

WAO Peer Review Action Plan

	Area for consideration	Proposed Actions	Lead	Timescale	Actions Carried Out
1.	Citizen Engagement – restricted space for public attendance	Review the approach and consider additional capacity requirements according to need.	Robert Robins	Achieved	Tables to be moved from public gallery and extra chairs put in as required(as per the suggestion made at the Constitution Committee)
2.	Continue to raise the profile of scrutiny and 'awareness raising'	. In view of the forthcoming 'Public Engagement' workshop organized by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), the timescale has been adjusted.	Robert Robins	End April 2014	Work in progress.
3.	Reports to Cabinet to include a section to ensure scrutiny accurately reflected	Cabinet to consider suggestion of including an additional section within Cabinet report template – best practice example Wrexham.	Gareth Owens/ Peter Evans	End of 2013/14 Municipal year	Work in progress.
4.	More challenge and more effective questioning needed in O&S meetings What value was added by scrutiny?	O & S Member training needs analysis – taking into account specific skills required for effective scrutiny – e.g. questioning skills / Different chairing skills / encourage apolitical environment etc. (avoid groups sitting together etc) Why poor attendance? Need for certain aspects to be compulsory? (Audit/planning). Training not well attended	Peter Evans	On-going	Julia Wright delivered three training sessions: 14.00-17.00, 18.00 -21.00 31 st October 9.30-12.30 1 st November (Subject of a separate report to the Constitution Ctte)

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5.	Certain aspects of training to be made compulsory	This was the subject of a report to the Democratic Services Committee in July, where it was agreed that O&S training should not be compulsory but that group leaders would be asked to encourage their members to attend	Robert Robins	On-going	Detailed in proposed actions.
6.	Inconsistency between scrutiny committees in terms of pre-meetings	The issue of variation is accepted but there has to be some flexibility that allows judgment to be used based on the different needs of O & S Committees. Pre-meetings for both chairs and for whole committees are recognised as being good practice.	Robert Robins	On-going	Whether a chair wants a briefing or not depends on the content of the agenda. A 'mixed economy' approach is likely to prevail. The officers advocate holding of briefings as good practice.
7.	Value of an executive summary or briefing note for lengthy reports/documents	To be considered	Gareth Owens	End of 2013/ 2014 Municipal year	Work in progress.
8.	More detailed and 'active' recommendations for and resolutions from O&S cttes	'Active' rather than 'passive' recommendations to be included within reports where possible. Committee Chairs and their advisors to ensure that committee resolutions are 'active'	Report Authors/ Ctte takers	Achieved	Since October, this has been reflected in business practice.
9.	Members of public not allowed to routinely speak at scrutiny	Covered by the 'Four protocols' and to be an element of the Public Engagement Strategy	O&S Team	On-going	Work in progress. NB: at recent meetings of the Housing and Environment Overview &

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					Scrutiny Committees, the respective Chairs have used their discretion to allow members of the public who were attending to contribute at the meeting.
10.	Consider the impact of the limited resource available and impact on activity e.g. expert witnesses, training, etc	The use of 'expert witnesses' within O&S has always been very limited, but should not be discounted as their use could be fundamental to Members' understanding of issues in particular cases. Within 2013/14 there has been budget available for training. For the future, the O&S officer team can deliver training.	O&S Team	On-going	Training was carried out in October/November but was poorly attended which reduces the cost effectiveness of sourcing external trainers.
11.	Engage local members more formally on issues affecting their communities (as the voice of local people)	Chair/Vice Chairs to consider (Denbighshire example)	O&S Team	End of April 2014	Work in progress: this will be informed by the CfPS Workshop on Public Engagement and will fall within the remit of the proposed steering group (see item 12, below)
12.	Consultation on development issues with Chairs and vice-chairs	Previous versions of this action plan have referred to Chairs and Vice-chairs. This also arose during the O&S training. It is proposed to establish regular meetings between the O&S Chairs and Vice chairs and the O&S Team to discuss issues of common interest in the continued development of O&S. This is a practice which FCC had in the past (the former Co-	O&S Team	Immediate, if the Constitution Committee Supports the proposal.	

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		<p>ordinating Body) and is still used to great benefit in other North Wales authorities.</p> <p>It is intended that such a body would 'own ' this action plan and that it would continue as a 'live document', reporting to the Constitution Committee as necessary.</p> <p>The Co-ordinating Group would also lead on the self-evaluation proposals which were agreed at the October meeting</p>			