

# Public Document Pack



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council

Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa,  
Aberaeron, Ceredigion SA46 0PA  
[ceredigion.gov.uk](http://ceredigion.gov.uk)

30 November 2023

Dwynwen Jones

01545 572070

Dear Sir / Madam

I write to inform you that a Meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at the HYBRID - NEUADD CYNGOR CEREDIGION, PENMORFA, ABERAERON / REMOTELY VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE on Thursday, 7 December 2023 at 10.00 am for the transaction of the following business:

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations)**  
**Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.**
3. **Engagement and Participation Policy - Half yearly monitoring update (Pages 3 - 24)**
4. **To discuss with Officers the possibility of establishing a Task and Finish Group on Procurement**
5. **To confirm minutes of the previous meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes. (Pages 25 - 30)**
6. **Forward Work Programme (Pages 31 - 36)**

Members are reminded to sign the Attendance Register

A Translation Services will be provided at this meeting and those present are welcome to speak in Welsh or English at the meeting.

Yours faithfully



**Miss Lowri Edwards**  
**Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services**

**To: Chairman and Members of Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The remaining Members of the Council for information only.

## CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

**Report to:** Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 07/12/2023

**Title:** Engagement and Participation Policy – Half yearly monitoring update

**Purpose of the report:** To provide an opportunity for Scrutiny Committee to consider progress made in delivering the Council's Engagement and Participation policy and in developing a new engagement toolkit.

### **Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:**

A report on progress of the action plan during 2022-23 was presented to this committee in June 2023. It was agreed that a 6-month monitoring update report is presented in December 2023.

### **Background**

Ceredigion Engagement and Participation Policy 'Talking, Listening and Working Together' includes an action plan on which this report is based.

The Policy is published on our website: [engagement and participation policy ceredigion county council.pdf](#)

Cabinet agreed the recommendations from the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- that all engagement exercises participants should receive the outcome results;
- that a 6-month monitoring update report is presented to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its December meeting.

### **Current Situation**

A consistent feedback method is outlined in the new Engagement toolkit. The importance of feedback will be further highlighted in training on use of the toolkit.

The action plans has progressed. Much of this progress is a result of the revised Engagement toolkit. This is attached at Appendix 1.

The action plan contains four aims. Progress is monitored by a Red/Amber/Green system. Red (no progress made), Amber (some progress made), Green (action is on track or complete).

### **1. To mainstream effective engagement and participation across Ceredigion County Council.**

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 2 x Green and 1 x Amber to 3 x Green.

**2. To ensure that we engage with the people of Ceredigion in the best way**

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 1 x Green, 1 x Amber and 1 x Red to 1 x Green and 2 x Amber.

**3. To meet our statutory duties and responsibilities under legislation**

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 1 x Green and 2 x Amber to 3 x Green.

**4. To keep up to date with the latest innovations and best practice in the field of engagement**

RAG status of the actions have progressed from 2 x Green and 1 x Amber to 3 x Green.

There is further detail in the progress report at Appendix 2.

**Wellbeing of Future Generations:**

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.**

No, this is not a change in policy or service.

**Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:**

**Long term:** not applicable  
**Collaboration:** not applicable  
**Involvement:** not applicable  
**Prevention:** not applicable  
**Integration:** not applicable

**Recommendation(s):**

To note the content of the Engagement and Participation Policy – Half yearly monitoring update.

To note the new Engagement toolkit.

**Reasons for decision:**

To ensure appropriate scrutiny of the Engagement and Participation Policy.

**Contact Name:** Cathryn Morgan

**Designation:** Equalities and Inclusion Manager

**Date of Report:** 16/11/2023

**Acronyms:**

None

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# ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION TOOLKIT

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## **Introduction**

This toolkit provides tips and advice for planning and carrying out your engagement or consultation campaign. The Appendices at the end of the document contain some templates and suggested text that you can use. [Appendix 1](#) will help you to plan your campaign.

Some people think that engagement and consultation are the same things. This can lead to confusion.

### **What is engagement?**

Engagement is an ongoing process. We develop relationships with residents in Ceredigion, as well as organisations that we work with. We want people to know our thinking when it comes to the future of our services. We may run a specific engagement campaign to gain additional views before developing a new plan or project that results in a change in service.

### **What is consultation?**

Consultations are typically focussed on specific decisions or changes which the Council is considering. There are rules that we must follow to ensure that the dialogue with stakeholders is meaningful and to ensure that the Council is not subject to legal challenge. See Gunning Principles at [Appendix 5](#).

For the purpose of this toolkit, the term 'campaign' will be used for both engagement and consultation.

### **Co-production**

Co-production enables people providing and people receiving services to share power and responsibility. Services and citizens work together in equal, reciprocal relationships. This approach is best practice and requires a meaningful commitment from everyone involved. Please discuss this with your line manager.

There is more information in our [Engagement and Participation Policy](#).

The [National Principles for Public Engagement](#) in Wales is a set of ten principles for engaging with the public and participants. It's a 5 minute read and is well worth the time.

## Step 1 - Matters to consider and where to get help

- Why are you undertaking the campaign? What do you need to find out?
- Do you need to undertake your campaign? Use the Consultation Decision Making tool at [Appendix 6](#).
- What will the Council do as a result of the campaign?
- Manage expectations - be clear about what can and can't be achieved.
- Consider the length of your campaign. 8 to 12 weeks is good practice, although there is no set timeframe. Include your campaign in the timeline you have created for the service change. There is a template at [Appendix 4](#).
- Be aware of the 'Gunning Principles' – see [Appendix 5](#).
- How will you feed the results back to your stakeholders, including Leadership Group, Scrutiny committee members, Cabinet members and residents?
- Do you need to undertake an [Integrated Impact Assessment](#)?

