



SCRUTINY
ANNUAL REPORT

2013/14



Copies of this report may be obtained from the Democratic Services & Scrutiny Secretariat at County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4QD or by ringing 01392 382300. It is also available on the Democracy Centre pages on the County Council's website at:

http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/decision_making/Scrutiny/Scrutiny-annual-reports.htm

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Councillor Julian Brazil

Chairman, Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Andrew Moulding

Chairman, Place Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Sara Randall Johnson

Chairman, People's Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Richard Westlake

Chairman, Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Foreword

Following the County Council elections in May 2013, the first year of the new Council saw the beginning of what are set to be another challenging four years in local government. The Council, having already saved £100 million over the last four years, has to save a further £110 million by 2017 due to cuts in Government funding. This means that it will inevitably see further major changes to the way in which services are delivered in the future.

The elections returned a Conservative majority with a high turnover and 19 new Members. Three out of the four chairmanships of Scrutiny Committees changed after the elections and there was a further change mid-year for the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee. Notwithstanding that, the central objective remained, of working together across the political spectrum and organisational boundaries in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for the people of Devon. As the newest of the new Chairmen I am pleased that the Council decided to maintain the basic structure of four Scrutiny Committees which demonstrates its continued commitment to a strong and independent Scrutiny function.

Nonetheless, it has been another productive year for Scrutiny. The newly elected Members quickly found their feet during this first year of the new Council but the team of dedicated Scrutiny officers was temporarily reduced from three to two for most of the year due to maternity leave. Committees have maintained their strong tradition of Task Group work and Spotlight Reviews investigating new topics or following up previous ones to review progress and improvements.

The co-ordinating role of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees remains important in order to use the resources available to Scrutiny to best effect. The group met regularly to coordinate Scrutiny Committees' activities and to consider matters of strategic policy or performance. It also met with the Leader of the Council on two occasions to again ensure optimum resources were made available to Scrutiny and to avoid any potential difficulties or conflicts.

It is now, more than ever, vitally important to only review topics which will add value to the Council's and/or partner organisations' policy and performance, as resources are evermore precious. In areas such as public engagement or stakeholder involvement, Scrutiny is a valuable resource which can help inform future service commissioning and/or provision and it can complement and help inform any service reviews.

I strongly believe that Scrutiny in Devon has made – and continues to make – a real and effective contribution to the work of the Council and that it has made a difference – which is of course what Scrutiny is all about.

As the Chairman of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee, albeit for only part of the year, I am delighted to present the 2013/14 annual report on behalf of my fellow Chairmen and Scrutiny Committee members and commend it to the Council.

Councillor Julian Brazil

Chairman, Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Corporate Services Scrutiny

Councillors Brazil (Chairman), Ball, Barisic, Berry, Boyd, Colthorpe, Edmunds, Julian, Knight, McInnes (until March 2014), Owen, Radford, Rowe, Westlake and Younger-Ross

Place Scrutiny

Councillors Moulding (Chairman), Ball, Bowden, Clarence, Dempster, Eastman, Edgell, Foggin, Hawkins, Hill, Hook, McInnes (until March 2014), Radford, Vint and Way

People's Scrutiny

Councillors Randall Johnson (Chairman), Barisic, Biederman, Channon, Connett, Dewhirst, Gribble, Hannaford, Hannan, Hone, Mathews, Prowse, Rowe, Sanders and Squires

Additional Members for Educational Issues:

Mrs C Mabin (Church of England), Mr J Mannix (Roman Catholic Church)

Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny

Councillors Westlake (Chairman), Boyd, Brook, Chugg, Clarence, Colthorpe, Dezart, Diviani, Foggin, Gilbert, Greenslade, Sellis, Wragg, Wright and Yabsley

Representing District Councils:

Councillor Christophers

Role of Scrutiny

Scrutiny provides an opportunity to those Councillors who do not sit on the Cabinet or who have no formal role within the administration to provide and undertake a depth of analysis which is not always possible by the Cabinet, given the wide range of topics for which it is responsible.

