government Measure (2011) and the need to contribute to the Council's savings targets means that a more effective structure will be needed for May 2012
- **Questioning Strategies:** Asking the right questions in the right way is at the heart of effective scrutiny and has been identified as an important focus for improvement
- **Engagement with Scrutiny:** Improved engagement with both citizens and staff can both ensure more effective overview and scrutiny and strengthen engagement with the council more generally.

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny is an essential ingredient of local democracy.

Overview & Scrutiny makes a difference by ensuring that local decision making is better, that local services are improved and that local democracy is strengthened. This is done by holding the Council's Cabinet to account and by monitoring and reviewing the performance of public services and policies. The work of overview & Scrutiny includes talking to the public, gathering evidence from relevant organisations and conducting research. For in depth pieces of work the boards will produce reports and make recommendations.

The City & County of Swansea has five Overview & Scrutiny Boards that work in a similar way to the select committees in parliament and are made up of backbench councillors from all parties.

The five Overview & Scrutiny Boards are:

- Child and Family Services Overview & Scrutiny Board
- Children, Young People & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Board
- Environment and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Board
- Health, Social Care and Well-being Overview & Scrutiny Board
- Performance and Finance Overview & Scrutiny Board

In addition the Council has two overview & scrutiny committees which have a cross cutting and coordinating role:

- Overview & Scrutiny Business Committee
- Partnership Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny is supported by:

- The **Overview & Scrutiny Unit** which supports the work of the boards by; managing the work plans; facilitating task and finish groups and events; and supporting research. Dedicated officers support each board and work closely with the chair and vice chair
- **Legal & Democratic Services** who provide advice and support for board meetings by coordinating agendas and minutes as well as giving legal advice.
- **Council Departments** who provide advice and information by attending meetings and providing reports. Directors and heads of service will be involved in reviews as sponsors and advisors.

Details of the work of the Boards, including their reports, can be found at www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny

Board and Committee Membership 2010/11

CHILD and FAMILY SERVICES OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY BOARD

Viv Abbott	Cheryl L Philpott
Susan M Jones	Darren Price
John Newbury	Janet Mary Thomas
Mark C Child Chair	David Phillips
John T Miles	J Christine Richards
Paxton R Hood-Williams Vice Chair	

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE and LEARNING OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY BOARD

V N Abbott	W Keith Morgan Vice Chair
James Bernard Kelleher	Ioan M Richard
Keith E Marsh	R June Stanton
William Evans	John T Miles
Penny Matthews Chair	Ceinwen Thomas
Rene H Kinzett	

Co-opted Members

Kathleen Boyce	Robin Lowe
Dr. Vanessa Hammond	

ENVIRONMENT and COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY BOARD

Audrey R A Clement	Jeff W Jones
June Evans Chair	Keith E Marsh
Nicola A Holley	Cheryl L Philpott
C Ryland Doyle	Alan Lloyd Vice Chair
DIE Jones	Rob C Stewart
Anthony C S Colburn	

HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE and WELL BEING OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY BOARD

Veronyca Anne Bates Hughes	N A Holley
Jeff W Jones Vice Chair	Paul M Meara
Susan M Jones	Ioan M Richard
W John F Davies	Erika T Kirchner
Robert Francis-Davies Chair	Byron G Owen
Margaret Smith	

PERFORMANCE and FINANCE OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY BOARD

Peter M Black	Paul M Meara
E Wendy Fitzgerald	John Newbury
David Thomas Howells	Darren Price Chair
June E Burtonshaw	David Phillips
Mike J Hedges Vice Chair	Des W W Thomas
Paxton R Hood-Williams	

OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Veronyca Anne Bates Hughes	Keith E Marsh
Sue M Jones	Paul M Meara
June Evans	John Newbury Vice Chair
Jeff W Jones	Darren Price
James Bernard Kelleher	Robert Speht Chair
June E Burtonshaw	John T Miles
C Ryland Doyle	Byron G Owen
Robert Francis-Davies	Ceinwen Thomas
DIE Jones	Glyn Seabourne
Rene H Kinzett	

PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

June Evans	Paul M Meara
E Wendy Fitzgerald	John Newbury Chair
Jeff W Jones	Cheryl L Philpott
Susan M Jones	Darren Price
Keith E Marsh Vice Chair	Ioan M Richard
W John F Davies	J Christine Richards
Erika T Kirchner	Rob C Stewart
Alan Lloyd	Des W W Thomas
David Phillips	Mair E Gibbs
Paxton R Hood-Williams	

OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY UNIT

Lee Wenham	Head of Communications Overview & Scrutiny
Dave Mckenna	Overview & Scrutiny Manager
Brij Madahar	Overview & Scrutiny Coordinator
Karen Shadrach	Overview & Scrutiny Coordinator
Delyth Davies	Overview & Scrutiny Officer
Rosie Jackson	Overview & Scrutiny Officer
Michelle Roberts	Overview & Scrutiny Officer
Liz Jordan	Chief Executive's Project Officer (Co located)
Jenna Tucker	Overview & Scrutiny Research Officer

Getting Involved

There are many ways in which you can get involved in Scrutiny. This can be done by:

1. **Attending a meeting** – All Boards are open to the public. Many of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings take place in the committee rooms in the Civic Centre.
2. **Consultation** – During the evidence gathering stage of a review a range of stakeholders will be consulted with in order to gain evidence. Details of such consultation will appear on the web pages or in a variety of other formats such as in the local newspaper.
3. **Tell us your views** – If you have an idea for a Scrutiny review or if you would like to contribute to a current review then please contact the Scrutiny Support Team on the contact details below.

Contact the Team

For further information or if you have any queries then please contact the Overview & Scrutiny Unit on the contact details below:

Email: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
Address: Overview & Scrutiny Unit
City and County of Swansea
Civic Centre
Oystermouth Road
Swansea
SA1 3SN

www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny

Overview & Scrutiny Web Pages: www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny
Swansea Scrutiny Blog: <http://scrutiny.cityandcountyofswansea.org.uk/>
Swansea Scrutiny Twitter: www.twitter.com/swanseascrutiny

A Big Thank You!

These are the people and organisations who contributed to overview and scrutiny over the course of the year and who made the work possible. It includes the people who were formally involved through reviews and formal meetings. Not on the list, but of vital importance are the Democratic Services and Legal Teams who help to support every meeting.

AB Glass
 Alison Ward, CBE, Chief Executive, Torfaen County Borough Council
 Amanda Carr, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services
 Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW)
 Bev Hopkins, Chair of Governors Hafod Primary School
 Beverley Williams, Newport City Council Borough Council and member of Intervention Board
 Brian Roles, Head of Education Planning and Resources
 Carl Humphrey, Head Of Highways
 Carol Green, Director, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services
 Caroline Carter, Community Regeneration Unit Co-ordinator
 Cathy Murray, Mental Health and Learning Disability Services
 Chief Superintendent Mark Mathias, South Wales Police
 Chris Maggs, Corporate Director (Social Services)
 Chris Vinestock, Head of Transportation City & County of Cardiff
 Claire Pery, Recycling Officer
 Councillor Alan Robinson, Cabinet Member for Community Regeneration
 Councillor Audrey Clement, Corporate Parenting Forum
 Councillor Chris Holley, Leader of the Council
 Councillor Gareth Sullivan, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning
 Councillor Graham Thomas, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism
 Councillor John Davies, Corporate Parenting Forum
 Councillor John Hague, Cabinet Member for Environment & Deputy Leader
 Councillor Mair Gibbs, Corporate Parenting Forum
 Councillor Margaret Smith, Corporate Parenting Forum
 Councillor Mary Jones, Cabinet Member & Lead Member for Children & Young People
 Councillor Mike Day, Cabinet Member for Education
 Councillor Nick Tregoning, Cabinet Member for Social Services
 Councillor Peter May, Cabinet Member for Housing
 Councillor Ryland Doyle, Corporate Parenting Forum
 Councillor Stuart Rice, Cabinet Member for Finance
 Craig Hargreaves, South Wales Police
 David Evans, Substance Misuse Action team - Planning & Commissioning Manager
 David Pugh, Co-ordinator of Blaen Garw Timecentre
 De Litchfield, Child & Family Services
 Debbie Jones, Manager for the looked after children Team
 Deborah Checkland, Planning Officer (Social Services)
 Deborah Driffield, Head of Adult Services
 Debra Hobby, Responsible Officer, Norton Lodge
 Derek Roberts, Chair of Governors Dylan Thomas Comprehensive School
 Dorothy Edwards, Bridgend Joint Locality Manager
 Dr Chris Johns, Clinical Director (Primary Care), ABM University Health Board
 Eddie Isles, Youth Offending Team Manager
 Eirian Davies, Team Around the Family Coordinator
 Elinor Evans, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services
 Ethnic Minority Language and Assistance Service
 Family Learning Programme and parents in attendance at St Helens Primary
 Friends of the Earth
 Geoff Thomas, Time Banking Wales
 Graham Daniels, Headteacher, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe
 Haydn Nelson, Child & Family Services
 Heini Gruffudd, Chair of Governors, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe
 Hilary Davies, Project Manager Integrated Service Delivery
 Hywel Pullen, Pricewaterhouse Coopers
 Ian James, Head of Education Effectiveness
 Ian Whettleton, Divisional Manager (Waste)
 Iwan Davies, Head of Culture and Tourism
 Jack Straw, Chief Executive
 Jackie Turner, Team Leader, Adult Social Services
 Jackie Whiteman, Swansea Vale Resource Centre
 Jane Tonks, Planning Officer – Young Disabled People
 Jeff Davison, Community Safety Manager
 Jenny Edwards, Environment Centre
 Jeremy Stephens, Head of Performance and Strategic Projects
 Jocelyn Llewellyn, Job Centre Plus
 John Lock, Planning Applications Manager
 Julie Burroughs, Social Services Quality Assurance Officer
 Karen Grunhut, Anti-Poverty Policy Coordinator
 Karen Sinclair, AM
 Kate Mizen, Acting Chair of Governors, Llangyfelach Primary School
 Kathryn Lewis, Lead Nurse Safeguarding, ABM University Health Board
 Keith Bowen, Contact a Family
 Laura Davies, Recycling Officer
 Lee Morgan, Head of Housing
 Linda Francis, Carer, Foster Swansea
 Lindsay Haywood, Youth Support Services Co-ordinator
 Lisa Hedley, Business Development Coordinator, Swansea Safeguarding Children Board
 Lisa Llewellyn, Res-A-Rec
 Literacy Advisors in Schools
 Lynda Palmer, Child Disability Team
 Mariann Hewitt, Planning Officer - Direct Payments
 Marilyn Evans, Job Centre Plus