This is your campaign. The following teams are available to help and advise you, but they are not able to do the work for you. Contact them to let them know about your campaign when you start planning.

- **Equalities and Inclusion** – for general advice and to ensure corporate oversight of all engagement and consultation campaigns  
[partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk)
- **Performance and Research** – for advice on the questions you may ask and on your analysis report [performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk)
- **Communications** – for help to promote your campaign  
[pressoffice@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:pressoffice@ceredigion.gov.uk)
- **Welsh Language Policy** - for advice on our statutory duty to seek public views about the impact our decisions may have on the Welsh language  
[cymraeg@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:cymraeg@ceredigion.gov.uk)
- **Clic contact centre management team** – so that they have the information needed to deal with any enquiries from the public about your campaign  
[cs.ccm@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:cs.ccm@ceredigion.gov.uk)
- **IT support team** – for help and advice about putting your campaign on our public website [servicedesk@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:servicedesk@ceredigion.gov.uk)



## Step 2 - Who are your stakeholders?

Identify your stakeholders. They could include service users, people of a specific age, people living in a specific area, other public bodies or simply 'everyone that lives or works in Ceredigion'.

Your stakeholder list should always include Ceredigion County Council Elected Members, Leadership Group, Town and Community Council clerks, the Council workforce, Ceredigion Public Services Board Partners and relevant service user groups and forums. These are listed, with contact details, at [Appendix 2](#).

When you know who your stakeholders are, you will be able to decide how best to involve and communicate with them.

## Step 3 - Methodology

You may decide to use various methods to get feedback from your stakeholders. This will depend on your capacity, budget, and the needs of your target audience. It's important to gather examples of people's direct experience of your topic, especially when this gives them an understanding that people who have only heard about such experiences do not have. This is called 'lived experience'.

### Methods

- ◇ A questionnaire or survey. This must be available on paper and also on-line.
- ◇ Raise as an agenda item for discussion at a regular meeting of your stakeholders.
- ◇ Link in with the many engagement events run by the Council and our partners. Ask our Equalities and Inclusion team and our Communications team if there are any suitable events coming up.
- ◇ Invite your stakeholders to a focus group - on-line, face to face or 'hybrid.'
- ◇ Organise a 'drop-in' community meeting or workshop.
- ◇ Carry out structured interviews with specific stakeholders, face to face, on-line, or over the telephone.
- ◇ Targeted email or letter, inviting people to give you feedback or asking partners to share the campaign with their networks.

## Step 4 - Creating your Campaign

- Write out the background information that your stakeholders will need in order to give you meaningful feedback. Decide on the questions you want to ask. Use plain language, avoid jargon. Don't use leading or ambiguous questions.
- Include a closing date, postal address, email address and telephone number.
- Create a large print version of the information by using the 'select all' tool in Microsoft Word, change the font to Arial 16 and save with a different name. You may need to reformat your document.
- Create an Easy Read version by using resources from our Microsoft Teams site: [Easy Read](#)
- Create a Young People Friendly version. Contact our Children and Young People's Officer for advice: [porthcymorthcynnar@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:porthcymorthcynnar@ceredigion.gov.uk)
- Create a poster for people who don't go online. Include all key information and how to respond off-line. Save this as a jpg or pdf so that it can be easily shared.
- Make sure that you have Welsh and English versions of all your documents.

### If you are creating a survey:

- ◇ Include equality monitoring questions as part of your questionnaire, these are available on [Cerinet](#). You will need these for your analysis report.
- ◇ Transfer your survey questions to [Microsoft Forms](#) (or alternative) to create an online version.

### If you are running a workshop, structured interview or focus group

- ◇ Try and keep to the topic. Use the questions or subject headings you have developed. This will give you consistency when you analyse your feedback.
- ◇ Collect as much information as you can about those who attend. You will need this for your analysis report.

### If you are attending an engagement event organised by someone else

- ◇ You will have competition from other information stands! Create an eye-catching display and think of an interactive activity to collect people's views.
- ◇ Collect as much information as you can about the people you've spoken with. You will need this for your analysis report.

## Step 5 - Communication

- Use the template at [Appendix 3](#) to send the information about your campaign to our ICT service desk.
- Create all your information in Microsoft Word format and use the 'Check Accessibility' button under 'Review' on your toolbar to check that people with a visual impairment will be able to read them easily. Read through [Microsoft: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities](#).
- Ask IT to place the information, documents and links on our [Engagement and Consultations](#) webpage. Ask them not to 'go live' until you are ready.
- When the webpage is ready, but not yet live, create a QR code by right clicking on the blank area of the webpage and click on 'Create QR code for this page'. Place the QR code in your poster for people who do go on-line but don't visit our website regularly.
- Provide information on your campaign to [pressoffice@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:pressoffice@ceredigion.gov.uk). Ask them to promote your campaign in a press release and/or social media post and/or newsletter.
- Provide the information to [hrnews@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:hrnews@ceredigion.gov.uk) if you want your campaign to be shared with the Council workforce as a weekly news item.
- Provide the information to the Clic contact centre management team [cs.ccm@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:cs.ccm@ceredigion.gov.uk) to help them respond to any enquiries from the public about your campaign

### When you are ready to 'go live'

- Send the information about your campaign to our Libraries and Leisure/Wellbeing Centres, asking them to print out and display the poster, and to print out any supporting documents from our Engagement and Consultations webpage on request.
  - ◇ Libraries: [Llyfrgell.library@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:Llyfrgell.library@ceredigion.gov.uk)
  - ◇ Leisure/Wellbeing Centres: [ceredigionactif@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:ceredigionactif@ceredigion.gov.uk)
- Email or post the information to the list of stakeholders that you have selected. You may want to send a few reminders while your campaign is running.

