

Scrutiny Chairman's Annual Report – 2023-2024

It's been a busy year for the Scrutiny Committee, with ten full meetings and one special meeting all with hybrid accessibility, and briefings. We started the year by welcoming a new Scrutiny Committee following the May elections. We continued the previous Committee's way of working, that of 'critical friend' giving robust clear guidance to Cabinet, Council, officers and external bodies / organisations. Both pre- and post-decision making. I stated from the outset that openness and transparency would be the watchwords of this committee and am proud to report that we have not had any reports presented in part II.

An early informal meeting developed and added to the works program, with a keen emphasis towards 'adding to and ongoing'. Of the varying work that Scrutiny Committee undertook we actively encouraged public participation – a key facet of local government activity. As usual, the committee deliberated and debated a wide range of topics, reaching decisions and democratically resolving to advise the various bodies engaged.

We established working groups to look at and report back on two specific issues:

- 3 Rivers Developments Ltd
- Does local government work for women (Inclusion and Diversity) – motion 564

Topics of note were:

- Decisions of Cabinet, Council, Officers and external organisations
- Six monthly Establishment updates
- Six monthly Corporate performance reports
- Planning enforcement
- Community Safety Partnership Report
- Six monthly whistleblowing updates.
- Annual report of complaints and compliments
- Annual Report under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
- Motion 583 – protecting rivers and seas
- Scrutiny agenda process
- Budget (Medium Term Financial Plan) update

We have commenced a process of scrutinising the portfolios of the Cabinet members to get a better understanding of their responsibilities and oversights.

Finally, it has been a privilege and pleasure to chair the Scrutiny Committee and I am indebted to officers and members for their tireless hard work, thus making our meetings well informed. A large thank you to everyone.

Cllr Rachel Gilmour (Clare & Shuttern)
Chairman – Scrutiny Committee