Ceredigion County Council

Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report 2011/12

Introduction

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

The Local Government Act 2000 provided executive arrangements which replaced the old committee system of local government with a system in which a small, clearly identified executive (the Cabinet) is responsible for providing leadership and taking decisions within a framework agreed by the full council; and where new overview and scrutiny committees review the performance of the executive and seek continuous improvement and development.

The structure of Overview and Scrutiny in Ceredigion during 2011/12 was based on the Council's six original departments.

The *Statutory Guidance for County and County Borough Councils in Wales on Executive and Alternative Arrangements* (2006) sets out that Overview and Scrutiny committees are an essential and integral part of executive arrangements. Under section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 they are given wide-ranging powers of review and scrutiny and the ability to make reports and recommendations on any matters relevant to the area and its inhabitants. The guidance sets out the role of councillors exercising overview and scrutiny as being:

- to hold the executive to account for the efficient exercise of executive functions – especially the performance of the executive as measured against the standards, objectives and targets set out in the policies and plans which it is implementing;
- to assist in the improvement and development of the council's policies by evaluating whether they are achieving their stated objectives, whether those policies and the way they are being implemented reflect the needs

and priorities of local communities and by reporting and making recommendations to the executive or the full council;

- to review and make reports on issues which affect the authority's area or its residents; and
- to examine whether the systems the executive has in place to deliver its functions are robust and are being properly observed.

In addition, they are able to review the discharge of non-executive functions and to report on matters of more general local concern. This could link with the authority's power under Part 1 of the Act to promote economic, social and environmental well being, by identifying areas which the executive could address using this power.

The more recent Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 sets out a clear role for an authority's scrutiny function in its improvement processes: as part of its role in holding local decision makers and policy makers to account, and in its policy development role. This should extend to:

- scrutiny of the processes that an authority has gone through in the discharge of the general duty to improve;
- scrutiny of the fitness of the organisation to discharge the general duty to improve;
- scrutiny of the processes that the authority has gone through in the selection of its improvement objectives, including a review of the level of engagement with stakeholders;
- scrutiny of the monitoring of the progress of the delivery of the authority's improvement objectives;
- promoting innovation by challenging the status quo and encourage different ways of thinking and options for delivery.

Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee met on eight occasions during the municipal year 2011/2012.

Standard items that are considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee include an update on developments in the Scrutiny field, and an update by the Chairmen on the work of their Committees.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

The Committee received regular updates on overview and scrutiny matters including updates from the Wales Overview and Scrutiny Officers Network meetings, updates on the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and governance issues.

The proposed 2012-13 budget was presented to the Committee by the Leader, and the Committee considered it as a whole before the individual committees considered the draft budgets for their respective services. The budget for 2012-13 had been produced through involving members at an early stage by holding three budget workshops.

The Committee considered the development of the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes for 2011/12. The role of the Co-ordinating Committee is to oversee the Forward Work Programmes and ensure that they are relevant to corporate priorities and focusing on the key areas, coordinated to avoid duplication, realistic and manageable within the resources available, and that they will add value. The Committee agreed that each committee should consider their individual Forward Work Programmes in accordance with the guidance in the report.

The Co-ordinating Committee led on the reconfiguration of the scrutiny structure within the Authority. This was done in response to the WAO recommendations in order to prioritise bringing added value to the improvement process.

The Chief Executive updated the Committee on the present situation regarding collaboration and shared services. The Committee examined the arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children following the Joint Report of Estyn and CSSIW in respect of their joint investigation into the handling and management of allegations of professional abuse and the arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children in education services in Pembrokeshire County Council. The Assistant Chief Executive addressed the Committee on the Welsh Government Proposals for 'Plan and Partnership Rationalisation'. Development of LSB Scrutiny in Ceredigion was looked into by the Committee by inviting the LSB Scrutiny Co-ordinator from Welsh Government to outline her role to the Committee.