Scrutiny Committees can maintain an effective Scrutiny function through:

- bringing in and championing the views of people and communities;
- helping improve Council policies and services so they meet people's needs better, looking at the issues from the residents' point of view;
- contributing to the review and development of Council policies, to make sure that they do what was intended;
- making sure the Council is open about the way decisions are made;
- making sure the Council measures its own performance and regularly reports in public on how well it is keeping its promises;
- holding the Cabinet and those officers responsible for developing policy and delivering services to account;
- looking beyond the Council at issues and organisations which affect the people's quality of life; and
- helping better joining up of public and other services.

Scrutiny is not just about a Cabinet Member or Officers turning up to present a glowing report of progress, or to answer random questions. It is a series of information-gathering exercises which enable members to ask the right questions, to drill down into the detail of how a service is being delivered, and, frequently, to suggest improvements which otherwise would be unlikely to see the light of day.

Terms of reference

The **Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee** is tasked with

- reviewing the implementation of the Council's existing policy and budget framework;
- considering the scope for new policies for the Council's use and management of resources;
- reviewing the Council's corporate and strategic services, governance arrangements and community safety activity;
- the Scrutiny of authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies;
- reviewing the draft budgets of all Directorates/Services prior to the budget meetings of the Cabinet and the Council;
- ensuring the effective Scrutiny of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and policies.

The **Place Scrutiny Committee** reviews the implementation of existing policies and considers the scope for new policies relating to the Council's functions concerning the environment, economic activity and enterprise, integrated planning, transport and community services, including community safety and emergency planning, libraries, arts and cultural heritage of the County.

The **People's Scrutiny Committee** looks at the implementation of existing policies and considers the scope for new policies relating to the Council's functions concerning the provision of personal services for children and adults including social care, safeguarding and special needs services, schools and learning.

The **Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee** reviews the implementation of existing policies and considers the scope for new policies relating to the Council's functions concerning the health and wellbeing of the people of Devon, including the activities of the Health & Wellbeing Board and the development of commissioning strategies and strategic needs assessments. The Committee also scrutinises any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in Devon, including making reports direct to the Secretary of State for Health, in accordance with the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.

Background

Given the particular circumstances of an election year, activity in the first few months of 2013/14 was inevitably less busy than usual but overall it was still a productive year. The newly elected Members quickly embraced the process and Scrutiny Committees have completed three Task Group and three Spotlight Reviews, with many more underway. Two of the Scrutiny Committees were chaired by members from the Conservative Group, one from the Liberal Democrat Group and one from the Labour Group. Vice-Chairmen were appointed according to the same ratio.

The Scrutiny Induction training for new and returning County Councillors, which was provided in May 2013, was repeated in December 2013 for the Devon Shared Member Development Service – attended by District Councils and Plymouth and Torbay Councils and enabling your Scrutiny Team to share the Council's good practice with other authorities.

As part of that process – and for the first time – a DVD was produced promoting Scrutiny and explaining how it works and what it can achieve. This has proved very popular both locally and nationally, as indicated below.

The Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee was chosen as one of only five Councils in the Country to receive expert advisor support to review the Health Check service commissioned by Public Health whilst also evaluating the return on investment of Scrutiny activity.

Support for Scrutiny

Scrutiny Committees are supported by three dedicated officers within the Democratic Services & Scrutiny Secretariat as shown below. The Council's statutory designated Head of Scrutiny is Rob Hooper, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager/Deputy County Monitoring Officer. The individual Scrutiny Officers and the Committees supported during the year are:

Scrutiny Committee	Scrutiny Officer
Corporate Services	Camilla de Bernhardt
Health & Wellbeing	
Place	Janine Gassmann
People's	Dan Looker

The Team provides research, advice, report writing and other support for Scrutiny Committees and in particular for their Task Groups. Approximately two-thirds of County Councillors serve on Scrutiny Committees.

The dedicated Team of Scrutiny Officers returned to full strength in January 2014 following an Officer's return from maternity leave for most of the year. This eased the pressure on resources even though Scrutiny Officers are not confined to supporting reviews set up by the Committee they primarily support. Other staff within the Secretariat may also provide

support where appropriate. However, Scrutiny operates in a climate where both direct and indirect officer support for the function continues to face pressure as the capacity to support in-depth reviews has reduced across the organisation and this situation is not likely to improve in the medium term.