## Step 6 - Using the results

- When your campaign is closed, prepare a message to say that the campaign has now closed and thank all participants that responded. Explain what will happen next.
- Ask ICT service desk to change the information on the [Engagement and Consultations](#) webpage to say, 'thank you' and 'what happens next'. Ask them to move your webpage to the 'closed campaigns' section.
- An analysis report, including examples of 'lived experience,' should be prepared after the campaign has closed. Performance and Research, [performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:performanceresearch@ceredigion.gov.uk) can provide advice on this.
- Different participants will have diverse needs and preferences for receiving feedback, which should be considered.
- Upload the analysis report (or a link to the Cabinet report) to the corporate [Engagement and Consultations](#) webpage and send by email to the stakeholders that were asked to respond to the campaign.

### What may happen next?

- ◇ If your initial campaign is an engagement, you may draft a new plan/policy/strategy and put this out for public consultation.
- ◇ You will take a paper to Leadership Group, Scrutiny committee, Cabinet for a final decision.
- ◇ The new plan/policy/strategy will come into force on a specified date.



If you would like further advice on consultation and engagement, contact the Equality and Inclusion Team via [partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1. Engagement and Consultation Plan Template

Engagement/Consultation Plan for: [name of engagement/consultation]

Version:

Lead officer:

Public campaign starts on: [date]

Public campaign closes on: [date]

**Background - What are we planning and why?** (This can be copied to a press release and [the webpage](#)).

**Stakeholder analysis** ([Who](#) do we need to consult with and why?)

**Next steps** (what will happen as a result of this campaign?)

	<b>Details</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>	<b>Who will this reach?</b>
Online survey			
Paper survey			
Large print version of survey			
Easy Read version of survey			
Young people friendly version of survey			
Poster (with QR code to the webpage)			
Place information on <a href="#">Engagement and Consultations</a> webpage			
Press release and social media posts			
Agenda item at a stakeholder meeting			
Public engagement event(s)			
Focus group(s)			
Community meeting/workshop			
Structured interviews with specific stakeholders			
Targeted email or letter			

## Appendix 2: Stakeholder List

### Mandatory stakeholder groups

Name of group	Contact details
Ceredigion County Council Elected Members	via <a href="mailto:ce.democracy@ceredigion.gov.uk">ce.democracy@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Leadership Group	via your Corporate Lead Officer
Town and Community Councils	via <a href="mailto:partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk">partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Ceredigion County Council Staff	post on <a href="#">Tîm Ceredigion MS Teams site</a>
Ceredigion Public Services Board Partners	via <a href="mailto:partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk">partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>

### Service user groups

Name of group	Contact details
Our Voice Our Choice <i>Self-Advocacy group for people with Learning Disabilities</i>	<a href="mailto:ourvoiceourchoiceceredigion@gmail.com">ourvoiceourchoiceceredigion@gmail.com</a>  Also, offer to post Easy Read copies to them: PO Box 281, Aberystwyth, SY23 9BY
Ceredigion Disability Forum <i>Council led group for people with disabilities</i>	via <a href="mailto:cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk">cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Ceredigion Family Centre Network <i>Provider of services to families with younger children in Borth, Lampeter, Aberaeron, Cardigan and Tregaron</i>	<a href="mailto:carol@plantdewi.co.uk">carol@plantdewi.co.uk</a>
Armed Forces Veterans Forum <i>Armed Forces community (including disabled people, people with mental health issues, older people)</i>	<a href="mailto:partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk">partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Young Farmers clubs <i>Young people aged 10-28 (often rural/Welsh speaking)</i>	<a href="mailto:anne@yfc-ceredigion.org.uk">anne@yfc-ceredigion.org.uk</a>
Hywel Dda Maternity Voices group <i>Expectant parents</i>	via <a href="mailto:cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk">cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Refugees <i>(Translations may be needed)</i>	<a href="mailto:refugee.resettlement@ceredigion.gov.uk">refugee.resettlement@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Youth Council and other youth groups	<a href="mailto:porthcymorthcynnar@ceredigion.gov.uk">porthcymorthcynnar@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Local Access Forum <i>Advisors to the Council on the improvement of public access to land for outdoor recreation, with regard to land management and conservation</i>	<a href="mailto:eifion.jones@ceredigion.gov.uk">eifion.jones@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>

### List of professionals/front line workers

Name of group	Contact details
Children and Young People Service Provider Forum	via <a href="mailto:partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk">partnerships@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Carers Support providers + Community Connectors	<a href="mailto:connecting@ceredigion.gov.uk">connecting@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Early Years, Childcare & Play Strategy group	<a href="mailto:meinir.paske2@ceredigion.gov.uk">meinir.paske2@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Third sector groups	<a href="mailto:chesca.ross@cavo.org.uk">chesca.ross@cavo.org.uk</a>
Food Banks/Pay as you feel cafes/ Community fridges	via <a href="mailto:cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk">cathryn.morgan@ceredigion.gov.uk</a>
Hywel Dda Health Board Community Outreach team	<a href="mailto:robert.allen@wales.nhs.uk">robert.allen@wales.nhs.uk</a>
Age Cymru Dyfed	<a href="mailto:georgia.smith@agecymrudyfed.org.uk">georgia.smith@agecymrudyfed.org.uk</a>
Aberystwyth University	<a href="mailto:iam14@aber.ac.uk">iam14@aber.ac.uk</a>
Wales and West Housing Association	<a href="mailto:rhiannon.ling@wwha.co.uk">rhiannon.ling@wwha.co.uk</a>
Dyfed Drug and Alcohol Service (DDAS)	<a href="mailto:adam.whitehouse@d-das.co.uk">adam.whitehouse@d-das.co.uk</a>