Consideration was given to the Self Assessment Report which had been provided to the Wales Audit Office in respect of progress in addressing the recommendations for improvements contained in the WAO Preliminary Corporate Assessment 2010, the 2010 Annual Improvement Report and the Corporate Assessment Up-date Letter of 2011. There was a detailed discussion on the information provided in the Self-Assessment, including:

- the progress with the transformation and efficiencies agenda,
- the recommendations to review the scrutiny structure,
- the proposed rationalisation of the partnerships and the work of the LSB,
- the agenda for increased integrated and collaborative working,
- the up-coming publication of the draft guidance on the provisions of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

The Health Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy 2011-14, Implementation Plan 2011-12 was considered by the Committee. The Committee gathered evidence on the progress to date from Council officers and representatives of partner organisations, namely the Chief Executive, Director of Social Services, Assistant Director of Environmental Services and Housing, Joint Commissioning Manager, Environmental Health Officer, Health and Wellbeing Strategy Officer, and representatives from Public Health Service, Hywel Dda Health Board and CAVO.

The Committee received an update on Emergency Planning, Overview and Priorities from officers of the Civil Contingencies Unit. It was agreed that the unit would explore working closer with Community Councils and will update the Committee during the next municipal year.

A update on the progress of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and Child Poverty Strategy 2011-14 was provided to the Committee, including reports to monitor the progress on the actions contained in the CYPP.

Crime and Disorder matters

Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 together with the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 came into force on the 1 October 2009.

They require the Council to have in place:

- A 'crime and disorder scrutiny committee' with the role of scrutinising the work of the Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership and its constituent bodies (the Council, Dyfed Powys Police, the Dyfed Powys Police Authority, the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, and the Hywel Dda Health Board which are the responsible authorities) in respect of their community safety functions,

- A procedure for the overview and scrutiny committee and the partnership and its constituent bodies to deal with councillor calls for action (dealing with community safety matters) from Councillors.

The Council's existing Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee undertook the responsibilities for crime and disorder matters.

Crime and Disorder Matters and the work of the Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership

Community Safety Partnerships were originally created by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder. The aim of the Ceredigion Partnership is to 'work with individuals, organisations and communities to build a safe, just and tolerant society for those who live and work in and who visit Ceredigion'. In addition to representatives of the responsible authorities, the Partnership also includes representatives of the Ceredigion Youth Offending Service, the Dyfed-Powys Probation Trust, the Local Public Health Team, Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations, Aberystwyth University, the Substance Misuse Commissioning Coordinator and the Community Safety Manager.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

The Community Safety and Civil Contingencies Manager presented the Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2011-12 to the Committee. This was followed by considering the Ceredigion Community Safety Plan 2011-14.

The Committee received a further update on the progress of Community Safety during the year. This covered the Community Safety Partnership Progress Report, in terms of progress towards Home Office Monitored Crime Reduction Targets;

recent developments in relation to Community Safety Legislation and other related impacts; and the changes arising from the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Member Attendance

Attendance by members of this Scrutiny Committee during the 2011/12 municipal year for their eight meetings is shown in the table below.

Name of Scrutiny Member	**Number of Meetings Attended**
J.D.R. Jones MBE (Chair)	8 / 8
E.E. ap Gwynn (Vice Chair)	5 / 8
I. ap Dewi	8 / 8
I.Ll. Davies	3 / 8
D.W. Edwards	7 / 8
B.T. Evans	7 / 8
D.J. Evans	6 / 8
G.E. Evans	6 / 8
P.B.J. Hinge	7 / 8
A.Ll. Jones	4 / 8
R.G. Lloyd	0 / 8
W.D.L. Lloyd	7 / 8
C. Miles	5 / 8
J.E. Roberts	4 / 8

Economic Development, Tourism and Europe Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Economic Development, Tourism and Europe Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on five occasions during the municipal year 2011/2012.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

The Committee proceeded with their review of County Farms which began during 2010/11. The Chairman of FUW and the County Executive Officer of FUW provided evidence to the Committee at the first meeting of the year. They were of the opinion that the Council should retain the County Farms as they provide young people with an opportunity to start a farming career. The views of the Members of the FUW on the County Farm Estate were collected following this meeting and reported back to the Committee. The review proceeded throughout the year including finalising the recommendations which would be reported to Cabinet during 2012/13.

The Cabinet decision on the Mill Street Car Park Development Proposals was called-in by the Committee. The background to the Cabinet decision was outlined, including the recent history concerning proposals for the redevelopment and regeneration of Aberystwyth with particular reference to the redevelopment of Mill Street Car Park and its adjoining area, the proposals included in the Aberystwyth Masterplan which followed an extensive consultation and engagement exercise, and the subsequent Aberystwyth Regeneration Plan. The procurement process that had been undertaken was explained to the Committee along with reference to the regular reports taken to Cabinet when formal decisions were required. The risks entailed in seeking to question the procurement process at this late stage were explained to the Committee. The Chairman shared evidence with the Committee from a letter she had received from the Aberystwyth Chamber of Trade and Commerce. Following a lengthy debate on the call-in it was unanimously agreed to endorse the Cabinet decision in respect of the Mill Street Car Park development proposals, and to request the Cabinet to consider that any capital receipts from the development be utilised to sustain and enhance the retail provision in Aberystwyth.