Social Media

The Democratic Services & Scrutiny Secretariat continues to use its Twitter presence (@DevonDemocracy) which is used to publicise forthcoming meetings as well as highlights in the business calendar, e.g. the publication of a Scrutiny Task Group Review. The integration of all social media strands in the new Democracy Centre (<http://new.devon.gov.uk/democracy/>) also gives a higher profile to the work of Scrutiny. The Democracy Centre integrates all the information and social media strands relating to the local decision-making process with the aim to improve accessibility and transparency for the end user.

As previously mentioned, the Scrutiny Officers also produced a short, four-minute film introducing Scrutiny work for the induction of new Members in 2013. To date the film has attracted nearly 1000 views on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihcDLs-Yikk.

Ways of Working

The Council continues to value Scrutiny and remains committed to maintaining an effective and independent Scrutiny support function which should not be marginalised and or subsumed into the Council's general policy formulation activity. We welcome the Leader's continued commitment to Cabinet Members working closely and cooperatively with Scrutiny and his desire that Scrutiny should play a full role in reviewing the effectiveness of the budget and service prioritisation.

Spotlight Reviews have proved to be a welcome alternative to traditional Task Group work, adding to Scrutiny's armoury. They include smaller, targeted, more flexible and quicker reviews of research activity and engaging with witnesses as a source of information about local service performance.

In order to further deploy future resources to their best effect, the potential for more individual working by Members could be explored, as well as the improved initial assessments of topics regarding their need for review or to first establish if there is a problem.

Review of 2013/14

Developments during the year

Following the elections in May 2013, the Council maintained the basic structure of four Scrutiny Committees demonstrating its continued firm commitment to the Scrutiny function.

Each Scrutiny Committee held a number of "Master Classes/Learning & Development sessions" during the year on the same day as a formal Committee meeting to provide an opportunity for Members to have a more in depth look at a particular service outside the confines of a formal meeting. This approach was universally welcomed and appreciated by new and more experienced members alike and will be utilised more in the future on a regular basis.

The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees also developed and agreed a protocol for information sharing and collaborative working which was agreed with HealthWatch.

Performance Management

Performance management continues to be an important area for Scrutiny Committees to be involved in against the background of and reflecting the Strategic Plan for 2011-15 entitled *Backing Devon*. Training sessions on the use of the County Council's SPAR.net service performance and risk recording system were offered as part of the induction programme following the elections and throughout the year, e.g. at the People's Scrutiny Committee on 3 April 2014.

Scrutiny Officers have also been working with performance colleagues to track Task Group recommendations on SPAR.net to improve the performance management of Scrutiny activity. This work is due to be piloted during the coming year.

Budget Scrutiny

The 2014/15 budget was again scrutinised both by individual committees and a subsequent joint all-day session of all Scrutiny Committees on 30 January 2014.

We believe that budget Scrutiny should not simply be limited to the formal budget setting exercise each year in January and February. It is very much also about reviewing what is done with approved budgets during the year and challenging the costs of service delivery to assess

- to what extent spending was within agreed budgets and if not why not;
- whether services deliver value for money;

- the extent to which alternative forms of service delivery may have been considered which could result in budget savings or redistribution;
- comparisons with other local authorities and service providers.

Scrutiny Committees again received an in-year briefing during the autumn Scrutiny committee cycle covering the delivery of the 2013/14 budget and the impact on service delivery in order to inform the overall budget Scrutiny process in January 2014. These briefings were helpful in confirming or otherwise if the organisation and individual services had met the Council's strategic objectives and targets in line with agreed budgets in that financial year.

Scrutiny, among other consultees (including businesses, trade unions, the voluntary sector and residents) helped shape the 2014/15 budget proposals. Following the joint budget day on 30 January 2014, many of the suggestions made by Scrutiny Committees were reflected in the final budget proposals submitted to the Council.