Mark Campion, Interim Children and Young People Strategy Manager
 Mark Sheridan, Senior Education Psychologist
 Martin Nicholls, Head of Corporate Building Services
 Martin Saville, Head of Public Protection
 Mike Flynne, Headteacher, Llangyfelach Primary School
 Mike Trubey, Head of Finance, City & County of Swansea
 Mo Green, More Green Recycling
 Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
 Neil Frow, Cwm Taf Health Board
 Nick Andrews, Planning Officer – Older People
 Norman Host, Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales
 Pam Barrow, Assistant Chief Officer Probation
 Pam Clutton, Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales
 Parents on the Parents & Carer's Forum, Swansea Council for Voluntary
 Pat Hughes, Assessment and Care Management Services for Older People
 Paul Littlewood, Principal Officer, Disability Services
 Paul Smith, Chief Executive, City & County of Swansea
 Paul Smith, Former Chief Executive
 Paul Whapham, Senior Physical Activity Development Officer
 Phil Gough, Finance Director, University of Wales, Swansea
 Phil Roberts, Corporate Director (Regeneration and Housing)
 Phillip Holmes, Head of Economic Regeneration & Planning
 Professor David Warner, Principal Swansea Metropolitan University
 Pupil Referral Units
 Rachael Webb, Headteacher, Hafod Primary School
 Rebecca Tribe, Recycling Officer
 Reena Owen, Corporate Director (Environment)
 Rhian Millar, Consultation Coordinator
 Rhiannon Thomas, Manager for looked after children Team (under 14 years)
 Richard Evans, Principal Officer (Social Services)
 Richard Leggett, Principal Officer, Commissioning Support Unit
 Richard Parry, Corporate Director (Education),
 Rick Wilson, Community Lives Consortium
 Rob Phillips, Headteacher, Dylan Thomas Comprehensive School
 Robin Brown, Head of Educational Inclusion
 Rose Seabourne, former Councillor and Cabinet Member – Torfaen County Borough Council
 Sandra Spratt, Swansea Council for Voluntary Services
 Sara Harvey, Regional Coordinator South West Wales, Welsh Local Government Association
 School Governors who completed the Literacy Questionnaire
 SCRAP (Swansea Community Recycling Alliance Partnership)
 Sergeant Julie Powell, South Wales Police
 Sharon Miller, Planning Manager, ABM University Health Board
 Stephanie Vaughan, Literacy Co-ordinator
 Steve Walker, Head of Child & Family Services
 Superintendent Martin Jones, South Wales Police
 Susan Cooper Head of Adult Social Care, Bridgend County Borough
 Swansea Employment Training Centre
 Swansea Waste Forum
 Talbot, Carmarthenshire, Rhodda-Cynon-Taf, Wrexham
 Tanya Nash, Sustainable Development Manager

Teaching staff who completed the Literacy Questionnaire
 Terri Shaw, Construction Waste & Sustainability Manager
 Tom Jones, Participation & Children's Rights Worker
 Trish Flint, Recycling Team Manager
 Tunstall Healthcare Group
 Vanessa Phillips, Welsh Local Government Association
 Vic Gregory, Residential and Daycare Services
 Vicki Franklin, ABM University Health Board
 Vicky Thomas, Project / Programme Planner
 Wendy Henderson, Gorseinon Development Trust
 Will Maclean, Welsh Assembly Government (Innovation & Efficiency)
 Wyn Williams, Carer, Foster Swansea
 Yvonne Burgis, Youth Services Manager