



SCRUTINY NEWSLETTER



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What's the Scrutiny Project all about?

What is scrutiny? What an organisation does to examine and monitor all or part of its activity with the aim of improving the quality of public services.

Why are we doing it? Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has made huge improvements on organising its internal controls to ensure they meet the requirements of the auditors. Putting effective mechanisms in place to monitor these improvements is the logical next step. Pembrokeshire Coast National Park saw the value of the work Brecon Beacons National Park Authority proposed and opted to join us in a bid to the WAG Scrutiny Development Fund – we were jointly successful and received £20,000, we will be matchfunding the grant with staff time. Snowdonia National Park Authority is taking a keen interest in the project.

Who is involved?

Members and officers from both Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority are involved and committed to the project, with help and guidance from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

Lead Officers

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority: Julia Gruffydd
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority: Janet Evans

Who benefits?

By ensuring that the way we do our business is efficient and effective, and that we meet all the legal, financial and regulatory requirements for local authorities, we are better placed to deliver high quality services to the public.

The scrutiny processes which evolve from the project will include ways in which the public can better engage with us and comment on service delivery if they identify problems. This will be completely separate to the complaints procedure!

The **Brecon Beacons Scrutiny Working Group**, consisting of **Cllr Krishn Pathak**, **Mrs Margaret Underwood** and **Cllr William Powell** will be meeting regularly to oversee progress on the project.

Lead Members for Pembrokeshire are Cllr Simon Hancock, Cllr Michael Williams, Cllr Peter Morgan and Mr Ted Sangster.

What's occurin' ?

A Scrutiny Admin Officer, Lora Davies, has been appointed, funded by the project, and is currently establishing contacts and setting up visits to local authority Scrutiny Committees (*details below*).

An Associate of CfPS, Frances Taylor has been selected and appointed to carry out the member/officer development sessions (*details below*).

Frances has excellent skills and experience, predominantly in the public sector. As Head of Scrutiny for Cumbria CC she was responsible for developing and delivering an effective Overview and Scrutiny function for the Authority. Frances has also recently worked with Isle of Anglesey County Council.

She has also lectured in Local Government Studies specialising in the Overview and Scrutiny function.

Development Days

Three training sessions have been arranged with Frances Taylor as follows:

7th March	Brecon Beacons National Park Offices
9th May	Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Offices
25th July	BBNP Offices

There will be some work for all of us to do between sessions!

It is hoped that Members and officers will make every effort to attend but following each session, training documents will be made accessible on the BBNP Members' Portal for those unable to be present.

Visits to Local Authorities:

To date, four Scrutiny Committee dates have been circulated for Members to visit, these are:

8th Feb – Malvern Hills DC (6:30pm Priory Lodge Hall, Avenue Rd, Malvern)
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21st Feb - Bridgend County Council (2:30pm Committee Rooms 2/3, Civic Offices)
Community Safety and Governance Scrutiny

15th Mar - Malvern Hills DC (6:30pm Priory Lodge Hall, Avenue Rd, Malvern)
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2nd March - Cardiff County Council (4:30pm Venue TBC)
Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee

Further information will be sent to those members who have signed up for these visits, and more visits will be arranged shortly.

We have put together a feedback form for completion following these visits, this can be found on the BBNP Members' Portal or alternatively contact Lora Davies for a hard copy.

Resources/Further Information

A useful website is the Centre for Public Scrutiny www.cfps.org.uk (a national scrutiny body).

Another good reference is at www.wlga.gov.uk/english/overview-scrutiny/

Also, there is now on the BBNP Members' Portal a Scrutiny Forum where we will be putting all documents, and where members can initiate discussion on any aspects of the project.

For further information please contact:

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