Outcomes

Generally speaking, Scrutiny Committees were largely supportive of the proposed 2014/15 budget as Members recognised the financial pressures which the Council faced. Some continuing concerns remained, however, particularly in relation to safeguarding, the Youth Service and early years and schools funding. The Place Scrutiny Committee raised concerns over the backlog of highway maintenance, highlighting the need to focus on preventive work to keep the network safe and to support the economic growth of the county. It also highlighted the proportionally high level of budgetary reductions in this service area as compared to other Place services. As a result, for instance, an additional £500,000 was allocated to the Highways & Traffic Management budget to improve the efficacy and resilience of highway drainage.

Task Groups

The majority of Scrutiny activity is undertaken by Task Groups. It is therefore only right that the opportunity is taken in this report to record our thanks to all those who served on such groups over the course of this year and to those who chaired them, for their hard work and dedication. We would also like to thank all the expert contributors who participated in the process, for the detailed evidence they gave to the process, for their time and effort and continued commitment to helping to shape reviews and recommendations for improvement.

Copies of all Task Group reports undertaken and finalised in 2013/14 are available on the Council's website, alongside those of previous years, at:

<http://new.devon.gov.uk/democracy/committee-meetings/Scrutiny-committees/Scrutiny-task-group-investigations/>

As an indication of the value of and contribution made by Scrutiny Committees the vast majority of those Task Groups recommendations were accepted by the Cabinet which in turn shows the value Cabinet places on the Scrutiny function.

Corporate Services Scrutiny

The Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee met six times during 2013/14, including the joint budget day on 30 January. It conducted two Task Group reviews.

The Committee's impact during the year

The Committee considered the impact of the significant changes to welfare reform in a series of investigations, started in the previous year through consideration of the changes to community and voluntary groups, developed with the significant work undertaken on the [Unintended Consequences of Welfare Reform Task Group](#), followed by an examination of the financial support for organisations in the [Support Services Framework Spotlight Review](#) and culminating in a single-item agenda meeting of the Committee speaking to organisations supporting the most vulnerable people in Devon.

Recommendations included challenging service commissioners to work better together as well as raising the profile of the potential financial implications that the legislative changes could have on local government finance. That work also identified the most appropriate ways to help vulnerable people against the fundamental, ideological shift in service provision.

The Committee agreed to look at concerns expressed around isolated and vulnerable groups and a Task Group examining [Community Resilience](#) in Devon was established. It commenced its work at the end of the year and will report in due course.

The Committee – recognising significant public concerns – also established a Task Group looking at the privatisation of the [Search and Rescue Service](#) and potential consequences which is again underway and will report in 2014/15.

Place Scrutiny

The Place Scrutiny Committee has been less busy during the year due also, in part, to staffing constraints. It met seven times during 2013/14, including the joint budget day on 30 January but conducted only one Task Group review on the quality of road reinstatements in the public highway by utility companies.

The Committee's impact during the year

The [Utilities Task Group](#) had previously published a report in March 2012 recommending various measures to improve the quality of road repairs by utility companies which have to comply with a certain quality standard. Previously, compliance figures averaged 69 percent. They had risen to an average of 78 percent in 2012/13 and risen again to a commendable 89.5 percent during the first and second quarters in 2013, with one utility company being 100 percent compliant during one quarter in 2013. The measures the Task Group originally recommended, including the training and improved supervision of the work force, had led to significant improvements.

People's Scrutiny

The People's Scrutiny Committee met eight times during 2013/14, including the joint budget day on 30 January. It initiated Task Group reviews into Safeguarding Children, Children's Centres and Educational Outcomes.

The Committee's impact during the year

In April 2013, the County Council received an inadequate judgement from Ofsted following an unannounced inspection on the overall effectiveness of the arrangements to protect children in Devon. Following Ofsted's findings, the [Safeguarding Children Task Group](#) started examining Devon's arrangements and monitored the County Council's implementation of the Ofsted Action Plan. While the main People's Scrutiny Committee has remained typically busy, covering its huge remit of children and adult services, much of the capacity for in-depth review has been subsumed, and quite rightly so, in this Task Group. A considerable number of meetings and site visits have and continue to be held as Members discharge their duty in helping to ensure Devon's children are kept safe. The Task Group published its interim report in September 2013. Verbal reports have been presented at each Committee meeting on the Group's continued progress, and a further written report is due to be published in June 2014.

