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**RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE INQUIRY REPORT ENTITLED 'PUBLIC  
ENGAGEMENT WITH SCRUTINY'**

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**Reason for the Report**

1. To present the response to the Committee's Task and Finish Inquiry report entitled 'Public Engagement with Scrutiny'.

**Background**

2. The Committee undertook a task and finish inquiry to consider public engagement with Scrutiny in the light of the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 and the accompanying guidance, as part of its 2012/13 work programme. The report made recommendations to the Scrutiny Services Team, the Cabinet and the Constitution Committee. As such it was presented to the Cabinet in June 2013 and the Constitution Committee in January 2014.
3. The terms of reference for the inquiry were:  
"To enable Public Engagement through the different functions and processes of Scrutiny to identify:
  - the requirements of Public Engagement under statutory requirements such as the Local Government Measure 2011
  - best practice across the UK
  - what can be adopted and adapted in Cardiff and how it can be resourced."
4. The task and finish group heard evidence from a wide range of witnesses.

### **Internal Witnesses:**

- Councillor Ralph Cook – Former Deputy Leader of Cardiff Council and former Scrutiny Chair
- Councillor Bill Kelloway – Former Scrutiny Chair
- Mike Davies – Former Head of Service, Scrutiny, Performance and Improvement
- Paul Keeping – Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services
- Nichola Poole – Former Operational Manager, Democratic Services
- Catherine Smith – Former Operational Manager, Communication and Media Department
- Steve Jarman – Former Operational Manager, Customer and Business Knowledge.

### **External Witnesses**

- Virginia Hawkins – Head of Assembly Committees, National Assembly for Wales
- Kevin Davies - South Wales Outreach & Liaison Manager, National Assembly for Wales
- Tim Buckle – Former Performance & Improvement Advisor, Welsh Local Government Association
- Dr Rachel Ashworth – Reader in Public Services Management, Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University
- Peter Law – Former Municipal Reporter, South Wales Echo
- Ed Hammond – Research and Information Manager, Centre for Public Scrutiny.

### **Response to the Report**

5. Attached at **Appendix A**, Members will find a briefing report setting out a combined response to the report's recommendations. This report itself has a number of appendices, as set out in the briefing report. Three of the four recommendations commended to Cabinet were accepted, and one was partially accepted. Constitution Committee considered the two recommendations

commended to them, accepted one in principle subject to further consultation, and requested a further report on the other. Scrutiny Services are seeking to implement all the recommended improvements made directly to them.

### **Scope of the Scrutiny**

6. This item will give Committee Members the opportunity to consider the response and how appropriate they feel that it is.

### **Way Forward**

7. Councillor Dan De'Ath, Cabinet Member for Safety, Engagement and Democracy, Marie Rosenthal, County Clerk and Monitoring Officer, and Paul Keeping, Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services, have been invited to present the response and answer Members' questions.

### **Legal Implications**

8. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

9. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. Consider the response to its Inquiry set out at **Appendix A**, and
- II. Decide whether it would like to make any comments to the Cabinet or Constitution Committee.

**MARIE ROSENTHAL**

County Clerk & Monitoring Officer  
24 September 2014

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH SCRUTINY**  
**A BRIEFING REPORT FROM THE COUNTY CLERK AND**  
**MONITORING OFFICER**  
**SEPTEMBER 2014**

**REASON FOR THE REPORT**

1. To set out for Members' information:
  - a. the formal response to the Committee's April 2013 Inquiry Report entitled Public Engagement with Scrutiny, attached at **Appendix 1**;
  - b. how the recommendations have been implemented;
  - c. factors that have constrained full implementation of the recommendations;
  - d. Cardiff's current practices for public engagement with scrutiny;
  - e. suggested priorities for further improving public engagement with scrutiny.
2. To seek Members' feedback and advice on the above.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The consistent and effective engagement of citizens in democracy is recognised as a key challenge for local authorities across the UK. This was illustrated in Cardiff when Scrutiny Services undertook a "Scrutiny Listening Exercise" in March 2012, interviewing a range of elected Members, senior managers and key external stakeholders to identify perceptions of the current strengths and development opportunities for Scrutiny in Cardiff. Two of the three key findings of this Exercise revolved around improving communication with internal (Cardiff Council) stakeholders, and increasing the level of engagement with external stakeholders on scrutiny issues.

4. The Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011<sup>1</sup> places a range of duties on Welsh local authorities to improve connection between citizens and local democracy. Chapter Five of Welsh Government's June 2012 Statutory Guidance on the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011/12<sup>2</sup> extensively covers Raising Public Awareness About Scrutiny; Scrutiny Websites; Publication of Scrutiny Work Programmes; Public Engagement and Call-in; citizen requests for items and questions to be raised at scrutiny; co-option onto committees or other scrutiny activities; and Engaging with the Voluntary Sector.

## **CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF ITS TWO RECOMMENDATIONS**

5. This Committee's *Public Engagement With Scrutiny* report was presented to Constitution Committee on 22 January 2014 with a cover report seeking permission to change the Constitution in the two areas recommended by Committee – to enable public questioning at scrutiny committee meetings in line with best practice across the UK, and to potentially enable further co-option of members of the public onto Scrutiny Committees. The Constitution Committee agreed to:
  - a. Support in principle the two recommendations of the PRAP report relating to public questions at committee meetings and co-option of independent persons onto committee and task groups, subject to officers satisfactorily carrying out the research and due diligence set out in those two paragraphs;
  - b. Invite officers to return to a future Committee meeting with the results of the research and due diligence, so that Committee can consider making specific amendments to the Council's Constitution to enable pilots to be carried out in one or both of the areas in question;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/contents/enacted> 2

<sup>2</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/publications/localgov/120625statguideen.pdf> 2

6. The Constitution Committee considered this matter again at its meeting on 17 September 2014. Scrutiny Services had commissioned two desk based research reports into public engagement – one concerning public questions at scrutiny meetings, and the other concerning Cabinet Question Time at Scrutiny meetings. These documents are attached for Members' information at **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 3** respectively. Also attached at **Appendix 4** is a document previously appended to Committee's April 2013 *Public Engagement With Scrutiny* Inquiry report – a desk based review of local authorities demonstrating best practice in public engagement with scrutiny.
7. The results of the review of public questions set out in **Appendix 2** show that there is a very wide spectrum of formal and informal arrangements in place across the UK to enable the public to speak at scrutiny meetings. In Cardiff the Constitution enables the Committee chair to permit the public to speak on his/her delegated authority, but there are no criteria currently in place to govern the length, nature or frequency of questions, or of the framework to govern issues that might arise. It is recommended that Scrutiny Services draft such a checklist, consult on the draft checklist with Scrutiny Chairs and then take an agreed checklist back to Constitution Committee along with a draft protocol to introduce as a pilot later in this Municipal Year.
8. The results of the review of Cabinet Question Time at Scrutiny Meetings set out in **Appendix 3** show that the majority of authorities conduct their Cabinet scrutiny in a very similar way to the way Cardiff Scrutiny Services does currently. There are, however, a small number of authorities which used an alternative technique, generally referred to as Cabinet Question Time. This practice involved Cabinet Members attending a scrutiny committee on a timely cycle to report and answer questions on the whole of their portfolio. Given that Cabinet Members may have useful suggestions and ideas on this matter, and that the five scrutiny committee chairs are meeting Cabinet colleagues at a meeting to be scheduled in October, it is recommended that authority be delegated to that meeting to agree whether this idea could or should be advanced in Cardiff at this time.