The Committee considered the budget being recommended by Cabinet for 2012/13.

The Committee received an update on the number of empty council leasehold properties in Aberystwyth. They received information on the number of current vacant properties which the Council was seeking to lease. It was noted that some of the Council properties were the subject of wider development opportunities or under negotiation.

An update on the Aberystwyth Regeneration Area was provided to the Committee, including information on the following projects:

- Town Improvement Grant,
- Recreational Sports Area,
- Aberystwyth Gateway Project,
- Improved Housing,
- Promenade Improvements.

The Committee were involved with the review of the Civil Registration Service in Ceredigion. Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Chief Executive – Head of Legal Services. The Committee agreed to the recommendations outlined in the report subject to the amendment of point 9 and 11 and recommended accordingly to Cabinet.

There was an update provided on the re-evaluations of the National Domestic Rates following a review carried out by the Committee during 2010/11. Representatives from Aberystwyth Chamber of Commerce, Cardigan Chamber of Commerce, and a business owner in Aberaeron attended the meeting. Members agreed that the revaluation exercise was having an adverse effect on local businesses and the economy in the area and that there was need to progress the matter via the WLGA and raise the matter at Welsh Government and Westminster Government levels. The Committee made a recommendation to Council.

The Committee received an update on the local procurement process having considered it previously during 2010/11, and were kept informed of updates on European funding.

An update on the progress of actions contained in the Ceredigion Tourism Strategy Action Plan 2011-20 was given to the Committee under the following headings:

- Creation of an effective new structure for tourism in the county,
- Encouraging more visitors to Ceredigion,
- Investing in quality product,
- Investing in a skilled tourism workforce.

Member Attendance

Attendance by members of this Scrutiny Committee during the 2011/12 municipal year for their five meetings is shown in the table below.

Name of Scrutiny Member	**Number of Meetings Attended**
G.E. Evans (Chair)	4 / 5
R.G. Lloyd (Vice Chair)	3 / 5
T.J. Adams-Lewis	3 / 5
G. Davies	4 / 5
I.Ll. Davies	3 / 5
J.A. Davies	1 / 5
I. ap Dewi	5 / 5
D.W. Edwards	4 / 5
R. Gorman	2 / 5
S.G. Hopley	4 / 5
J.D.R Jones MBE	2 / 5
O. Llywelyn	1 / 5
D.R. Rees-Evans	5 / 5

Education, Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Education, Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on six occasions during the municipal year 2011/2012.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

The Committee held their first meeting at Llwyn yr Eos School, to receive feedback from the task and finish group on Special Needs Education. Llwyn yr Eos School has a Language Unit, Autistic Unit, Special Medical Needs Unit and Emotional Unit, with 122 of the 215 pupils within the main Special Needs stream. The task and finish group consisted of three members of the Committee and met on four occasions to receive a range of presentations from specialists in the field of Special Education Needs and inclusion. These areas included:

- SEN Strategy;
- Funding model;
- Resource Panel;
- Moderate learning difficulties;
- Specific learning difficulties;
- Visual and hearing impaired;
- Attendance;
- Behaviour support.

The group had identified means of developing SEN within the County which the department had taken into consideration. These included:

- Early intervention was critical;
- Work with pre-schools and improved collaboration with parents was vital;
- The new funding formula for SEN reflected the need to support pupils with FSM;
- Funding formula gave an opportunity for schools to invest in early intervention;
- SEN pupils should be kept within the county;

- The need for centrally employed specialists supporting individual schools especially small schools; and
- In the current economic climate that there was need to continue to maintain funding for SEN Education, in order to reduce the costs to taxpayers in years to come.

Members monitored the development of the Welsh Language provision within the County and Implementing the Language Strategy.

The Committee were kept informed of any updates on the South West and Mid Wales Consortium throughout the year, and received information on BECA Curriculum Group which is a collaboration between Coleg Ceredigion, Cardigan Secondary School and Newcastle Emlyn Secondary School.