The [Children's Centres Task Group](#) was set up in September 2013 to evaluate the County Council's statutory responsibilities and its role and function in relation to children's centres. The Task Group published its final report on 3 April 2014. Members agreed that children's centres had an important role to play in helping to safeguard the County's children by identifying and working with the most vulnerable. There was however a need to ensure greater equity of services, so that children and families are protected right across Devon.

The [Educational Outcomes Task Group](#) was due to start in April 2014 to review school performance, particularly in relation to the most vulnerable, and will report in due course.

Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny

The Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee met six times during 2013/14, including the joint budget day on 30 January. It undertook reviews on maternity services in Northern Devon and contributed to the Centre for Public Scrutiny's publication "Checking the Nation's Health" looking at the value of Council Scrutiny with a Task Group on health checks.

The Committee's impact during the year

The [Health Check Task Group](#) was established as part of the national project undertaken at the invitation of CfPS around the national guidance to be issued on scrutinising the Health Check process. Devon was chosen as one of only five local authorities in the country to participate in the Centre for Public Scrutiny's work. The Task Group benefitted from five days of expert advisor time to review the local programme roll-out as well as ascertain the

return on investment of the project. One of the outcomes of the work was to further cement the relationship between Scrutiny and public health:

The work undertaken by Scrutiny on NHS Health Checks has been very timely and has raised the profile and understanding of the programme. The process allowed independent engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and providers to determine next steps in rolling out the programme. The intelligence work and feedback from the focused sessions will be used to inform the model of delivery to increase take up.

Tina Henry
Consultant in Public Health and NHS Health Check Lead
Devon County Council

The national report recognises and acknowledges the good work being done in Devon and is now available on:

www.cfps.org.uk/domains/cfps.org.uk/local/media/downloads/CfPS_Nations_Health_final_online.pdf with the Council's contribution recognised also in the national local government press (MJ, March 2014 edition).

The [North Devon Maternity Task Group](#) concluded with further actions rather than recommendations in recognition of the transitory nature of the service. The review took place before decisions had been taken on the development of the future service. These included suggestions from Scrutiny on performance indicators, criteria for home visits for new mothers and concern over significant budget reductions.

The Committee also initiated an individual Member investigation into mortuary services in Honiton and continued its involvement in the Transforming Community Services programme led by the NEW Devon Clinical Commissioning Group.

Call-In of Cabinet and Cabinet Members' Decisions

It is widely acknowledged that, in order to be effective, call-ins must be used only in exceptional circumstances, sparingly and appropriately. In the year in question there were only three instances as summarised below and while these may not have resulted in any significant changes to decisions they reinforce the independence and value of Scrutiny in applying an 'external' view on decisions.

People's Scrutiny: Revocation of Cranbrook Primary School Permission

The People's Scrutiny Committee "called-in" the decision of the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Skills on the proposed revocation of the permission for the Cranbrook Primary School. The call-in had been initiated on the grounds that it was not clear if the establishment of the school in question remained a viable option and/or if there was sufficient flexibility within the current proposal to modify the implementation date rather than starting the process anew under different legislation, which would require the Council to first seek proposals to establish a new Academy/Free School.

Following detailed consideration of all the issues and clarification of the statutory position the Scrutiny Committee was ultimately satisfied with the Cabinet Member's decision.

People's Scrutiny: Children's Homes

The People's Services Scrutiny Committee also examined the decision of the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Skills on Children's Homes and the proposed cessation of services at the Birchen Lane, Tiverton and at Blossom Corner and Rifford Road Homes in Exeter, on the grounds that the decision was not in the interest of Devon's looked after children and in breach of the Council's duties as corporate parents. Following lengthy and detailed consideration of the issues, the Scrutiny Committee rejected the decision of the Cabinet Member and asked the Cabinet to reconsider, taking account of advice given at a meeting of the Safeguarding Children Task Group and recognising that the case for closing Blossom Corner was overwhelmingly rejected by those who responded to the consultation exercise.