9. Constitution Committee at its meeting on 17 September 2014 asked the County Clerk and Monitoring Officer to:
- a. Consult Members of Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee and the five scrutiny committee chairs to agree to introduce public question time at Cardiff Scrutiny Committees and develop a protocol to guide this;
  - b. Authorise the County Clerk and Monitoring officer to draft a suitable amendment to the Constitution for Council to approve in due course;
10. Scrutiny Services submitted a bid to the Welsh Government's Scrutiny Development Fund in March 2014 to support research into the topic of co-option of non-elected Members onto scrutiny committees. The research proposals sought to pilot two separate trial reference panels, as suggested good practice in Participation Cymru's *Principles of Public Participation*. One trial would revolve around a "professional" reference panel, comprising individuals from organisations with expertise in a particular field (eg education, social care, environment etc), and a "citizen" reference panel comprising individuals willing to provide lay feedback on scrutiny activity, based on their life experience. Welsh Government declined to support this bid, and the Scrutiny Team did not have capacity to carry out the research without external funding
11. Constitution Committee at its meeting on 17 September 2014 requested a further Report on this matter in due course.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

12. The remaining 10 recommendations from PRAP's April 2013 report were commended to Scrutiny Services for implementation as soon as could be achieved. Progress has been made on implementing some of these recommendations, as indicated below:



- a. **(Recommendation 2)** The Scrutiny Team's Administration Assistant was allocated responsibility in the spring of 2014 for arranging publication of the monthly Forward Plan and a monthly programme of scrutiny tweets;
- b. **(Recommendation 3)** Scrutiny has facilitated public involvement through a significant range of mechanisms, bullet pointed in paragraphs 13 and 14 below;
- c. **(Recommendation 9)** The introduction of the Modern.Gov system has been actively planned for the past six months, and is likely to be introduced at the end of the 2015 Calendar Year. This will facilitate the most effective presentation of scrutiny information that can currently be resourced;
- d. **(Recommendation 10)** The introduction of webcasting of scrutiny committee meetings is being actively considered, and may be introduced in the 2015/16 Municipal Year;
- e. **(Recommendation 12)** Principal Scrutiny Officers research a wide range of issues and areas of public interest in facilitating presentation of Work Programme options to Members as part of the annual scrutiny work programming process;
- f. **(Recommendation 15)** Committees have introduced more regular "Correspondence" items onto their agendas during the past 18 months to enable letters to and from the Committee Chair to be placed in the public record. Scrutiny Inquiry reports are also placed on the Council's website;
- g. **(Recommendation 16)** Lessons learned from the more significant pieces of public engagement that have been undertaken (eg Listening Days and Call-ins) have been discussed in fora such as the Scrutiny Chairs' Liaison Forum and Constitution Committee.

13. More significantly, however, Cardiff's Scrutiny Committees have achieved a wide range of successes that are easy to overlook, but which represent the fruits of huge investment and outstanding commitment during the period since April 2013. A few brief examples of this include:

- a. Children and Young People Committee's engagement of young people in 2013/14 was recognised as one of just three projects in the UK to have been shortlisted in the "Involvement, Insight and Impact" category of the Centre for Public Scrutiny's 2014 "Good Scrutiny" awards.
- b. CASSC's *Understanding the Needs of Carers* Inquiry saw in-depth interviews with over 100 carers, many of whom could be characterised by the epithet "vulnerable";
- c. Environment Committee secured over 3000 responses to its "Litter in Cardiff" survey in 2013, and Economy and Culture Committee secured a similar number for its "Cardiff Market and Arcades Survey";
- d. The Cardiff Partnership Board Scrutiny Panel was chaired by the director of a third sector organisation, had two other third sector co-optees and four public sector co-optees as well as five elected Members on it during 2012 – 14;
- e. During 2013 CASSC held a short scrutiny which saw 16 separate ethnic minority community leaders provide evidence in public on the experiences of their communities' access to adult social care services;
- f. CYP has held three intensive "Listening Days" with Looked after Children and Key Stage Two school children to identify information, successes and concerns;
- g. Economy and Culture Committee in May 2013 held a Listening Morning with local small city centre business to inform its inquiry, and subsequently engaged in depth with over 100 Central Market Traders and Arcade store owners via survey and interviews;
- h. Numerous task and finish inquiry meetings, such as those held on the *Bedroom Tax* and *Human Trafficking* engaged specialist third sector agencies to provide in-depth evidence;
- i. Third sector organisations and individual citizens directly presented evidence in public to Budget Scrutiny meetings in February 2014;
- j. Welsh language advocates, Access Focus Group members and County Nursery parents have provided evidence in public to Scrutiny call in meetings during this period.

14. Further improvements have been achieved at a more organisational level, such as:

- the publication of a monthly “Scrutiny Forward Plan” detailing the range of scrutiny activities and meetings taking place for the month ahead, which since April 2013 has been mailed each month to a range of voluntary, community and professional groups.
- Scrutiny introduced tweeting of Scrutiny Committee meetings in May 2013;
- Cardiff Scrutiny Services have during the past year been developing what is hoped will be a mutually productive relationship with the Cardiff Third Sector Council, and as an example Cardiff was the only welsh local authority who had a manager from the County Voluntary Services Council present at the Centre for Public Scrutiny’s April 2014 seminar on public engagement;
- The Council’s 2014/15 Scrutiny Forward Plans will be promoted significantly more widely and previous forward plans with the active support of the Cardiff Third Sector Council;
- Significant effort has been invested in introducing the Modern.Gov platform which will facilitate commissioned for introduction 2015.

## **SUGGESTED PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD**

15. Cardiff Scrutiny Committees are currently engaging the public in their work to a certain degree, but this could be seen to be undertaken in a piecemeal and organic manner, rather than in a systematic and developmental one. The remaining paragraphs of this report suggest an approach for moving forward in a sustainable manner on the assumption that existing officer and Member resources will not grow or reduce. It builds this proposed framework around four principles:

- a. Any public engagement with scrutiny and wider democracy in Cardiff should sit within the principles of the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategies – a point made in PRAP's April 2013 report;
- b. Any such engagement should sit within Participation Cymru's *Principles of Public Engagement*. The principles were considered by the PRAP task and finish inquiry in 2012/13, and are listed for Members' information at **Appendix 5**;
- c. The success of any such engagement should be able to be compared with that undertaken by other local authorities in Wales. It is recommended that the emerging suite of indicators being commended as part of the National Scrutiny Officer's Network's *Characteristics of Effective Scrutiny* described in paragraph 18 below and appended at **Appendix 6** are adopted as a framework for this;
- d. The process of engagement is multi-faceted, as described in paragraph 16 below as Arnstein's *Ladder of Engagement*. Cardiff's could use Arnstein's Ladder as a tool to analyse whether it was investing its limited scrutiny resources most effectively in progressing the various facets of engagement it was undertaking;

### ***Arnstein's Ladder Of Engagement***

16. Sherry Arnstein's 1969 six step "ladder of participation" theory<sup>3</sup> demonstrates the interaction of power structures in society, and has been used since then as a guide to assess who has power when important decisions are being made. Participation Cymru commended the use of this theory to Welsh scrutiny practitioners at a Centre for Public Scrutiny seminar in April 2014 to facilitate their understanding and planning of public engagement with scrutiny. The six steps of the ladder are:

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<sup>3</sup> <http://lithgow-schmidt.dk/sherry-arnstein/ladder-of-citizen-participation.html>

1. Information
2. Education
3. Consultation
4. Involvement
5. Partnership
6. Devolved Power.

17. At the meeting, officers will seek to use this structure to engage Members in discussion about the level to which they wish to engage the public in scrutiny in Cardiff, and to give context to help explain the way that citizens are currently engaged in scrutiny.

### ***The Welsh Characteristics of Effective Scrutiny***

18. In response to the Wales Audit Office's 2013 *Improving Scrutiny* study, scrutiny officers from Cardiff sat down with colleagues from the other 21 Welsh local authority scrutiny teams to devise *The Characteristics of Effective Scrutiny*, a framework that could measure and benchmark the effectiveness of the local scrutiny environment, practice and outcomes that was sensitive and robust enough to account for local difference of Council culture, structures, priorities and other variables. This framework will be subject to another report to this Committee, but at **Appendix 6** of this report Members will find an extract listing the indicators of effective scrutiny that relate to public engagement. These will form a natural measurement framework for the future engagement of Cardiff citizens in scrutiny and wider democracy.

POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE  
*PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH SCRUTINY* INQUIRY REPORT

RESPONSE FROM CABINET MEMBER  
FOR SAFETY, DEMOCRACY AND ENGAGEMENT

23 September 2014

As Cabinet Member for Safety, Democracy and Engagement I have recently reviewed PRAP's excellent *Public Engagement With Scrutiny* Inquiry report. I remember being a Member of CASSC at the time the Inquiry was commissioned, and in my role as Cabinet member for this Portfolio since July 2014 I would like to apologise that a formal response has not been provided to the Committee until now.

As a Councillor who has sat as a Member and as a Chair of a Scrutiny Committee in Cardiff, I fully support the value of scrutiny in representing the views and concerns of the public. I recognise that some good work is currently undertaken in engaging citizens in scrutiny work, but also share your aspiration to significantly develop this. We are challenged by resources and the range of competing priorities for our time, but I look forward to being able to continue to report progress to you in returning to PRAP to engage with you on this agenda in the future.

