

Organisational response

Report title: Review of Scrutiny Arrangements – Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Completion date: [date]

| Ref | Recommendation | Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations | Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete | Responsible officer (title) |
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| R1 | <p>Current model and role of scrutiny</p> <p>The Council should review its current model for scrutiny to ensure scrutiny can fulfil its broader range of roles and responsibilities. Any revised model should ensure there are opportunities for scrutiny to engage in its wider roles, including for example, in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy development - Performance monitoring - Holding cabinet members to account throughout the decision-making process - Following up outcomes of previous recommendations or decisions | <p>Audit Wales presented their report and recommendations to Cabinet Members, and to all Members via an All Member Seminar.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Forum will create a research and review Task and Finish Group to take forward the recommendations of the Audit Wales report.</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group will consider the recommendations and conduct their own research into other service models of scrutiny across Wales.</p> <p>This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visits to other Local Authorities to examine their scrutiny models, - interviews with Scrutiny and Cabinet Members, -probing the approach to policy development, performance scrutiny and post scrutiny. -attending committee meetings, -viewing footage of virtual meeting - desk research of Forward Work Programmes and Scrutiny agendas. <p>The feedback from this research will allow the Chairs and Vice Chairs to establish a proposal for any changes to the scrutiny</p> | May 2024 | <p>Craig Griffiths (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)</p> <p>Stacy Curran (Democratic Services Manager)</p> |

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| | | <p>model in Neath Port Talbot. These proposals will be put to Council for their ratification in March 2024, in order that any changes to constitutional or administrative arrangements can be put in place in the Councils' AGM in May 2024.</p> | | |
| R2 | <p>Public engagement</p> <p>The Council's scrutiny model should be more citizen focused by strengthening its arrangements for public involvement and engagement in scrutiny. This should include ensuring greater transparency and timeliness about which items will be on the scrutiny committee agendas; and using existing engagement and consultation work to inform its scrutiny work including consideration of scrutiny topics, as part of its scrutiny reviews, in holding cabinet members and decisions to account, and in its performance monitoring roles.</p> | <p>The Council's Public Participation Strategy 2023-2027 sets out how we will encourage and support people to participate in decision making.</p> <p>Once any changes to the scrutiny model have been approved, specific actions to target public participation in the democratic processes and in particular the scrutiny model will be developed.</p> <p>Ongoing work to improve the Council's Democracy Web pages will continue to ensure accuracy and transparency throughout.</p> | May 2024 | <p>Craig Griffiths (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)</p> <p>Stacy Curran (Democratic Services Manager)</p> |

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| <p>R3</p> | <p>Planning and work programme</p> <p>To enable the scrutiny model to be more citizen focused, the Council should review its arrangements for the way in which scrutiny is planned to ensure scrutiny can independently plan and strategically prioritise its own work programme.</p> | <p>Once any changes to the scrutiny model have been approved, specific actions to target planning and work programming will be developed. Currently, the scrutiny model dictates a very specific tie of the scrutiny forward work programme to that of the Cabinet Board. It is envisaged more focussed alignment with Corporate Plan priorities will be developed in line with a new scrutiny planning model.</p> | <p>May 2024</p> | <p>Craig Griffiths (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)</p> <p>Stacy Curran (Democratic Services Manager)</p> |
| <p>R4</p> | <p>Support</p> <p>The Council should review the type of scrutiny support it requires across all areas of the organisation including service areas, to enable scrutiny to perform its wider role and ensure that any resourcing implications arising from any changes to the scrutiny model are understood and planned for.</p> | <p>Once any changes to the scrutiny model have been approved, a review of the scrutiny support services will be undertaken to ensure an appropriate resource in in place.</p> <p>Further organisational resource changes will be considered should the new model so require.</p> <p>Work has already commenced within the IT department to allow for more direct assistance with elected members and audio visual equipment and this will be enhanced.</p> | <p>May 2024</p> | <p>Craig Griffiths (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)</p> <p>Stacy Curran (Democratic Services Manager)</p> |

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| R5 | Evaluation The Council should strengthen its arrangements for assessing the effectiveness and impact of scrutiny. | Once any changes to the scrutiny model have been approved, a review of the arrangements for assessing the effectiveness and impact of scrutiny will be undertaken to ensure evaluation opportunities are maximised. | May 2024 | Craig Griffiths (Head of Legal and Democratic Services) Stacy Curran (Democratic Services Manager) |
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