The Committee looked at the Lampeter 3-19 Pilot – Evaluation and Impact Assessment and noted the current position.

The Committee monitored the situation following the publication of the joint CSSIW and ESTYN report on Pembrokeshire County Council and were reassured that a report and work plan on the Council's role with regard to safeguarding which was presented at a future meeting, and were informed that School Governors would be required to attend training.

The Committee held a meeting at Cardigan Secondary School to look at implementing literacy and numeracy strategies to raise standards in KS1 – KS4 and the Annual Report on Flying Start. Members were also informed of implementing the Business Improvement Plan.

A meeting was held at Tregaron Secondary School where the Secondary School Funding Formula was examined. The committee supported the proposed changes to the Secondary School Funding Formula which was a result of a review that had been undertaken in the light of concerns expressed over a number of years that the current formula did not result in an equitable distribution of resources. The Committee also received a presentation on developing school leadership on all levels.

The Committee considered aspects of the Home to School/College Transport Policy and its operation in the light of high priority strategies and the conclusions of the Members' Panel appointed to consider the document for making recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee agreed to confirm the conclusions of the Members' Panel and the revised Policy wording for recommending to the Cabinet.

The quarterly business performance reporting was considered throughout the year and feedback was provided to the Cabinet.

There was a call-in of the Cabinet decision ‘Future provision of Dihewyd Primary School’. Following discussion it was agreed to recommend to Council that they consider recommending to Cabinet that the school remains open for two and a half years, until September 2014, to enable the School’s Governing Body to increase pupil numbers to over 20. The Council requested Cabinet to allow the school to remain open until the end of December 2012, and to continue to fund two teaching posts for that period, and if the pupil numbers had increased to 16 by that time, the school to be given a further year to allow for stability prior to review. The decision of the Cabinet was to defer the decision on the future provision of Dihewyd Community Primary School and that a further report on the implications is presented to Cabinet.

The Committee gathered evidence from the Team Leader Education Inclusion Officer, the NEETS Strategic Officer, the Behaviour Support Officer, and the Coordinator for Inclusion and Child Protection whilst looking at the following topics: Improving support to vulnerable individuals and reducing inequality, Improving opportunities to develop individuals and reducing inequality and the Pupil Referral Unit.

The Committee also received the Department’s Self Evaluation Report and agreed that a review on the Foundation Phase compared to the old system of teaching be presented at a future meeting.

Member Attendance

Attendance by members of this Scrutiny Committee during the 2011/12 municipal year for their six meetings is shown in the table below.

Name of Scrutiny Member	**Number of Meetings Attended**
I. ap Dewi (Chair)	6 / 6
D.J Evans (Vice Chair)	6 / 6
E.E. ap Gwynn	6 / 6
I.Ll Davies	2 / 6
J.T.O Davies	5 / 6
R. Davies	5 / 6
D. Edwards	4 / 6
G.E Evans	5 / 6
P.B.J Hinge	4 / 6
C.J Hughes	5 / 6
T.H Lewis	6 / 6
R.G Lloyd	3 / 6
G.I Lloyd	5 / 6
O. Llywelyn	5 / 6
C. Miles	6 / 6
D.R Rees Evans	6 / 6
J.I Williams	5 / 6

Environmental Services and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Environmental Services and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on eight occasions during the municipal year 2011/2012.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

Animal Health and Welfare services were considered by the Committee. The principal officer and a senior animal health inspector attended to outline the priorities, data entry (AMLS and AMES), welfare of animals, illegal activities and investigations of major contraventions. Concerns were expressed by Members that Ceredigion's funding for the Animal Health and Welfare Service had been cut from a budget of £195,113 in 2010/11 to £123,698 for the financial year 2011/12. The Committee agreed that a letter be sent to Welsh Government requesting which services were considered a priority in accordance with the funding allocated to the Council. The response received from the Welsh Government was shared with the Committee and it was highlighted that there was a need to consider alternative ways of delivering services.

The Committee contributed to the development of the Corporate Enforcement Policy and agreed to monitor this area during the next municipal year. The Committee considered the collaborative working to improve planning services between Ceredigion and Powys County Council. This was followed by consideration of the report on the outcome of the Joint Planning Review with Powys.