## Appendix 3: Template text for webpage

### Title of Engagement/Consultation campaign

Consultation closes: [\[insert date\]](#)

*Paragraph to explain why you are running the campaign – provide the context.*

- *Include what will happen as a result of the campaign.*
- *Explain how we will inform people about the results of the campaign.*

### Further information:

Add [links](#) to any supporting documents that will help to provide context

### How to take part

Complete our on-line survey [\[add link\]](#)

Download a paper copy [\[add link\]](#)

Download a large print version [\[add link\]](#)

Download an Easy Read version [\[add link\]](#)

If you wish to receive the information in a different format, please contact us on 01545 570881 or email [cllc@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:cllc@ceredigion.gov.uk)

You can also ask for a paper copy from your local Library or Leisure Centre, by calling 01545 570881 or emailing us at [cllc@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:cllc@ceredigion.gov.uk)

Please return paper copies to your local library or to [\[insert name of team\]](#)  
Ceredigion County Council, Canolfan Rheidol, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, SY23 3UE.

If you would like to be updated on the progress of this proposal, please contact us via the contact details above.

## Appendix 4. Example Timeline template

Timeline for [insert name of campaign here]	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Engage with stakeholders to assess current views. Carry out desk top research												
Write up your analysis report on the engagement results, prepare an initial IIA and draft the strategy/plan/policy												
Present draft strategy/plan/policy, initial IIA and analysis report to Scrutiny committee												
Present draft strategy/plan/policy, analysis report and initial IIA to Cabinet. Request approval to go out to public consultation (for statutory consultations)												
Public consultation on draft strategy/plan/ policy												
Write up the consultation analysis report, amend IIA if needed and prepare final strategy/plan/policy												
Present final strategy/plan/policy, IIA and analysis report to Scrutiny committee												
Present final strategy/plan/policy, analysis report and IIA to Cabinet for approval												
Publish the final strategy/plan/policy on Council website and send by email to stakeholders and relevant Council teams												

**Note:** allow 3 weeks for translation of documents at each of these stages.

## Appendix 5. Gunning Principles

The Gunning Principles set out the legal expectations of what is appropriate consultation with an emphasis on ‘fairness.’ The principles can be used in court to determine whether a public body has shown fairness in its engagement, consultations and decision making.

They were coined by Stephen Sedley QC in a court case in 1985 relating to a school closure consultation (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning). Prior to this, very little consideration had been given to the laws of consultation.

Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

**1. Proposals are still at a formative stage**

*A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers*

**2. There is sufficient information to give ‘intelligent consideration’**

*The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response*

**3. There is adequate time for consideration and response**

*There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation, despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation*

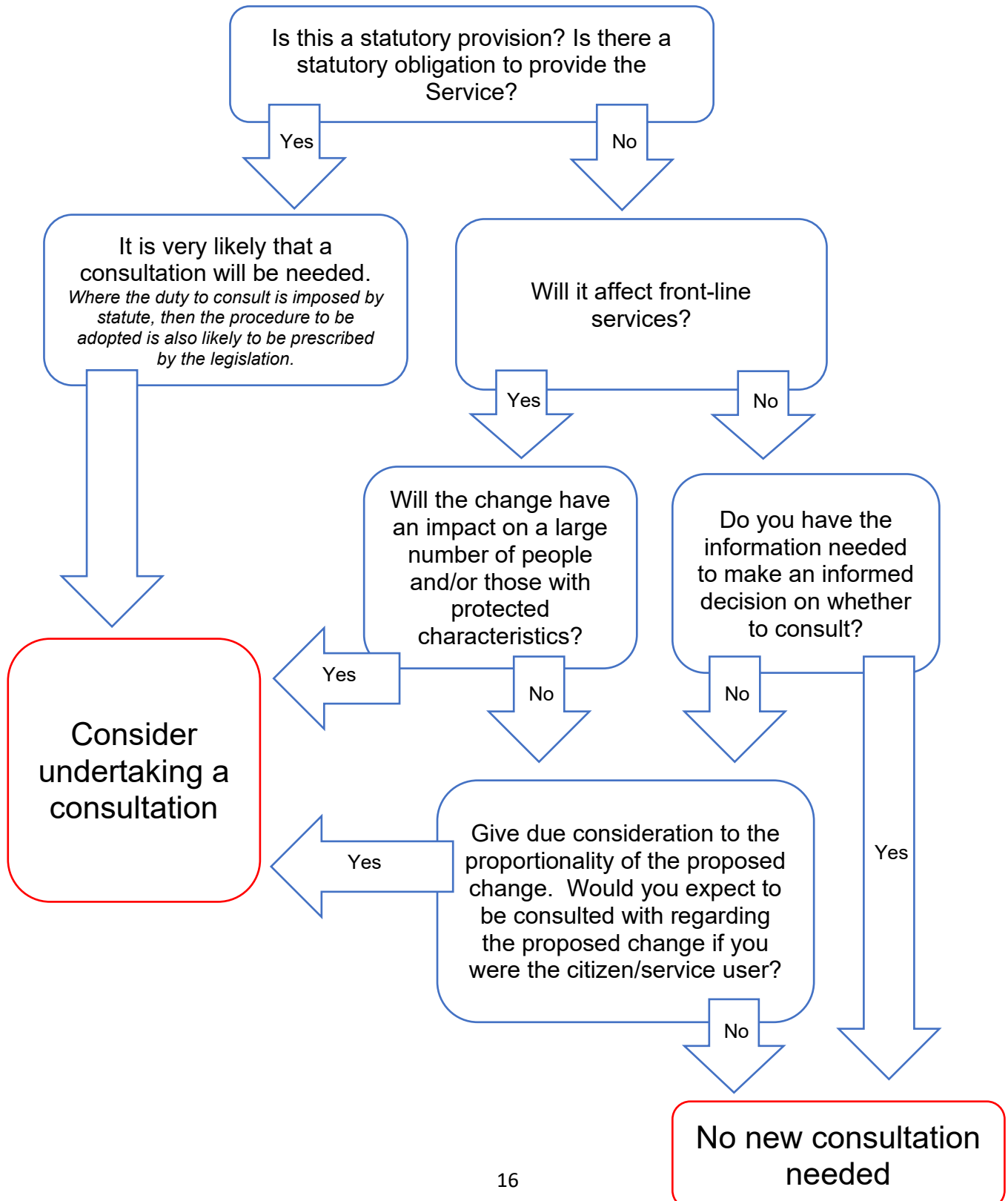
**4. ‘Conscientious consideration’ must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made**

*Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account*

The Gunning Principles underpin our [Engagement and Participation Policy](#).

## Appendix 6. Consultation Decision Making Tool

This decision has been developed as a guide to assist decision making but please be advised that consultation requirements will vary from one context to another and should be assessed on an individual basis. Judgments will need to be made on what level of consultation is proportionate to the specific proposal under consideration.



## Ceredigion Engagement and Participation Policy ‘Talking, Listening and Working Together’

### 6 month progress report: 01/04/2023 – 30/09/2023

#### Aim 1: To mainstream effective engagement and participation across Ceredigion County Council

Action	Progress	RAG status
To develop an Engagement toolkit and deliver training on its use to all Corporate Managers.	The Engagement and Consultation toolkit has been revised, see Appendix 2. Advice has been offered on a one-to-one basis to officers undertaking engagement and consultation campaigns. Group sessions on its use will be offered from December 2023.	Green action is on track
To maintain a timetable of consultation and engagement exercises carried out by all Council Services.	<p>The timetable is held by the Equalities and Inclusion team and is updated on an ongoing basis. 8 campaigns had an end date during the period:</p> <p><u>Consultations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reuse of old library building, New Quay</li> <li>2. Future use of trust monies of charity ‘Old County School, Tregaron</li> <li>3. Respite and Day Care provision, Through Age and Wellbeing programme</li> <li>4. 20mph limits on county roads</li> <li>5. Ceredigion Housing Strategy</li> </ol> <p><u>Engagements</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Views were gathered to inform Ceredigion Strategic Equality Plan</li> <li>2. Ceredigion Stakeholder survey to inform the Council’s corporate self-assessment</li> <li>3. Views were sought about Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans</li> </ol>	Green action is on track
To publish an Engagement Annual Report to monitor the developments as we change how we engage with the public.	The 2022-23 annual report was approved by Cabinet in July 2023. The 2023-24 annual report will be presented in June 2024.	Green action is on track

**Aim 2: To ensure that we engage with the people of Ceredigion in the best way**

Action	Progress	RAG status
To revise and update our list of Stakeholder groups.	The list has been revised and updated. It is included in the revised Engagement toolkit and available to all Council staff.	<b>Green</b> action is on track
To develop the use of online engagement platforms and maintain the use of non-digital engagement methods.	<p>The corporate <a href="#">Engagement and Consultations webpage</a> is updated on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>It has been decided not to progress with the online platform – ‘Have your Say Ceredigion’. Ceredigion ‘My Account’ is being developed and this will be used to develop methods of online engagement with Ceredigion residents.</p> <p>Non-digital methods of engagement are being utilised. The Engagement toolkit will support consistent use across all Council services.</p>	<b>Amber</b> some progress made
To improve the way that we feedback to those who have participated in our engagement exercises.	A consistent feedback method is outlined in the Engagement toolkit. The importance of feedback will be further highlighted in training on use of the toolkit.	<b>Amber</b> some progress made

**Aim 3: To meet our statutory duties and responsibilities under legislation**

Action	Progress	RAG status
To ensure a mechanism is in place so that the public can attend Council meetings in person or remotely via a hybrid meeting system.	The draft protocol for Attendance at Local Authority Multi-location Meetings and Electronic Broadcasts of Meetings was presented to Democratic Services Committee on 09/06/2023 and approved by Council on 26/10/23.	<b>Green</b> complete
To revise and update our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) tool	The revised Integrated Impact Assessment tool was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee and approved by Cabinet. It will be used by officers from 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023.	<b>Green</b> complete
To establish an e-petition system and publish a protocol that sets out how the Council intends to handle and respond to petitions.	<p>The Petitions Protocol is listed under Part 5 (Codes and Protocols) of Ceredigion County Council constitution. The constitution is publicly available on the Council's website - <a href="#">The Council's Constitution - Ceredigion County Council</a>.</p> <p>A report on amendments to the protocol, to include e-petitions, was presented to Democratic Services Committee on 20/09/2023 and is scheduled for full Council meeting in December 2023.</p>	<b>Green</b> action is on track