Turning to the four recommendations targeted to Cabinet in your Inquiry report:

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**Recommendation 6.** *Members recommend that the Cabinet should provide Scrutiny Services with dedicated resources to increase the current level of public engagement the Service undertakes.*  
(Supported by Key Findings 7, 8, 18)

**Response: *Partially Accepted.*** Cabinet supported a Financial Pressures bid in the Medium Term Financial Plan to create a Public Engagement Officer within the Scrutiny Team as part of the Council's 2013/14 budget. This post was proposed as a cut to help meet the County Clerk's savings target for 2014/15, and this proposal was accepted. It gives no pleasure to report that the Council's extremely challenging financial position has necessitated reducing staffing resources across the organisation, and I understand that as a result dedicated resources to promote engagement with democracy in Cardiff are not currently available.

As evidenced by the energy invested in developing the Cardiff Debate, Cabinet recognise the promotion on citizen involvement with Democracy as a priority, and In the absence of a dedicated resource within Scrutiny there is no reason why the Scrutiny Team and Communications and Media Team should not work productively together to effectively profile the work undertaken in Scrutiny.

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**Recommendation 7.** *Members recommend that the Cabinet should engage with Scrutiny Chairs to agree a level of support from the Council's Communication and Media Team to work more closely with Scrutiny Chairs and Members to highlight their work to local and professional media outlets. For example, more media releases should be issued before and after scrutiny meetings. The Scrutiny Chairs also have an important role in highlighting to local media current Scrutiny committees work. Scope for scrutiny engagement should be discussed with the Communications and Media team at the beginning of the municipal year. (Supported by Key Findings 7- 9, 15, 18, 25, 32, 41, 42)*

**Response: Accepted.** As in the response to Recommendation 5 above, Cabinet wishes to see the work of Scrutiny effectively profiled. A recent development introduced by the new Leader is a regular article on scrutiny activities in Capital Times, and we would wish to see at least one Scrutiny-related article covered in each edition of Capital Times.

While recognising the constraints imposed by resource pressures facing the organisation, Cabinet wishes to work with Scrutiny Chairs to agree what would be a sustainable and achievable level of ongoing promotion. Some communications activity would need to be carried out by professional communications officers, but there are other opportunities for officers within Scrutiny Services to be trained to carry out other productive communications activities via social media and via the Modern.Gov platform.

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**Recommendation 8.** *Recognising that the Council's website is due to be reviewed in 2013, Members recommend that Cabinet should enable Scrutiny to access citizen's views, more easily, by developing a citizen focussed new website. This is will provide ample opportunities for people to find out about, comment upon and participate in the work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Committees. (Supported by Key Findings 3, 5, 10, 14, 18, 19, 24, 36, 41, 42)*

**Response: Accepted.** The Council's new website is in place, and will provide an important portal for communication about scrutiny activities and information, but Cabinet has also more recently supported the Council's procurement of the Modern.Gov platform, which potentially offers a more bespoke product to enable scrutiny and other Council Committees to engage with citizens in providing information and seeking feedback on meetings, agenda items, and decisions.

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**Recommendation 11.** *Members recommend that Cabinet should ensure that their Work Programme items and timings are published well in advance of meetings, to allow public engagement with pre-decision scrutiny. (Supported by Key Findings 28, 34)*

**Response: Accepted.** The Council's Programme of Organisational Development contains an *Improved Governance* Programme, whose Member Development and Engagement Project contains a milestone commitment to "Evaluate & improve executive decision making and Forward Plan". The Leader and Cabinet are committed to making this Plan a reliable and useful document to help schedule effective decision making, and scrutiny consideration as a part of that. Members of Policy

Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee will see improvements to the Forward Plan during this Municipal Year, and will have the opportunity to scrutinise the steps towards improvement through their scrutiny of the Organisational Development Programme.

In closing, please may I thank the Committee, and in particular the members of this task and finish inquiry team, for their help in making helpful recommendations to Cabinet. As the Chair of Constitution Committee, I am equally determined to see the recommendations made to Constitution Committee implemented, and as the Cabinet Member for Democracy and Engagement I will work with the County Clerk and her team to seek to optimise their work on public engagement.

**COUNCILLOR DANIEL DE'ATH**  
**23 September 2014**



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## Scrutiny Research Team

# Public Involvement in Scrutiny Meetings: A Desk-based Review of Current Practices

Research Report - August 2014



The City of Cardiff Council

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# 1. Introduction

In order to inform potential decisions made in relation to scrutiny meetings incorporating further public involvement, the Scrutiny Research Team was commissioned to identify practices employed by other authorities with regard to facilitating public statements and questions at scrutiny meetings.

Practices are mostly split between formal and informal approaches, the former being fairly standardised among local authorities. For this reason the first part of the report outlines a general structure for public interaction at scrutiny meetings and incorporates the subtle variations from different case studies.

There then follows some examples of the informal approach. A table giving an overview of the formal structures is attached in appendix A.

As the Team was also asked to provide information on the practices of core UK cities, a final section briefly outlines the approaches of:

- Birmingham
- Bristol
- Glasgow
- Leeds
- Liverpool
- Manchester
- Newcastle
- Nottingham
- Sheffield

## 2. Methodology

The research involved a desk-based review of arrangements for local scrutiny meetings focussing on the level of involvement afforded to the public. The data presented in this research report was based on a review of local authority websites, plans and other online documents that were publically available. Telephone conversations and email correspondence with the core cities' scrutiny teams also contributed to the evidence reported here.

## 3. Formal Procedures for Public Speaking

### 3.1 Submission of questions/statements

Questions or statements should be submitted prior to the meeting. These should be sent to the chair of the Committee or named Governance Officer on the publicly-available agenda. In some cases notification of acceptance will be issued, and the deadline for submissions varies:

- 5 days in advanced for a detailed response (brief details to relevant officer any time before the meeting if not) – **Leicester**
- 4th working day before the meeting: 12pm – **Suffolk**
- 3 clear working days before the meeting: 5pm – **Oxford**
- 3 working days before the meeting: 5pm – **Thurrock**
- 2 clear working days before the meeting: 12pm – **Cornwall**
- 2 clear working days before the meeting – **Hart**
- 2 working days before the meeting – **Herefordshire**
- 2nd working day before the meeting: 10am – **Barnet**
- The day before the meeting: 12pm – **Devon**
- The day before the meeting: 12pm (same deadline for photos or documents for circulation) – **Wyre Forest**
- The working day before the meeting - **York**
- The day of the meeting: 2.15pm – **Wychavon.**

### **3.2 Content of Questions/Statements**

Questions must be relevant to an item on the agenda but some local authorities specify other criteria. Generally the committee chair will decide which statements/questions are valid and will be included.

Questions or comments will not be permitted:

- If they are requests from or in connection with the aims and activities of a political party - **Barnet**
- If they would result in the release of confidential information, or which may prejudice enforcement - **Barnet, Breckland, Herefordshire**
- If they relate to a matter where this is a right of appeal against any decision of the Council - **Barnet**
- If they are defamatory, abusive or offensive - **Barnet, Breckland, Suffolk**
- If submitted from Council employees or trade unions on employment matters - **Barnet**
- If they relate to the making / confirmation of Tree Preservation Orders, as the procedure for making objections or representations is prescribed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012. - **Barnet**
- If they are in more than one part - **Thurrock**
- If they are on behalf of anyone else - **Thurrock**
- If they are not written clearly - **Thurrock**
- If they concern actual or potential legal proceedings involving the Council - **Breckland**
- If they make allegations against, or comments about, the conduct of individual Council Members or Officers - **Breckland**
- If they concern individual planning or licensing applications - **Herefordshire, Hart**
- If they concern applications for grant aid - **Hart**
- In some cases only statements and not questions are permitted - **Suffolk.**

### **3.3 Allocated Time for Questions/Statements**

A designated time may be set aside for questions. These are of varying lengths:

- 60 minutes – **Devon**
- 45 minutes - **Oxford**
- Up to 30 minutes – **Barnet**
- 20 minutes – **Suffolk**
- 20 minutes at the start of the meeting – **Breckland**
- 10 minutes are the start of the meeting - **Cornwall**

Other meetings incorporate questions into the relevant agenda item:

- A total of 4 minutes per agenda item – **Hart**
- 3 minutes at the point of the relevant item – **Wyre Forest**
- 3 minutes per speaker - **Breckland**
- Questions will be asked before the relevant agenda item – **Thurrock**.