The Social Housing Grant was considered several times throughout the year. The Committee highlighted that due to the limited grant funding that is currently available from the Welsh Government that it's imperative that the Authority is committed to ensuring that all possible avenues are explored including the bringing of suitable empty properties back into use and that any and all possible funding streams are identified and used as effectively as possible. The delivery programme must be monitored closely so as to enable timely and effective decision making so to make the most of the limited resources available.

Empty homes within the County were considered by the Committee in the context of the current challenge for the Local Authority of how to maintain an adequate supply of housing. The Committee also considered the Housing Renewal Programme.

The quarterly business performance reporting was considered throughout the year and feedback was provided to the Cabinet. The Committee considered the budget being recommended by Cabinet for 2012/13.

The committee considered the transfer of functions from Consumer Direct to Citizens Advice, receiving evidence from the Council officers and a representative from the

Ceredigion Citizens Advice Bureau. The Committee were assured that the service would continue to offer a Welsh language service and that the contact number would remain the same in order to minimise disruption. The Committee endorsed closer partnership working between Ceredigion's trading standards service and local CAB.

The Committee received a presentation from the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Local Access Forum.

The welfare reform officer updated the Committee on the Welfare Reform implications and provided a forward look at future developments.

The Committee received an update on the registration and approval of food premises including food hygiene rating scores.

Member Attendance

Attendance by members of this Scrutiny Committee during the 2011/12 municipal year for their eight meetings is shown in the table below.

Name of Scrutiny Member	**Number of Meetings Attended**
D.W Edwards (Chair)	8 / 8
P.B.J Hinge (Vice Chair)	5 / 8
J.M Cole	4 / 8
A Davies	1 / 8
D.R Davies	7 / 8
Ll.G Edwards MBE	3 / 8
S.G Hopley	7 / 8
A.Ll Jones	3 / 8
T.H Lewis	6 / 8
J. Lumley	8 / 8
J.E Roberts	5 / 8
D. Suter	4 / 8
A. Williams	4 / 8

Finance and Personnel Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Finance and Personnel Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on four occasions during the municipal year 2011/2012.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

The recommendation presented to Cabinet during 2010/11 on encouraging Members to pay their Council Tax by direct debit or from their monthly Members allowance was approved by Council. The Committee received further progress reports on the recovery of Council Tax and non domestic rates throughout the year.

The Committee were kept informed of any updates regarding the Icelandic Banks during the year and further updates were provided on sickness absence within the authority.

The Committee examined the information that was required on the job vacancy templates used by departments. The Committee recommended that the job vacancy template should also note the level of English that was required for the post; and that information on any other languages that applicants could speak should be collated.

The Committee looked at the early voluntary retirement scheme and the effect that it has on the remaining workforce. The committee monitored the reorganisation of the Council's Human Resources Service, and were happy with the progress that was being made. Regular updates were provided on the progress being made relating to job evaluation. Representatives from Eversheds attended to contribute to the updates.

The options for the provision of ICT facilities to Members following the 2012 elections were considered by the Committee, where it was agreed that three Members of the Committee would trial the Ipad before reporting back to the Committee. The feedback from the trial group contributed to the recommendation and final decision of the Cabinet.

The quarterly business performance reporting was considered throughout the year and feedback was provided to the Cabinet. The Committee also considered the budget being recommended by Cabinet for 2012/13.

The Committee considered and contributed to the three year capital programme for the period 2012/13-2014/15 and the medium term financial strategy 2011/12 onwards.

The 2012 draft Information Security Policy was considered by the Committee before being presented to Cabinet and Council. The Committee recommended that a separate 'Do's and Don't' page for Councillors be added.

The Committee considered the Ceredigion Community Grant Scheme. Members commented that the maximum capital grant should be increased as it had not been reviewed since 1995. The Committee made the following recommendation to Cabinet:

(i) the grant for individuals should be increased from £150 to £200 effective from 1 April 2012; and
(ii) the maximum capital grant should be increased from £20,000 to £25,000 effective from 1 April 2012.

The Committee received a report on the source of match funding to build a 3-19 school in Llandysul. The Director of Finance assured Members that the £16m funding required was available and would be derived from Corporate funding, DECS Capital receipts arising from the sale of school buildings and possibly prudential borrowing funded by a specific Grant or Revenue Support Grant, allocated by the Welsh Government.

Member Attendance

Attendance by members of this Scrutiny Committee during the 2011/12 municipal year for their four meetings is shown in the table below.