**Aim 4: To keep up to date with the latest innovations and best practice in the field of engagement**

Action	Progress	RAG status
To review and revise Ceredigion County Council's Engagement and Participation Policy	The current Engagement and Participation Policy was published in October 2022. It will be reviewed in 2025, or before this if required.	<b>Green</b> action is on track
To keep an engagement toolkit up to date for all staff to use.	The engagement toolkit has been revised. It will be kept up to date and be available to all staff after it has been approved and published on the internal staff website.	<b>Green</b> action is on track
To liaise with Engagement and Equalities colleagues across Wales.	<p>The Equalities and Inclusion manager is a member of the Wales Tackling Poverty &amp; Inequality Network and Councils Engagement Leads Network, both run by WLGA.</p> <p>The Equalities and Inclusion team contributes to regional engagement and equality meetings and is currently working with Mid and West Wales Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion managers on a regional consultation exercise to prepare for the revision of our Strategic Equality Plan.</p>	<b>Green</b> action is on track



**Minutes of the Meeting of CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held Hybrid - Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron / remotely via video conference on Thursday, 19 October 2023**

**PRESENT;** Councillor Rhodri Evans (Chair) Councillors Ifan Davies, Endaf Edwards, Elaine Evans, Ceris Jones, Hugh R M Hughes, Ann Bowen Morgan, Caryl Roberts and Carl Worrall

**Also in attendance:** Councillor Catrin M S Davies and Gareth Davies (Cabinet Members); Councillors Amanda Edwards, Elizabeth Evans, Wyn Evans and Gareth Lloyd

**Officers in attendance:**

Mr Duncan Hall, Corporate Lead Officer – Finance & Procurement, Miss Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer – Democratic Services, Mr Alun Williams, Corporate Lead Officer – Policy & Performance, Mrs Diana Davies, Corporate Manager-Partnership & Performance, Ms Marie Neige-Hadfield, Corporate Complaints & Freedom of Information Manager, Ms Cathryn Morgan, Equalities and Inclusion Manager, Mrs Dwynwen Jones, Scrutiny Support Officer and Mrs Dana Jones, Democratic and Standards Officer

(10:00am-12:25pm)

**1 To elect a Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2023.2024 municipal year with immediate effect**

It was RESOLVED that Councillor Elaine Evans be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of 2023/24 municipal year with immediate effect.

**2 Apologies and Personal Matters**

Councillors Euros Davies, Eryl Evans and Paul Hinge apologised for their inability to attend the meeting together with the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bryan Davies.

Councillor Caryl Roberts apologised to all Corporate Lead Officers for her comments at the last meeting, which in her opinion had been misinterpreted. However, Councillor Roberts stated that it was not appropriate to make the comparison and she took responsibility for her actions.

**3 Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations) Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.**

None.

#### **4 Tackling Hardship Strategy Annual Report 2022.2023**

This report sets out the steps taken by Ceredigion Public Services Board (PSB) to provide a coordinated response to the increased risk of hardship in Ceredigion. This was the last report of our stand alone 'Tackling Poverty Strategy'. Going forward, it had been agreed that the PSB Poverty sub-group would ensure that combating poverty was maintained as a cross-cutting issue across all areas of work undertaken to deliver Ceredigion PSB's Local Well-being Plan 2023-28. A workplan was currently being developed to assist the Council with this.

The three key objectives of Ceredigion Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-2023 were:

1. To develop a shared understanding with partner agencies of the evolving impact of COVID-19 on hardship in Ceredigion through the collation and analysis of data.
2. To co-ordinate and consolidate collaborative efforts with partner agencies in order to promote and take advantage of all available help and assistance
3. To identify gaps in support and evolving hardship needs in order to develop early effective intervention that will strengthen individual and community resilience as we adjust to the impact of COVID-19.

Currently, the Council had achieved the objectives of the strategy. The Poverty sub-group has met regularly and discussed a wide range of issues to help us understand the impact of hardship on Ceredigion citizens. The data dashboards that were developed to support this work were widely used by partners and had been recognised across Wales as an example of good practice.

The Tackling Hardship action plan and regular reporting had helped the Council to coordinate their actions. The Cost-of-Living webpage on the Council website and the Cost-of-Living leaflet, which was posted to all Ceredigion postcodes in winter 2022, had helped to promote the available help and assistance. Gaps in support had been identified and, while the Council were unable to address all these gaps, they were able to respond to some, for example the network of 54 Warm Welcome Spaces that offered a warm and friendly place for communities to come together during winter 2022.

There full report for the period March 2022 – April 2023 was presented.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to receive and endorse the Tackling Hardship Annual Report 2022-23.

It was also agreed that an email be sent to the Clerk of the Community Council wards not covered by food banks namely Llandyfriog, Llanddewi Brefi, Tregaron and Ystrad Fflur on the process of setting up these banks in their Ward.

## 5 **Annual Report of Compliments, Complaints and Freedom of Information reports 2022.2023**

The Corporate Lead Officer, Policy and Performance presented the information relating to the Council's Compliments, Complaints and FOI activity between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023. The report itself included specific information on the number and type of compliments received, the different complaints stages, performance and outcomes relating to these and information on compliance with FOI and EIR legislation.