### **3.4 Number of Speakers**

In the interests of time, restrictions may be imposed on the number of people able to speak. For example:

- There must be time to hear from both those 'for' and 'against' – **Hart**
- Only one addressees per topic though if more than one request is made to speak, the five minutes will be shared – **Oxford**
- The chair will have discretion over who is permitted to speak in the case of a large number of requests. Up to five people may speak per topic and must decided between themselves who will be nominated. If an issue is likely to be of interest to a certain group, they will be contacted – **Wyre Forest**

- If more than one person wishes to speak on an issue they must agree a spokesman – **Cornwall**
- Entirely at the Chair’s discretion – **Leicester**

### **3.5 Length of Time Granted to Speakers**

The amount of time for which the speaker is given the floor can be closely monitored:

- Maximum of five minutes unless the Chairman agrees otherwise - **Wychavon**
- Up to 5 minutes (with time possibly reduced if there are more than 4 speakers) – **Suffolk**
- Up to 3 minutes – **Oxford**
- Up to 3 minutes – **Barnet**
- 3 minutes per person – **Devon**
- 3 minutes – **Cornwall**
- 2 minutes – **Hart**
- Chair’s discretion – **Leicester**.

### **3.6 Responses from the Committee**

The nature of the response a speaker can expect is often laid out clearly:

- Written responses to public questions will be circulated to the questioner in advance, or at the meeting. – **Barnet**
- Responses are entirely at the Chairman’s discretion. They may seek clarification of facts but will not enter into a debate during public participation – **Suffolk**
- The Chair will answer the question and a more detailed answer may be given in writing – **Thurrock**

- The address will be referred without discussion to the Chief Executive who will arrange for a response to be made. Board members may choose to make a response at the meeting in addition – **Oxford**
- Detailed ‘answers’ will be given to any points raised – **Devon**
- In response to any question received (**Wychavon**) , the Chairman may respond in the following ways
  - an oral answer
  - reference to information contained within a publication or
  - a written answer, which would be circulated at the latest with the minutes of the Meeting.

### **3.7 Supplementary Questions**

In addition to the original questions speakers may be permitted to ask a follow-up question:

- If they wish, members of the public can ask the Committee Chairman one supplementary question at the Committee meeting, which will be answered without discussion. The supplementary question must be relevant to the original question put to the Chairman – **Barnet**
- One supplementary question is permitted – **Wyre Forest**
- One extra question is allowed that relates to the first question or the given answer – **Thurrock**
- However sometimes only one question is permitted – **Thurrock, Oxford**

### **3.8 Questions/Statements in Absentia**

In some cases special provision is made for those who have an intention to speak but are unable to attend the meeting:

- Members of the public submitting questions are able to send a substitute to ask their supplementary question if they are unable to attend the committee



meeting. The Governance Officer supporting the meeting should be made aware of this prior to the meeting commencing. Comments made in writing will be published as an addendum to a report – **Barnet**

- Any requests submitted by letter, email or phone before the meeting will be reported at the start of the meeting. A written answer will be provided – **Herefordshire**
- Only those who have submitted the request may speak when his or her name is called - **Hart**

## 4. Informal Procedures for Public Speaking

Other local authorities welcome comments or questions from the public but there are less structured guidelines in place than those above. Examples include:

- **Bury** – Each Committee agenda will include a Public Question Time item: a period of 30 minutes set aside specifically for questions from the public. Questions can relate to an item on the agenda for consideration or a matter of interest regarding services or the performance of the Council.
- **Croydon** – It's advisable to speak to a clerk beforehand but the Chair has discretion of who speaks during the meeting. Any financial or personal interest should be declared.
- **Ealing** – scrutiny committees and panels actively engage people with debates part of the decision-making process.
- **Luton** – Apart from occasions where exempt information is involved, all meetings are open to the public and The Democracy Team will try to accommodate requests to speak.
- **Merton** – Members of the public can be invited to speak on a certain subject but they can also request an invitation to speak by contacting the scrutiny officer. All decisions are made by the Chair.
- **Rugby** – The level of formality is at the discretion of the panel but scrutiny meetings tend to be fairly informal. Members of the public will be invited to partake in discussions and ask questions rather than submit pre-prepared questions.
- **Warwickshire** – A public question time during the meeting allows questions and comments can be sent in writing.
- **York** – a public participation scheme encourages residents to attend and partake in an open floor.

## 5. No Provision for Public Speaking

In some circumstances the public are not permitted to speak at all:

### **Lancashire**

- Under the constitution, the public can attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings (except where personal or other confidential items are being considered).
- Members of the public will not generally be permitted to ask questions or make statements when viewing a committee meeting.
- However, the public may be invited to give information to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or task group, either in person or in writing.

### **Devon**

- A lack of scope for public speaking until a recommendation to change the rules for meetings on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014 caused public unrest and protests.

## 6. Core Cities

It was interesting to note that none of the core cities outlined detailed, structured processes for public involvement. They described their inclusion of the public as follows:

### **Birmingham**

- All meetings are open to public attendance and are live streamed online.
- Any public interaction is at the chair's discretion.
- Emails can be sent to the scrutiny team prior to the meeting and the chair will decide whether or not to incorporate the comment or question.

### **Bristol**

- Public questions are welcomed but must be submitted three days before the meeting. Responses are then prepared and tabled one hour before the meeting.
- For statements the same process applies but the deadline for submission is 12pm the day before the meeting
- A total of 30 minutes is allowed for statements with 3 minutes granted for each.
- The Chair may allow for supplementary questions but there is no standing order the means he or she is bound to give them

### **Glasgow**

- Glasgow were approached to provide information on the way that the public can speak at their meetings but we had not received any information by the deadline of this report.

## **Leeds**

- All Scrutiny meetings are open to the public to attend as observers.
- Speaking may be permissible at the meeting following submissions to the chair beforehand.
- Permission to speak is at the discretion of the Chair, who will manage the meeting to allow a range of questions to be put and give the opportunity for answers to be given.
- Members of the public can speak to a scrutiny advisor who will advise them on their request and how best to submit it.

## **Liverpool**

- When the scrutiny exercise has finished, the report of the panel is submitted to the parent Select Committee for approval.
- Executive Directors and Assistant Executive Directors attend the relevant Select Committee when there are issues to discuss.
- Members of the public can submit questions in advance to help have an answer ready for the meeting or there is a public question time at the end of select committees with no time limit.

## **Manchester**

- All meetings are open to the public with a work programme published in advance. At the meeting clerks will speak to attendees and scout the audience to see who is there and what their point of interest is. They will identify those who have expressed a desire to speak prior to the date.
- There are two scrutiny officers present – one to lead and one to act a seconder and support the clerk in liaising with the public, advising and notifying the chair about those wishing to speak prior to the start,
- All contributions are subject to the discretion of the chair
- There is no set time limit and public discussion is quite informal – the raising of a hand can and has been acknowledged.

## **Newcastle**

- All meetings are open and the public are welcomed to speak.
- Questions or points can be raised prior to the date of the meeting or even just before the start of the meeting itself. There is an informal approach which is hoped will encourage participation.
- A time limit of five minutes has been implemented when required at popular call-in meetings.
- There is no set element in the agenda but the chair would weave in public questions or statements as required

## **Nottingham**

- All meetings are open and public quests/comments are welcomed at the chair's discretion.
- Questions are normally submitted to the chair prior to the meeting
- However there is a reasonably informal air and the raising of a hand can be accepted by the chair.

## **Sheffield**

- There is an item at every Scrutiny meeting called 'Public Questions and Petitions' where anyone can ask a question.
- Attendance at the meeting is compulsory to ask a question, unless there is a request for a reasonable adjustment.
- It is helpful and advised send questions in advance. This can help a fuller answer to be provided on the day of the meeting.