Name of Scrutiny Member	**Number of Meetings Attended**
B.T Evans (Chair)	4 / 4
C. Miles (Vice Chair)	2 / 4
E.E ap Gwynn	4 / 4
J.M Cole	1 / 4
J.A Davies	0 / 4
G. Davies	2 / 4
D. Edwards	4 / 4
Ll.G Edwards MBE	2 / 4
D.J Evans	4 / 4
J.D.R Jones MBE	4 / 4
R.G Lloyd	3 / 4
D.R Rees-Evans	4 / 4
J.I Williams	2 / 4

Highways Property and Works Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Highways Property and Works Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on six occasions during the municipal year 2011/2012.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee examined winter maintenance with a focus on the role of Community Councils. Following on from this meeting a representative from the Highways Property and Works Department attended the Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss the Community Care aspect of winter maintenance, and a meeting was held with the Town and Community Councils and One Voice Wales to discuss the County Council's Winter Maintenance Services. The Committee gave further consideration to the Winter Maintenance Matrix and made a recommendation to Cabinet that the pre-salting matrix for 2012-13 should include the pre-treatment of the entrances to all schools which are on a gradient where they front a council maintained highway which is not serviced by a pavement or footway.

The Committee considered the response received from the Welsh Assembly Government to the concerns expressed by the Committee in relation to the provision of public transport within the County. A progress report was provided on the Central Wales Infrastructure Collaboration (Shared Services) project with Powys.

An update on the performance of the new refuse collection system was provided to the committee which included a site visit of the facilities at Glanyrafon Depot.

The Committee considered the budget being recommended by Cabinet for 2012/13. The quarterly business performance reporting was considered throughout the year and feedback was provided to the Cabinet.

Ceredigion Harbours Management Plan was presented to the Committee by the Harbourmaster, which included the contents of the policy document, risk assessments, fees and charges, harbour lights, dredging and visiting ships. Following the Committee's visit during 2010/11 at the beginning of the work on the Borth Coastal Protection Scheme the Committee made a progress visit to the site and was provided with an update from the project manager of Bam Nuttall.

The Committee considered building rationalisation including Property Asset Management, including the Carbon Management Programme.

Member Attendance

Attendance by members of this Scrutiny Committee during the 2011/12 municipal year for their six meetings is shown in the table below.

Name of Scrutiny Member	**Number of Meetings Attended**
I.Ll.Davies (Chair)	6 / 6
J.E.Roberts (Vice Chair)	6 / 6
T.J.Adams-Lewis	1 / 6
J.T.O.Davies	4 / 6
Ll.G.Edwards MBE	2 / 6
G.E.Evans	4 / 6
S.G. Hopley	6 / 6
P.James	1 / 6
T.H.Lewis	4 / 6
G.I.Lloyd	6 / 6
W.D.L.Lloyd	5 / 6
J. Lumley	5 / 6
S.H.Richards	4 / 6
A.Williams	3 / 6
J.I.Williams	5 / 6

Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on fourteen occasions during the municipal year 2011/2012.

Key Issues considered in 2011/12

The Committee visited the Extra Care Housing Project at Maes Mwldan, Cardigan which aimed to keep people in the community for longer by providing care within the facility, and the district nurses were able to visit tenants if required.

The Committee carried out a review of Autism within the County. Evidence was gathered from Autism Wales, the Autism Development Officer, an Advisory Special Needs Teacher, and Senior Team Leader from Tybryn Carmarthenshire.

During 2009/10 the Committee conducted a review into Disabled Facilities Grants and received an update report during 2010/11. The Committee continued to monitor the progress during 2011/12 with updates from the Social Services and Environmental Services and Housing Departments. The Committee welcomed improvements in the initial handling of enquiries and undertaking assessment of the needs of individual clients through drawing together teams from the Social Services Department and Hywel Dda Local Health Board. These enhancements had an impact on the referral of cases to the Department of Environmental Services and Housing and the subsequent processing of applications for Disabled Facilities Grants. The Committee had a further meeting on the progress of DFG's once the all Wales figures were made available.

The Committee received a report on Welsh speakers in care homes within the County. A recommendation was made that the department does not refer individuals that require a Welsh speaking service to private sector homes unless there is a sufficient number of Welsh speakers at the home. It was also decided that a progress report on the use of Welsh language in care homes be presented in 12 months. A report on the number and percentage of Welsh Speaking staff within the department was provided at a future meeting.