A report detailing the compliments and complaints activity in relation to Social Services was also presented, and information about the Lessons Learned as a consequence of (corporate) complaints was also provided. The main report consists of a section about the contact received from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales ("the Ombudsman") during the reporting period. The Ombudsman's Annual Letter to the Council was also presented and provided further details about all Ombudsman activity for Ceredigion, as well as for other Council's across Wales.

This was the fourth consecutive report where there had been no Ombudsman investigations commenced or formal reports issued in relation to complaints made against the Council. Whilst there were fewer Ombudsman referrals during this reporting year, the Council had a consistently high rate of Early Resolution/Voluntary Settlements. It was therefore acknowledged that challenges remain in relation to the complexity of complaints received, a general increase in activity surrounding complaints, FOI, Ombudsman referrals and referrals to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), as well as the challenges associated with the delivery of the Complaints and FOI Team itself. These challenges had inevitably had an impact on the Council's ability to meet its performance objectives in relation to prescribed timescales.

In brief it was reported, that:

- 465 Compliments were received
- 403 Enquiries were processed by the Complaints & FOI Service
- 144 Complaints were received: Stage 1 = 96 Stage 2 = 48
- 35 'Contacts' received via the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
- 882 FOI & EIR requests processed by the Complaints & FOI Service

In summary, it was reported that:-

- There were significantly more Compliments received during this reporting period. Improving the way that compliments were captured remains a piece of work that the Complaints and FOI Team needs to undertake, but that was being delayed due to capacity constraints.
- The service received a greater number of enquiries – many of which were either allocated back to the service areas to resolve pro-actively, or formal responses were required in order to explain why such matters could not be dealt with under the complaints procedures.

- It was worth noting that the number of complaints received by the Council was the third lowest in Wales.
- A great deal of work was needed to prevent Stage 1 complaints from escalating to Stage 2 unnecessarily on account that it had not been possible to respond within the prescribed timescale of ten-working-days.
- Compliance with timescales under Stage 2 also requires attention, as do the shortcomings in complaints handling that were referred to the Ombudsman. The Complaints and FOI Team continues to face challenges in meeting the demands of rises in the numbers of compliments, complaints, and FOI activity.
- There were fewer Ombudsman referrals than last year, but the number of Early Resolution / Voluntary Settlements was the highest in Wales.
- Complaints about Refuse Collection and Planning matters continue to be the main reasons for complaints; however, these services were predisposed to attracting complaints and these must be taken in context with the level of activity undertaken by these two service areas.
- Compliance with Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) timescales were at the lowest level reported, at 54% and 44% respectively. A great deal of work was being undertaken to improve on this.

Areas to focus on were:-

- Improving adherence with timescales prescribed in complaints and FOI/EIR policies/legislation
- Increase the resilience within the Complaints and FOI Team
- Reinforce the principle that complaints are owned throughout the Council
- Deliver a comprehensive training programme on complaints handling
- Improving system for capturing compliments and data surrounding lessons learned
- Continuing with open, transparent, and citizen-centred approach to resolving concerns

It was AGREED to note the contents of this report in advance of its presentation at the Cabinet meeting on 7th November 2023.

## **6 Update on the Banking Services Contract**

The Chairman reported that a request was received from a member of the public on the 27th of July 2023 requesting that he considered as an agenda item the provision of banking services to the Council in light of concern about the urgent need to address climate change and to take all necessary steps to achieve 'net zero'.

The member of public stated as follows:

We feel that the issue of who the authority banks with, what the effects of this may be, and how the authority might best move forward to ensure that its

monies and investments help to address climate change rather than reinforce it, would benefit from the thorough consideration and investigation that the Scrutiny Committee could provide. In accordance with Members of the public addressing the Committee, Mr Grimsell attended the meeting to address Members on this matter.

The Corporate Lead Officer, Finance and Procurement then presented a report giving an overview of what was in scope within the Banking contract and where the current tender process had got to, including noting that Environmental matters had been given consideration within the scoring criteria.

Following questions from Members, it was agreed to note the report for information.

The Chair thanked Mr Grimsell for attending the meeting to address his concerns.

**7 To consider the Committee's Forward Work Programme**

The Forward Work Plan was agreed as presented.

**8 To confirm minutes of the previous meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes.**

Councillor Caryl Roberts proposed amendments to the draft minutes as follows:

- Delete the reference to **Officers** in paragraph three of the Clic item as Councillor Caryl Roberts was only referring to Corporate Lead Officers “informed following the first meeting after the election by the Chief Executive that Members should not contact any **officers** direct in relation to issues, only the Corporate Lead Officers, Corporate Manager, or himself.
- Delete the reference to Corporate Manager also in paragraph three of the Clic item that “Members should not contact any officers direct in relation to issues, only, the Corporate Lead Officers, **Corporate Manager**, or himself”
- To add a sentence “The Chief Executive stated that someone around this table is lying”

A discussion ensued regarding the addition of the sentence and advice was provided by the Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services. During consideration of proposed amendments of the minutes it was **RESOLVED** to exclude the public and press during consideration of this item on the basis that discussion related to individual(s) and that such information, should not, on balance, be disclosed to the public and press.

It was agreed to exclude the press and public from the meeting in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Access to Information rules.

Following discussion, the meeting returned to a public fora.

Councillor Caryl Roberts withdrew the proposed additional sentence and this was seconded by Councillor Ann Bowen Morgan.