## 7. References

### **Barnet 'Public Participation and Engagement'**

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s15010/18.%20Public%20Participation%20and%20Engagement.pdf>

### **Breckland Scrutiny Page**

<http://www.breckland.gov.uk/content/public-participation-overview-and-scrutiny-commission-1>

### **Bury Scrutiny Page**

<http://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4288>

### **Cornwall Scrutiny Page**

<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-democracy/public-questions-at-council-meetings/?altTemplate= Standard>

### **Croydon Scrutiny Page**

<http://www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/scrutiny/getinvolved>

### **Devon Scrutiny Page**

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/democracy/guide/scrutiny-guide/a-guide-to-scrutiny-what-is-my-role-in-scrutiny/>

### **Devon-based campaigner Claire Wright's blog**

[http://www.claire-wright.org/index.php/post/devon\\_county\\_council\\_votes\\_to\\_relax\\_public\\_speaking\\_rules](http://www.claire-wright.org/index.php/post/devon_county_council_votes_to_relax_public_speaking_rules)

### **Ealing Scrutiny Page**

[http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200892/decision\\_making/344/scrutiny/4](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/200892/decision_making/344/scrutiny/4)

### **Hart - Public Participation at Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

[http://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4\\_The\\_Council/Council\\_meetings/Public%20Participation%20leaflet%202014%20A4.pdf](http://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4_The_Council/Council_meetings/Public%20Participation%20leaflet%202014%20A4.pdf)

### **Herefordshire Scrutiny Page**

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/government-citizens-and-rights/democracy/scrutiny>

### **Lancashire Scrutiny Page**

[http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/overview\\_scrutiny/public\\_participation/index.asp](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/overview_scrutiny/public_participation/index.asp)

### **Leicester 'Overview and Scrutiny Handbook'**

<http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCAQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.leicester.gov.uk%2FEasySiteWeb%2FGatewayLink.aspx%3Fallid%3D86233&ei=WAT3U-vsCYWP0AWK6oHwBw&usg=AFQjCNHtdW0Ebd83tHRvvRAKNPhDgtUvFQ&bvm=bv.73373277,d.d2k>

### **Luton Scrutiny Page**

[http://www.luton.gov.uk/Council\\_government\\_and\\_democracy/Local-democracy/Overview%20and%20Scrutiny/Pages/Get%20Involved.aspx](http://www.luton.gov.uk/Council_government_and_democracy/Local-democracy/Overview%20and%20Scrutiny/Pages/Get%20Involved.aspx)

### **Merton 'Scrutiny Handbook 2011'**

[http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny\\_handbook\\_oct\\_2011-3.pdf](http://www.merton.gov.uk/scrutiny_handbook_oct_2011-3.pdf)

### **Oxford 'Oxford City Council Meetings – Public Involvement**

<http://www.oxford.gov.uk/Library/Documents/Council/Council%20Meeting%20Proceedures%202013.pdf>

### **Rugby Scrutiny Page**

[http://www.rugby.gov.uk/info/200154/consultations\\_feedback\\_and\\_petitions/137/public\\_participation\\_at\\_council\\_meetings](http://www.rugby.gov.uk/info/200154/consultations_feedback_and_petitions/137/public_participation_at_council_meetings)

### **Suffolk 'Public Participation Session'**

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/suffolk.gov.uk/Your%20Council/Decision%20Making/2014-02-04-Public-Participation-Committees.pdf>

### **Thurrock Scrutiny Page**

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/asking-questions-at-council-meetings/asking-questions-of-overview-and-scrutiny-committees>



**Warwickshire Scrutiny Page**

<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/osexplained>

**Wychavon Scrutiny Page**

<http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/scrutiny-suggestion>

**Wyre Forest ' Procedure Rules for Scrutiny Committees'**

[http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/media/207758/10\\_procedure\\_rules\\_for\\_scrutiny\\_committeesv2\\_1.pdf](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/media/207758/10_procedure_rules_for_scrutiny_committeesv2_1.pdf)

**York 'Guide to Overview and Scrutiny in York'**

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s52223/Guide%20to%20Overview%20Scrutiny%20in%20York.pdf>

Scrutiny Services, The City of Cardiff Council,  
Room 243, County Hall, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff CF10 4UW.  
Tel: 029 2087 2296 Fax: 029 2087 2579  
Email: [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)  
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## Appendix A - Table to demonstrate variation in practice for public speaking at scrutiny meetings.

Type of public involvement	Variations in practice across authorities.						
	Leicester	Suffolk	Oxford	Cornwall	Devon	Barnet	Hart
<b>Submission of questions / statements prior to the meeting</b>	5 days in advance for a detailed response	4 working days before the meeting	3 working days before the meeting	2 working days before the meeting	The day before the meeting	2 <sup>nd</sup> working day before the meeting	2 clear days before the meeting
<b>Allocated time for questions</b>	60 minutes	20 minutes	45 minutes	10 minutes at the start of the meeting	60 minutes	Up to 30 minutes	A total of 4 minutes per agenda item
<b>Number of speakers allowed.</b>	Entirely at the chairs discretion	Information Not Available (INA)	Only one addressee per topic but if more than one request is made the time must be shared.	If more than one person wishes to speak on a topic they must agree a spokesman.	INA	INA	INA
<b>Length of time granted to speakers</b>	Chairs discretion	Up to 5 minutes	Up to 3 minutes	3 minutes	3 minutes per person	Up to 3 minutes	2 minutes
<b>Nature of responses from the committee</b>	INA	Responses are entirely at the Chairman's discretion. They may seek clarification of facts but will not enter into a debate during public participation.	Referred without discussion to the Chief Executive who will arrange for a response to be made. Board members may choose to make a response at the meeting in addition.	INA	Detailed 'answers' will be given to any points raised	Written responses to public questions will be circulated to the questioner in advance, or at the meeting	INA

	<b>Leicester</b>	<b>Suffolk</b>	<b>Oxford</b>	<b>Cornwall</b>	<b>Devon</b>	<b>Barnet</b>	<b>Hart</b>
<b>Questions are not permitted</b>	INA	<p>If they are defamatory, abusive or offensive.</p> <p>In some cases only statements and not questions are permitted</p>	INA	INA	INA	<p>If they are requests from or in connection with the aims and activities of a political party.</p> <p>If they relate to a matter where this is a right of appeal against any decision of the Council.</p> <p>If submitted from Council employees or trade unions on employment matters.</p>	<p>If they concern individual planning or licensing applications.</p> <p>If they concern applications for grant aid</p>
<b>Questions in Absentia</b>	INA	INA	INA	INA	INA	<p>Members of the public submitting questions are able to send a substitute to ask their supplementary question if they are unable to attend the committee meeting. The Governance Officer supporting the meeting should be made aware of this prior to the meeting commencing. Comments made in writing will be published as an addendum to a report.</p>	<p>Only those who have submitted the request may speak when his or her name is called</p>

s c r u t i n y



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## Scrutiny Research Team

### ***Cabinet Question time in Scrutiny Meetings:***

A Desk Based Review of Current Practices

**Research Report - August 2014**



**The City of Cardiff Council**

## 1. Introduction

This research was commissioned to assist an exploration of how Cabinet Members were scrutinised in other local authorities. To help inform this, the Scrutiny Research Team were specifically asked to explore the practice of Cabinet Question time in other local authorities.

## 2. Methodology

The research involved a desk-based review of arrangements for local scrutiny meetings, focussing on the involvement of Cabinet Members in scrutiny. The information presented in this research report was based on a review of local authority websites, plans and other online documents that were publically available. Telephone conversations and email correspondence were also conducted when additional information or clarification was required.

## 3. Results - Summary

The results of this review found that the majority of authorities conduct their Cabinet scrutiny in a very similar way to the way Cardiff Scrutiny Services does currently. Most authorities therefore require the relevant Cabinet Member to attend a Scrutiny meeting which is exploring an item/s that are within their portfolio. There were however, a small number of authorities which used an alternative technique. This practice was generally referred to as Cabinet Question time. This involved Cabinet Members attending a scrutiny

committee on a timely cycle to report and answer questions on the whole of their portfolio.

This usually involved a written report being produced by the cabinet member, prior to the meeting, detailing certain information which would then be followed by a brief presentation. The Scrutiny Committee would then have the opportunity to question the Cabinet Member on any aspect within their portfolio.

This was the general format adopted by most authorities who used this approach. However, the practice was not uniform and there were variations across differing authorities. This often depended on how scrutiny was arranged in the local authority. As scrutiny setups vary significantly it is clear that one practice is not suitable to all. The majority of authorities for example, used their single Overview Committee to scrutinise Cabinet Members individually throughout the year. Others, who had a number of committees, used the relevant Scrutiny Committee to conduct the Cabinet Question time on a timely basis.

Some authorities used the whole meeting to question the Cabinet Member without any time limit for the item. Other authorities explored additional items alongside the time limited Cabinet question time period. These items were sometimes related to the relevant Cabinet Member while others were completely outside of their remit.