The Committee considered the contents of the feasibility study on the possible relocation of Bodlondeb Residential Care Home, Penparcau Aberystwyth prior to its consideration by the Cabinet. The Committee visited Bodlondeb and interviewed both residents and staff; and also visited Hafan y Waun to inspect the wing being suggested to relocate the 20 residents from Bodlondeb. The Committee made recommendations to the Cabinet that they did not support the options in the feasibility study and that the Council continues to press the Hywel Dda Health Board and the Methodist Homes Association to agree to utilise the vacant wing at Hafan y Waun to provide EMI nursing care facilities.

A presentation on the West Wales Adult Placement was provided to the Committee. The Committee gathered information from the Manager of the West Wales Adult Placement Scheme, Adult Placement Officer, a carer and a user of the service.

The Committee monitored the departmental recovery plan and congratulated the department on the work undertaken in order to reduce the deficit.

The draft Annual Report by the Director of Social Services was considered by the Committee to which the Chairman suggested that there was need to include the supporting role of the Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the report.

The Committee carried out a review of mental health services within the County. The Committee gathered evidence from the Manager of Mental Health for Ceredigion and the Assistant Director Mental Health, Hywel Dda Health Board; Service Manager Mental Health and Learning Disabilities; Senior Practitioner, Social Services; an officer from the Mental Health Team (nights); Chief Executive and Chairman of MIND; representatives from HAFAL, HUTS, Crossroads, Eich Dewis Chi; a Mental Health Advocacy Provider and the Chairman of Ceredigion Mental Health Forum. The Committee was informed of the many developments over the years to mental health within the County. At a further meeting the Committee gathered evidence from the Principal Housing Officer and the Senior Homelessness and Housing Options Officer.

At the request of the Committee Hywel Dda Health Board carried out a scoping exercise to identify options for EMI nursing provisions within the county. Further updates were provided on this throughout the year.

Age Concern addressed the Committee on the distribution of information to older people and financial advocacy.

The Committee examined the arrangements in place for community care during the inclement weather. The Committee were informed of the services that are provided by the Highways, Property and Works department during the inclement weather in delivering meals on wheels to service users; delivering staff to work; and delivering carers to patients, by contracting 4x4 vehicle drivers.

The quarterly business performance reporting was considered throughout the year and feedback was provided to the Cabinet. They received quarterly updates on the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Independent Reviewing Officer's Reports.

The Committee considered the consultation briefing document for Ceredigion Community Services Development. The Committee was provided with the reasoning for integrating Health and Social Care, the new model of care, the challenges, the management structure, the John Bolton model, together with the benefits in adopting

the proposals. Proposed changes/additions to the document were made by the Committee.

The Cabinet approved the option of transforming Awel Deg Residential Home in Llandysul into a Dementia Care Residential Home in its entirety, subject to receiving approval from the Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee considered the budget being recommended by Cabinet for 2012/13, and examined the overspend by the department for 2011/12.

The Committee contributed to the response to the National Assembly for Wales's Health and Social Care Committee inquiry into residential care for older people.

The Committee considered the CSSIW report on Ceredigion Local Authority Social Services Inspection Evaluation and Review 2010-11, where it was agreed to re-emphasise the need for supply staff within the department.

The Committee gathered information on direct payments from Chief Executive, The Rowan Organisation and the group accountant. They also contributed to the preparation of a response to the draft Welsh Language Framework that was out to consultation. The strategy document 'More than Just Words – A Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Care' was considered along with the draft response prepared by the department.

The Committee visited the Independent Living Centre, Felinfach to look at the provision for the deaf and visually impaired within the County.

Member Attendance

Attendance by members of this Scrutiny Committee during the 2011/12 municipal year for their fourteen meetings is shown in the table below.

Name of Scrutiny Member	**Number of Meetings Attended**
W. D. L. Lloyd (Chair)	14 / 14
C.J Hughes (Vice Chair)	9 / 14
E. E. ap Gwynn	10 / 14
J.M Cole	7 / 14
B.T Evans	10 / 14
G.E Evans	6 / 14
P.B.J Hinge	8 / 14
P. James	4 / 14
A.Ll Jones	13 / 14
J.D.R Jones MBE	12 / 14
T.H Lewis	12 / 14
G.I Lloyd	13 / 14
S.H Richards	6 / 14
J.E Roberts	12 / 14
J.I Williams	13 / 14

Lisa Saycell
Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive Department
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