Following a vote, it was AGREED to confirm the minutes of the meeting subject to the following amendments:-

- Delete the reference to **Officers** in paragraph three of the Clic item as Councillor Caryl Roberts was only referring to Corporate Lead Officers “informed following the first meeting after the election by the Chief Executive that Members should not contact any **officers** direct in relation to issues, only the Corporate Lead Officers, Corporate Manager, or himself.
- Delete the reference to Corporate Manager also in paragraph three of the Clic item that “Members should not contact any officers direct in relation to issues, only, the Corporate Lead Officers, **Corporate Manager**, or himself”

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**Confirmed at the Meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7 December 2023**

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

**Report to:** Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 7 December 2023

**Title:** Draft Forward Work Programme 2023/24

**Purpose of the report:** Review the current work programme of the Committee

**Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:**

The forward work programme of the Committee is reviewed and updated at each meeting

### **Background**

Overview and Scrutiny Committees oversee the work of the Council to make sure that it delivers services in the best way and for the benefit of the local community.

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to look at the services and issues that affect people in Ceredigion. The process provides the opportunity for Councillors to examine the various functions of the council, to ask questions on how decisions have been made, to consider whether service improvements can be put in place and to make recommendations to this effect.

Scrutiny plays an essential role in promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the Council's decision making process and the way in which it delivers services.

The main roles of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees:

- Holding the cabinet and officers as decision-makers to account
- Being a 'critical friend', through questioning how decisions have been made to provide a 'check and balance' to decision makers, adding legitimacy to the decision making process
- Undertaking reviews of council services and policy
- Undertaking reviews to develop council services and policies
- Considering any other matter that affects the county
- Ensuring that Ceredigion is performing to the best of its ability and delivering high quality services to its citizens
- Assessing the impact of the Council's policies on local communities and recommending improvement
- Engaging with the public to develop citizen centred policies and services

Effective Overview and Scrutiny can lead to:

- Better decision making

- Improved Service Delivery and Performance
- Robust Policy Development arising from public consultation and input of independent expertise
- Enhanced Democracy, Inclusiveness, Community Leadership and Engagement
- Adds a clear dimension of transparency and accountability to the political workings of the Council
- Provides an opportunity for all Members to develop specialist skills and knowledge that can benefit future policy making and performance monitoring processes
- Creates a culture of evidence based self-challenge

### **Current Situation**

#### **Questions to consider when choosing topics**

- Is there a clear objective for examining this topic?
- Are you likely to achieve a desired outcome?
- What are the likely benefits to the Council and the citizens of Ceredigion?
- Is the issue significant?
- Are there links to the Corporate Strategy
- Is it a key issue to the public?
- Have the issues been raised by external audit?
- Is it a poor performing service?

#### **Choosing topics**

Overview and Scrutiny Committees should consider information from the Corporate Strategy, the Corporate Risk Register, budget savings – proposals and impact, Quarterly Corporate Performance Management panel meetings and departmental input in choosing topics and designing their Forward Work Programmes, as well as any continuing work.

#### **Wellbeing of Future Generations:**

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.**

No

#### **Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:**

**Long term:** N/A  
**Collaboration:** N/A  
**Involvement:** N/A  
**Prevention:** N/A  
**Integration:** N/A

#### **Recommendation(s):**

To review and update the current Forward Work Programme.

**Contact Name:** Dwynwen Jones

**Designation:** Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer

**Date of Report:** 30 November 2023

#### **Acronyms:**

FWP – Forward Work Programme



Committee	Item (description/title)	Invited Speakers	Purpose i.e. monitoring, policy, recommendation
<b>Corporate Resources</b>			
12 June 2023	SMART Towns Digital Connectivity update  Engagement and Participation Plan Annual Report 2022-23	Arwyn Davies  David Owen  Cathryn Morgan	Chair's request  Chair's request
19 July 2023	Menopause Policy  Workforce Plan  Update on Hybrid Working  Update on Clic (requested)  Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	Geraint Edwards  Geraint Edwards  Geraint Edwards/Russell Hughes-Pickering  Joy Lake/Anna Gawthorpe  Duncan Hall	Pre-Cabinet  Pre-Cabinet  Pre-Cabinet
19 October 2023	To Elect a vice-chairman for the remainder of the 2023/2024 municipal year with immediate effect  Tackling Hardship  Compliments, Complaints and Freedom of Information Reports  Update on Banking Services Contract	  Cathryn Morgan  Marie Neige-Hadfield/Alun Williams  Duncan Hall	  Pre-Cabinet  For info  Chair requested following public request

7 December 2023	Engagement and Participation Strategy update monitoring report  Discuss the possibility of establishing a Procurement Task and Finish Group	Cathryn Morgan	Agreed at June's meeting to monitor progress 6 monthly
22 January 2024 SPECIAL	Invite to Openreach and Peter Williams, WG to update Committee on works planned/undertaken in County  Half yearly Compliments, complaints and FOI report broken down into service area  ICT and Digital Strategy	Marie-Niege Hadfield  Alan Morris	
9 February 2024, 1:30pm	Budget Preparation		
Special to be arranged late Feb/early March 2024?	Various HR policies to include:  Stress Management Policy  Work Life/Balance Policy & Revised Annual Leave Policy	Geraint Edwards	Pre-Cabinet
16 May 2024	Council Tax and Welfare Reform update  County Farms Report	Ann Ireland  Arwyn Davies	

<p>Future meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the Corporate Estate Procurement and Commissioning Strategy</li> </ul>		
<p>Task and Finish County Farms</p>	<p>Ongoing Next meeting November 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 Council Chamber – not open to the public</p>		

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