This demonstrates that while there were overarching principles attached to the practice of Cabinet Question Time, there are also a variety of practices across a number of authorities. The case studies outlined below therefore provide some additional information on how differing authorities practiced their Cabinet Question Time.

## 4. Cabinet Question time – Case studies

### 4.1. Swindon – Cabinet Member Portfolio Questioning

Swindon Council requests each of their Cabinet Members to attend the Overview Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis to answer questions on their portfolio. There are nine cabinet Members so each attends once a year, while the Leader of the Council attends twice a year. The Leader provides a presentation on their priorities and then an update on progress half way through the year.

The cover reports for the meetings state that:

“A key purpose of the Overview and Scrutiny function is to hold the Cabinet to account and ensure that Council priorities and performance are being delivered. The Scrutiny Committee partly fulfils this requirement through the use of question and answer sessions on each executive portfolio with each Cabinet Member.

The purpose of the Question and Answer session is to ensure that each Cabinet Member regularly provides the Scrutiny Committee with performance information relative to their portfolio responsibilities. It also requires the Cabinet member to provide budget information for their portfolio responsibilities and provides an opportunity for the Scrutiny Committee to ask questions on the portfolio responsibilities.”

At each meeting the Cabinet Member provides a report to the Committee under the following headings:

- Portfolio responsibilities

- What have you done well?
- What would you do differently?
- What are the challenges facing your portfolio?
- Priorities moving forward.

The Scrutiny Committee then have the opportunity to question the Cabinet Member on this report and any other aspect of their portfolio. The questions and responses at the meeting are recorded and minuted but there is no formal letter written to the Cabinet Member as a result of the meeting.

Swindon also has three other topic based Scrutiny Committees where Cabinet Members are held to account by for their individual portfolio items. There are also annual Cabinet Question Time meetings at these scrutiny committee meetings for the relevant portfolio holders.

## **4.2. Elbridge – Scrutiny of Cabinet Members**

Elbridge Council take a very similar approach to that of Swindon. Indeed their cover report states very similar rationale behind their use of Cabinet Member Question Time.

“The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has invited members of Cabinet to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings over the course of the Municipal Year. Each member of Cabinet will be asked to provide an update on the work currently being undertaken as part of their Portfolio, including any issues and challenges, providing members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to ask any relevant questions.

A key role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to hold the Cabinet to account. The Council’s Constitution states that one of the functions of the



Overview and Scrutiny Committee is 'to review the discharge by Cabinet of any of its functions'. In undertaking the scrutiny of Cabinet Members, the Committee is fulfilling this function."

However, the key difference to the Swindon example is that rather than only having one portfolio holder attending the meeting in Eldridge has two. The Committee therefore receives two separate reports and then questions each Cabinet Member separately at the same meeting.

### 4.3. Croydon

Croydon had a very structured approach to their Scrutiny meetings and Cabinet member question Time. At each of their Overview Committee meetings there would firstly be a Public Question time. This was followed by Committee Member Question Time, which allowed the Committee to question a different portfolio member at each meeting. These were then followed by one or two overarching items.

This approach was also followed in their three thematic Scrutiny sub committees (health and adult social care, Children Learning and Leisure, Community Services). Here each session began with a Public Question Time, then was followed by a Committee Question Time with the relevant portfolio holder. As there were more meetings than portfolio holders at the Sub Committees, Cabinet Members tended to be involved in two question time sessions per year. Interestingly, in the Health sub Committee, the Chief Executive of the local NHS trust was required to attend.

**It is important to note however that Croydon no longer practises this kind of Scrutiny arrangement. Since a new Administration has come to power, they now practice the more 'traditional' model of Scrutiny**

**whereby Cabinet members are requested to attend to answer questions on the particular items they are investigating.**

#### **4.4. Swansea – Cabinet Member Question Time**

Swansea follow the same model as both Swindon and Croydon in that each Cabinet Member attends their overview scrutiny committee once per year with the leader attending twice. These Question sessions take up the majority of time for the meeting.

Scrutiny Members are encouraged to think of relevant questions for the Cabinet Member prior to the meeting. Sometimes these may be submitted to the Cabinet member in advance to allow for a comprehensive response. Members of the public are also encouraged to submit questions electrically which can then be asked to the Cabinet Member via the Chair of the Committee.

As a result of these meeting the Committee will write a letter to the Cabinet Member to record any concerns, recommendations and priorities they feel need to be addressed.

Unlike Swindon and Croydon however, Swansea's scrutiny sub Panel meetings are not held in public and are formed to explore particular topics in detail. The Cabinet Members can therefore be requested to attend to give evidence to the Panel but are very rarely attend the Panels to be held to account. The Cabinet Member Question Times are therefore the only public opportunity in the year for the Cabinet Members to be questioned in public.

Scrutiny Services, The City of Cardiff Council,  
Room 243, County Hall, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff CF10 4UW.  
Tel: 029 2087 2296 Fax: 029 2087 2579  
Email: [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)  
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**s c r u t i n y**



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**Scrutiny Research Team**

# **Public Engagement in Scrutiny – A Desk-Based Review of Best Practice.**

**Research report for the  
Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: January 2013**



County Council of The City and County of Cardiff

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## **1. Introduction**

As part of its work programme for 2012/13 municipal year, the Policy Review and Performance (PRAP) Scrutiny Committee is undertaking an inquiry on public engagement in Scrutiny.

The Scrutiny Research Team was commissioned to undertake desk-based research, focussing specifically on the citizen engagement requirements and scrutiny obligations arising from the Local Government (Wales) Measure (2011). The aims of the research were to identify:

- current and best practice engagement examples that could be adopted or modified for application in Cardiff Council to enhance citizen engagement in Scrutiny;
- existing publically available strategies, arrangements, protocols and criteria which could be used to improve engagement.

## **2. Methodology**

The research involved a desk-based review of electronically published reports, documents and written material produced by local authorities, public organisations and bodies, Welsh Government departments and voluntary organisations.

The research presented in this report has met or developed the requirements and recommendations of:

- The Local Government (Wales) Measure (2011), or;
- The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012).

### 3. Executive Summary

Scrutiny committees have adopted a number of strategies, arrangements, protocols and criteria to deliver varying degrees of public engagement in scrutiny. Three different levels of engagement were identified, which involved:

- **informing** the public of the scrutiny role, decision making and scrutiny processes;
- **consultation** with citizens to identify their opinions and views;
- **giving power and influence** to citizens in scrutiny work.

Scrutiny committees have engaged with the public in various ways through their work programming, committee work, and communication processes. The different levels of engagement cited within each of these processes are outlined below.

**Work programming** - To *inform* the public of what could constitute a suitable scrutiny topic, some scrutiny committees have published the criteria that they should meet. Information on how prospective scrutiny topics are considered by scrutiny committees has been published in scrutiny handbooks. Some scrutiny committees use pre-determined scoring criteria to statistically rank suggested work programme topics, and determine their inclusion / exclusion and priority in the work programme. The evaluation methodology, criteria and matrices have been included in some publically issued scrutiny handbooks. Scrutiny committees have used **consultation** with members of the public, by developing mechanisms for scrutiny topic suggestions to be submitted for consideration by scrutiny committees. **Power and influence** has been given to the public through allowing these scrutiny topic suggestions to potentially shape forward work programmes. Scrutiny committees in some local authorities have developed pre-determined scoring criteria to objectively evaluate each prospective scrutiny topic. Using this methodology, the merit of scrutiny topics suggested by the public can be statistically evaluated for inclusion / exclusion and prioritisation in the work programme.

**Citizen involvement in committee work** – Direct public involvement and **consultation** was achieved in some local authorities through public speaking arrangements and protocols at scrutiny committee meetings. In practice, these public speaking arrangements enable members of the public to present their views on matters under consideration by scrutiny committees. Additionally, a number of local authorities have procedures in place which allow members of the public to speak at call-in meetings. Public consultation has also been used on task and finish inquiries, to obtain citizen opinions and views for specific scrutiny inquiries. The public have also been consulted for research purposes by scrutiny committees and councils. In one instance, **power and influence** was given to members of the public through their appointment as peer researchers on a particular scrutiny inquiry.