Notwithstanding the views of the Committee, the Cabinet subsequently decided that no new or additional evidence or specific proposals had been submitted which would warrant the Cabinet Member's decision being revoked or amended.

Corporate Service Scrutiny: Accommodation Strategy for Adults

The Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee called-in the Cabinet's decision relating to the Accommodation Strategy for Adults relating in particular to the process for subsequent decision making process; being concerned that this would result in the principles of decision making set out at Article 13 in the Constitution not being fairly and transparently applied and that ideally such decisions should be made by full Cabinet.

No change was ultimately sought to the Cabinet's decision relating to the specific service review.

2014/15 and Beyond

When adding an item to their work programmes, Scrutiny Committees now more than ever have to ascertain the likely value to be gained from any review and balance that against the time and resources involved in undertaking the activity – to make a judgement as to whether the likely outcomes can make a difference and what areas would benefit most from Scrutiny input. The work Scrutiny undertakes should add value to the democratic process and should have positive influences on the Council's and partner organisations' policy and performance.

Scrutiny is most effective when focusing on a limited number of in-depth topics, to help prioritise it may be useful to ask if the item is:

- of particular concern to residents;
- an area where performance could be improved;
- a corporate priority;
- an area where legislation is being developed or has recently been published;
- an area which could represent better value for money;
- identified as strategic risk; or
- potential for policy development.

A range of approaches can be used, including the use of Learning and Development/Briefing Sessions to provide an opportunity to update and inform members on specific topics or strategic issues relevant to the work of Scrutiny Committees and/or the operation of the Council ; holding special meetings, one-off exercises and workshops, individual members being assigned specific responsibilities, site visits, Task and Spotlight Group investigations, case studies, post-Scrutiny process reviews and mystery shopping etc.

In addition to specific areas identified in the Scrutiny Work Programme or continuing Task Groups the main strategic challenges for 2014/15 and beyond will be:

- constructively scrutinising the impact of the further £110 million savings which the Council has to achieve by 2017;
- recognising those difficult financial times ahead and challenging, in particular, the outcome of forthcoming service reviews;
- understanding and scrutinising the implications the further financial and resource reductions will have on the Council's Strategic Plan (due to be refreshed and its future organisational and democratic structures);
- understanding the changes to the commissioning and procurement of services and their future monitoring;
- assessing any impact on service delivery and the impact of the third sector and other partners; and
- exploring the potential for shared services or joint working/arrangements in delivering services and in promoting the opportunity open to Members who currently serve on both the County Council and a District Council to pursue that objective;
- improving the Scrutiny of finance and partnership issues – arguably two of the most critical areas for the future in local government; the Centre for Public

Scrutiny has previously attested that Scrutiny experiences the most difficulty in effectively carrying out work in these areas;

- consolidating the future role and relationship of Scrutiny with
 - o all levels of health provision, including Health & Wellbeing Boards, HealthWatch, NHS commissioning organisations and providers, especially clinical commissioning groups (notwithstanding the failure of Government to produce the new 'Guidance to Health Scrutiny Regulations' promised under the Health & Social Care Act 2012!);
 - o Police & Crime Panels;
 - o other community safety activity commissioners and providers.

The Council's Scrutiny Committees recognise – as does the County Council itself – the importance of an 'independent' effective Scrutiny process which can both provide an authoritative means of calling the Cabinet to account and contributing to the development and delivery of services by the Council and others – for the benefit of the people of Devon.

Scrutiny is not just for Members; it is also an officer function. It is staff who work with Members to scope investigations and clarify what is possible in a reasonable timeframe, who need to demonstrate the diplomacy required to get the right people in front of Scrutiny Committees at the right time, who liaise with officers who may have little or no experience of Scrutiny, and, above all, who write effective, penetrating and tactful reports and recommendations.

Without the support of the Council's officers across the board, Scrutiny could not work and it is therefore fitting that this report concludes by paying tribute to all those involved and in particular the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Secretariat and the dedicated Scrutiny Officers without whose efforts Scrutiny in Devon would not operate as effectively as it does.

This Annual Report provides a valuable snapshot of the work of the Council's Scrutiny Committee's in 2013/14, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Scrutiny process in which the Council and the public at large can be proud.