

Ceredigion County Council

Overview and Scrutiny

Public Engagement Protocol

This is a separate protocol to the guide to contributors

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

Overview and Scrutiny arrangements in Ceredigion

The structure comprises of 5 thematic Overview and Scrutiny Committees, namely:

Committee	Scope
Co-ordinating Committee	Transformation of services, collaboration, partnership working. Ceredigion Local Service Board, Single Integrated Plan, Safeguarding, communication, equalities and crime
Corporate Resources	Corporate Services (to include human resources, customer services, ICT, treasury management and legal services), Inclusion/Equal Opportunities, Civil Contingencies, Business Continuity, Estates Management and Civil Registration.
Healthier Communities	Social Services, Integrated Care Services, Housing services, Leisure and Recreation Facilities, Environmental Health, Public Protection and Licencing.
Learning Communities	Lifelong Learning, Children and Young People, Schools, Training, Youth Services and Cultural Services.
Thriving Communities	Economic Development, Regeneration, Tourism, Marketing, Stronger

	Communities, European Grant Aid, Business Support, Capital Programme, Transport and Highways Infrastructure, Town and Country Planning and Sustainability, Coast and Countryside and Waste and other Municipal Services
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Scrutiny Committees are politically balanced to reflect as far as possible the political composition of the Council.

To view the dates of this meeting please visit the council diary:

[Ceredigion County Council Monthly meetings calendar - November 2023](#)

The minutes and agendas of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are also available at the following link:

[Ceredigion County Council Committee structure](#)

Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are open to the public and are hybrid - Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron / remotely via video conference and usually start at 10am, however they are sometimes held at other locations depending on the topic of scrutiny. If the committee needs to discuss confidential information regarding an item on the agenda, the press and members of the public will be asked to leave the room during the discussion.

Making a request for Scrutiny

In order to encourage those who live and work in the County to become more involved in the Scrutiny process in Ceredigion, we encourage members of the public to suggest issues for Scrutiny. If you wish to put forward a suggestion for a topic to be scrutinised, please contact us and you will receive a response from the Overview and Scrutiny Officer.

Please contact us on:

Email: scrutiny@ceredigion.gov.uk

Post: Overview and Scrutiny
Democratic Services
Ceredigion County Council
Canolfan Rheidol
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3UE

Telephone: 34878# : 3 ; ; 4

Or visit Ceredigion County Council's Website at the following link

[Overview and Scrutiny Committees - Ceredigion County Council](#)

and complete the **Suggestion for topics form by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee** located at the bottom of the page.

The Legislation

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 created a range of new powers and duties for local authorities to strengthen local democracy and increase public awareness of, and involvement in, the local democratic process.

Section 62, places a requirement on local authorities to make arrangements that enable all persons who live or work in the area to bring to the attention of the relevant overview and scrutiny committees their views on any matter under consideration by the committee.

Section 62 also provides that an overview and scrutiny committee must take into account any views brought to its attention in accordance with arrangements under this section.

HOW TO MAKE A REQUEST TO SPEAK AT THE COMMITTEE?

The Forward Work Programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees can be found on the following link:

[Ceredigion County Council Browse forward plans](#)

As this is a live document please contact the Scrutiny team to ensure the item will be presented on the noted date.

If you would like to present your views on a upcoming item on the Overview and Scrutiny agenda you must submit a written request to speak to the Scrutiny team as soon as possible and no later than midday two working days before the Committee. A written request can be made by post or by e-mail to the address above.

You should include in your request, your name and contact details, including a daytime telephone number, and e-mail if available, and details of the agenda item you wish to contribute to.

You should then explain the nature of your interest and the contribution which you think you could make. The Scrutiny Officer will then discuss the approach with the committee's chair and/or vice-chair explaining the nature of the contribution. If the Chair is of the opinion that a member of the public in such circumstances could make a valid contribution to the committee's understanding of the issue, s/he will give their consent.

Members of the public can also make a written contribution if they are unable to attend in person. At the Chair's discretion, such contributions can be circulated to members of the committee at the start of the meeting. The written contribution must be a

maximum of one side of A4 paper and received by the Scrutiny Officer 2 working days prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Presenting Information

The information must be relevant to the business of the Overview Scrutiny Committee to which it is put.

To allow each member of the public wishing to participate at the meeting to speak, an allocated time limit of 5 minutes per speaker will be given. The total allocated time for members of the public at each overview and scrutiny committee will be 30 minutes per meeting. If there are more speakers than the allocated time allows for, members of the public will be required to nominate a speaker for the cause or split the time between them.

The Chairman of the Committee will have the absolute discretion to rule in such matters.

The role of the Scrutiny Committees is to utilise people's expertise and experiences so that they can gain a better understanding of issues affecting the Council and the people of Ceredigion.

You must present yourself to the Scrutiny Officer 15 minutes before the start of the meeting who will answer any questions you may have and show you where to sit.

When invited by the Chairman of the Committee, you may speak once, for up to five minutes, and the importance of adhering to the time limit is emphasised. You will not be allowed to circulate any written material or photographs unless these have been included with the written request to the Scrutiny Officer 2 working days prior to the commencement of the meeting. After speaking, you must allow the Committee to discuss the matter, and you should not join in this discussion. The Chairman may ask a question/questions if further explanation of the points raised will be required.

What to expect

Meetings are normally hybrid - Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron / remotely via video conference.

There is always a formal agenda which is available at the following link:

[Ceredigion County Council Committee structure](#)

Members of the Committee will sit around a table with contributors giving evidence and members of the public providing information from a separate table or remotely via

video conference. Microphones are provided so that everyone can hear one another. The meetings are carried out interchangeably between Welsh and English with a simultaneous translation service provided.

There is seating provided for the public, press or other personnel attending.

On arrival introduce yourself to one of the Scrutiny staff who will answer any questions you may have and show you where to sit.

After the Meeting

The person providing information will receive a letter or e-mail advising them of the outcome of the investigation. They will also be given the opportunity to provide written feedback on the scrutiny process they have been involved in.

Conduct at a Scrutiny Committee

Members of the public must not abuse the privilege of participation by personal attacks on Elected Members, other participants or members of the public. Speakers will be required to respond politely to any question from the Chairman and Elected Members of the Committee.

Any speaker who makes a statement, which, in the opinion of the Chairman, is defamatory, abusive, racially motivated or discriminatory, will be required to stop speaking and leave the meeting. The Committee will be advised to disregard such comments.

Where a number of speakers share the same viewpoint, a spokesperson may be required.

The Chairman will have complete discretion on how public participation is conducted.

If the above principles are not adhered to, the Chairman may close that part of the meeting.

Please contact us on:

Email: scrutiny@ceredigion.gov.uk

Post: Overview and Scrutiny
Democratic Services
Ceredigion County Council
Penmorfa
Aberaeron
Ceredigion
SA46 0PA

Telephone: 01545 574 177 / 01545 572 044