**Communication** – To **inform** the public about the work of scrutiny in a consistent manner, some councils have scrutiny communication strategies and protocols. Certain councils also have online information systems to inform members of the public of ongoing scrutiny work and discussions, including the interactive webcast of scrutiny committee meetings in one particular council. Local authorities have published their programmes of planned work and published bulletins and leaflets to inform the public of ongoing scrutiny work. Some councils publish a calendar of planned engagement and consultation activity and enable the public to sign up for email alerts on areas of interest.

**At a corporate level**, some local authorities have public engagement strategies. Additionally, some local authorities have appointed specific engagement officers / managers in order to improve consultation and engagement with key stakeholders. Some local authorities have held public consultation events, such as meetings and listening days. Local authorities have also used online consultation functions, including e-panels, e-forums and e-polls. Engagement monitoring tools have been used by local authorities to collect engagement data, which could be analysed to identify public opinions and views, and to quantify the engagement activity achieved. There are a number of local authorities that also use networking and partnership arrangements as a means of developing engagement opportunities.



#### **4. Background Information & Research**

The notion of citizen engagement is advocated by the Welsh Government (formerly Welsh Assembly Government) who have emphasised that real improvements can be delivered which people can recognise and understand by engaging them in shaping and scrutinising our services (2006).

A review of local services for the Welsh Government by Beecham (2006) identified an urgent requirement to develop the relationship between citizens and public services. He outlined a citizen model, emphasising the voice of the citizen as a central pre-requisite to drive improvements, with Scrutiny identified as a medium for engagement.

The Local Government (Wales) Measure (2011) builds on the Local Government Act (2000) and places further onus on Local Authorities to improve public engagement in scrutiny. Local authority obligations and recommended actions are outlined in the Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012).

## **5. Best Practice Findings**

### **5.1. Work Programming**

The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012) recommends that citizens and communities should be able to access details of how they can shape and contribute to the delivery of forward work programmes.

A number of local authorities have, in practice, shown varying levels of consideration of public interest when formulating their work programmes. Many councils have arrangements in place which permit members of the public to submit suggestions of scrutiny topics, with some providing guidance on the criteria that suggested scrutiny topics should meet. Some councils use a pre-determined scoring criteria to rank prospective scrutiny topics and determine their inclusion or rejection from the scrutiny forward work programme. Additionally, some local authorities have a structured methodology to determine scrutiny topic placement and prioritisation in the work programme. Each of the scoring and evaluation systems and matrices used consider the extent to which topics serve the public interest. Examples of some of these evaluation systems and matrices are included in the appendices to this report.

#### **5.1.1. Work Programme Topic Suggestions from the Public**

A number of local authorities enable citizens to suggest topics for future scrutiny, and include scrutiny topic suggestion forms on their scrutiny websites. Examples of such websites cited in this research include: Redbridge Council; Newport Council; Leeds Council; Newcastle Council; Ealing Council;

Haringey Council; Manchester Council; West Berkshire Council; Mid Devon; Test Valley Borough Council; Swindon Council; Bracknell Forest Council; Redbridge Council; Dover Council; Waltham Forest Council; Wolverhampton Council; Buckinghamshire Council; East Lindsey Council; Arun Council; Merthyr Council; Dorset Council; Eden District Council; Staffordshire Council; Carmarthenshire Council; Devon Council; Huntingdonshire Council; Lewes Council and Woking Council.

To inform and guide the public on what could represent an appropriate scrutiny topic, some local authorities have published a set of criteria that suggested topics should meet. Local authorities which have published such guidance to support the topic suggestion process include: West Berkshire Council; Mid Devon Council; Swindon Council; Bracknell Forest Council; Redbridge Council; Dover Council; Waltham Forest Council; Wolverhampton Council; Huntingdonshire Council and Woking Council.

#### **5.1.2. Criteria for Scrutiny Topic Selection in the Public Interest**

To ensure that the topics selected by scrutiny committees are based on a prioritisation of citizen needs, some local authorities have established criteria to rank each proposed scrutiny topic. Some local authorities use pre-determined scoring criteria to provide objectivity in selecting and prioritising scrutiny topics based on citizen needs.

Chorley Borough Council allows anyone to suggest a topic for scrutiny. The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee Panels use a set criteria to assess the value and benefits to the citizens of Chorley which scrutiny topics could realise (Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) [no date]). The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Panels use the criteria to select / reject topics and make efforts to assess the evidence for particular inquiries and their anticipated outcomes.

Stockton Council enables members of the public to suggest scrutiny topics through its Council website or by contacting the Scrutiny Team or a Councillor. The Scrutiny Team use a PICK (Public Interest, Impact, Council Performance and Keeping in Context) scoring system to attribute a statistical value to potential scrutiny topics. This is used to substantiate topic inclusion / exclusion in the work programme based on a prioritisation of citizen needs. A copy of the PICK scoring system is included in 'Appendix A' of this report. The Council's scrutiny toolkit manual also contains a work programming pro forma which is completed to record the rationale for selecting each scrutiny topic, including a public interest justification.

East Lindsey District Council has developed a Scrutiny Toolkit. Topic suggestion forms can be completed by members of the public, representatives of external bodies, Council officers and Members of the Council. Each of the topics suggested are considered by the Council's Overview Committee for inclusion or rejection by applying an initial selection test, using a defined methodological procedure. Following this, a prioritisation assessment is completed to identify where topics which have met the initial selection process will be placed in the work programme. Some of the evaluation systems and matrices used by the Council are included in 'Appendix B' and 'Appendix C' of this report.

A vast number of local authorities have issued scrutiny handbooks publically. Within these handbooks scrutiny procedures are set out clearly to inform the public of how topic selection decisions are made. In a number of scrutiny handbooks, the topic selection criteria pro forma has been included, which is used to score each potential scrutiny topic to determine its inclusion in or exclusion from the work programme. Such scoring matrices are used by local authorities including Sunderland, Cornwall, Newport City Council, Lancaster, Kirklees and Dorset Council. The use of scoring matrices to determine scrutiny topics demonstrates some of the arrangements used by local authorities to inform the selection and prioritisation scrutiny work in relation to citizen needs.

## **5.2. Citizen Involvement in Committee Work**

The Local Government (Wales) Measure (2011) requires local authorities to make arrangements for all persons who live or work in the area to bring to the attention of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee their views on any matter under consideration by the committee. In addition, Overview and Scrutiny Committees must take the views brought to their attention into account.

Scrutiny committees have engaged the public in their work, by permitting or providing opportunities for public speaking in scrutiny committee meetings and during call-ins. Members of the public have also been directly involved in task and finish inquiries and have been appointed as co-opted scrutiny committee members. Public engagement has additionally been used for research purposes by scrutiny committees and councils in general.

### **5.2.1. Public Speaking in Standard Scrutiny Committee Meetings**

A vast number of local authorities have arrangements and protocols in place to permit public speaking at scrutiny committee meetings. These public speaking arrangements enable members of the public to present their views on matters under consideration by scrutiny committees. A selection of local authorities which have public speaking arrangements in scrutiny committee meetings are outlined below.

In Lambeth Council, members of the public and stakeholders can submit questions to the Council, as reported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (2002). It is reported that the questioner will receive a response within 10 working days and will be invited to attend the scrutiny meeting to question members and officers further.

In Exeter 15 minutes is set aside at the beginning of each of its Scrutiny Committee meetings to allow for questions from members of the public. Question must be submitted to the Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support 3 working days in advance of the respective scrutiny meeting.

Northampton Council has a protocol for public speaking at its Scrutiny Committee meetings, which permits members of the public to speak on each item for up to 3 minutes. The public does not need to register their intention to speak in advance, but they need to complete a Public Address Protocol and notify the Scrutiny Officer of their intention to speak before the meeting commences.

In Cambridge Council, members of the public who wish to speak at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings can submit a written request to the Council's Democratic Services Section 3 days before the respective meeting.

Breckland Council has a protocol to encourage the participation of local residents in scrutiny. The protocol is described on the Council's website as giving the public the opportunity to make a statement, ask a question of the Commission or submit a petition on any item of business shown on the meeting agenda. At the start of each meeting a period of 20 minutes is set aside for questions, statements or petitions from the public, with 3 minutes for each speaker permitted.

The Forest of Dean District Council, allows 30 minutes at the beginning of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting for public questions. In order to participate, members of the public must submit their proposed questions to the Council at least 2 days before the scheduled meeting. The aim is to be open and transparent, and focus scrutiny on the needs of the public, according to the Council's report on Public Speaking at Scrutiny Review and Committee Meetings [no date].

Dover District Council has a protocol for public speaking during its Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings. The protocol outlines how anyone who

lives or works in Dover is entitled to speak at a scheduled meeting of one of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Requests to speak need to be submitted 2 working days before the respective meeting.

### **5.2.2. Public Speaking in Call-in Scrutiny Committee Meetings**

The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012) recommends that public speaking arrangements are developed for decisions which have been called-in. It is recommended that where the subject matter under consideration is not confidential or exempt, multiple representations could be made at call-in meetings to allow different public perspectives to inform the committees' deliberations.

A number of local authorities have procedures in place which allow members of the public to speak at call-in meetings at the discretion of the committee chairperson. Examples of local authorities which enable public participation at call-in meetings in this manner include Cherwell District Council, Brent Council and Torbay Council.

Brent Council permitted local residents to speak in a meeting of the Executive in 2012 on a call-in of a Willesden Green redevelopment. Residents raised their concerns about an associated library closure, to ensure that the Council was aware of the impact of the proposition to them.

### **5.2.3. Public Involvement in Task and Finish Scrutiny Inquiries**

Many local authorities engage with the public in various ways during the conduct of task and finish inquiries in order to identify the opinions, views and perspectives of citizens. A number of case study examples are outlined below, to demonstrate how the use of various approaches were key to

informing scrutiny committees about central issues and views particular to their topics of scrutiny.

Gloucestershire County Council held a one day scrutiny commission on flood management proposals which directly involved a community group representing local people's interests (CfPS, 2012). Consultation involved Town, Parish and District Councils, the NFU, Natural England, the Environment Agency, and others. These stakeholders presented their views and independently considered a proposed flood management strategy for the Severn Estuary. A key outcome of the inquiry was summarised by a resident who felt that through this engagement the Council became aware of the concerns of the people affected by the flood risk. The resident said that the scrutiny commission provided a coordinated and focussed approach to manage this risk (CfPS 2012). Gloucestershire County Council was the overall winner of the CfPS Successful Scrutiny awards 2012.

South Tyneside Council's Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee made a concerted effort to engage with the local community (Local Government Association (LGA) [no date]). The committee set up a 'hub group' composed of representatives from the Council, the Primary Care Trust and the voluntary sector during its scrutiny of the effects of alcohol on the community. The hub group worked with a voluntary sector facilitator to identify individuals and organisations in the community who were interested in the scrutiny topic. From this process, an extended community group was further created which was given the power to develop scrutiny survey questions, undertake a survey and consider feed back. It was reported that the scrutiny gave ownership and involvement to people who were not usually engaged in the Council's scrutiny. Members and officers regarded that the inquiry was successful as topics were developed according to the interests of the community.

Newport City Council was cited in a WLGA / CfPS (2010) report for its engagement with key stakeholders including the Youth Council, Disability Forum and Senior Citizens Forum during its scrutiny of the ways of tackling fuel poverty. Engagement was achieved through workshops, which were held



to identify stakeholders' views. Newport City Council also involved stakeholders in scoping a scrutiny exercise on Fuel Poverty called 'Heat is on'. A workshop was held involving a number of public, private and third sector organisations, which provided them with the opportunity to outline the services they provide, and to discuss fuel poverty issues. It is reported by WLGA / CfPS (2010) that this was delivered through interactive discussions where all participants could ask questions and raise concerns.

In Buckinghamshire, the results of independent public consultation during a task and finish inquiry helped to contradict and inform the Council's perceptions of the use of its bus services which were subject to planned cuts. The Council held the view that the majority of journeys on these routes were for leisure purposes. A local Councillor consulted with the public, requesting feedback from residents on proposed cuts to bus services. Consultation findings highlighted that more service users were actually travelling for shopping and employment purposes (Buckinghamshire Council 2011). The findings improved the Council's awareness of the citizen's perspective.

Cheshire West and Council engaged with children and young people during the conduct of a scrutiny review on improving education and employability for looked after children. According to a report by the Every Child Matters Select Panel (2011) children and young people were invited to attend workshops. At these workshops their views and opinions were sought on the barriers to success in education and employment. A series of actions were taken to enable the educational needs of looked after children and young people to be met. The Council won a CfPS award for innovation in scrutiny in 2010, due to the engagement processes they developed and utilised in this task and finish inquiry.

Westminster Council developed a Young People's Scrutiny Panel (CfPS [no date]). A specific aim of the Panel was to identify how young people perceived Westminster, and highlight their positive and negative experiences of living in the borough. The Panel, which consisted of 815 young people, reported back to the full Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee. This

report was considered by the Scrutiny Committee before reporting back to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services. One Panel member was reported as emphasising how the Young People's Scrutiny Panel provided a brilliant opportunity for young people to express what they feel is important and what they want changed and improved.

Enfield Council involved local residents during the Democratic Scrutiny Outreach Team's (DSOT) challenge of the proposed closure of Enfield's Chase Farm Hospital. This was one practice which helped the Council achieve a Municipal Journal award in recognition of its engagement with the community and hard to reach groups in scrutiny and decision making processes. The award nomination literature outlines how the views of Enfield's local residents and those of neighbouring Boroughs against the closure were fundamental in supporting the Council's argument to keep the hospital open. It was reported that the DSOT played a key role in ensuring that the residents' views were expressed at the highest level with MPs, Councillors, Ministers, NHS and residents.

Chesterfield Council brought health providers and young residents together to improve understanding of health inequalities as part of a scrutiny inquiry (CfPS [no date]). The case study reported that two young people said that they felt proud to be involved, and pleased that community representatives were very interested in their views.

Hillingdon Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee invited members of a Youth Council to take part in a committee meeting on the perceptions of CCTV (CfPS [no date]). During the meeting, the Youth Council members were given the opportunity to explain how they believed many of the crimes caught on CCTV were directly linked to alcohol and drug abuse by young people. The case study reported how the Committee found the views of young people were very useful in providing a different perspective, when undertaking the scrutiny review. Members said that they would work with young people again on future projects. One of the young people involved in the inquiry reported that it was nice that their views were taken into consideration.

Hackney Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee engaged with young people in its review of estate safety and antisocial behaviour (CfPS [no date]). It was reported that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee worked with Hackney Youth Parliament who helped them to develop a youth survey on the issue. The surveys were given out on the streets and in local youth clubs. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the response from young people was far better than could have been achieved without the involvement of the Youth Parliament.

#### **5.2.4. Strategies and Arrangements for Co-option**

The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012) recommends that local authorities employ several strategies to identify co-optees. These include advertising in the local press and via social networking sites. The Welsh Government has also recommended that role descriptions are developed for co-opted members.

A number of Council's have application forms online for members of the public to request participation as co-opted members in Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Within these forms, applicants are required to provide background information to support their suitability as a co-optee. Examples of local authorities which use these co-optee application forms include Redbridge Council, Wakefield Council, Leeds County Council, Merthyr Tydfil Council and Durham County Council.

Durham County Council has a protocol for the co-option of non-voting scrutiny members (2009). The protocol outlines the provision for co-opted members on each of the council's scrutiny committees and explains the application process in detail. One mechanism for verifying the appropriateness of prospective co-optees is the use of a character reference from a third party which is sought and considered prior to the appointment of co-optees to scrutiny committees.

Nottingham City has developed a role profile and person specification for co-optees to assist with recruitment and selection of co-opted members to its scrutiny committees.

The Welsh Government has included a pro forma role description for co-opted members in its Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012). It contains a series of suggested principle points and core competencies to assist councils in developing their specific recruitment arrangements.

#### **5.2.5. Types of Co-option in Practice**

A number of council's recruit co-opted members to their scrutiny committees. The examples cited in the research include the use of temporary ad-hoc co-optees for specific scrutiny inquiries and the appointment of co-optees to scrutiny committees for the full elected cycle.

Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care Services Scrutiny Committee invited appropriate representatives of service users and their advocates to its meetings on an ad-hoc basis rather than co-opting members (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2002). Members found that input from carers at a committee meeting was extremely useful in guiding their approach to a scrutiny of the National Carers Strategy. The reported advantages of this approach were enabling members to get a quick, but very high impact, picture of the experiences of service users. Service users and carers reported that they were able to feel involved and have an influence on the development of services to meet their needs. A Carers Topic Group was established as a direct consequence of the scrutiny, to review the allocation of the carers grant in order to support the objectives of the Carers Strategy.

Bristol City Council was cited by the ODPM (2002) as appointing co-optees to its six Scrutiny Commissions and ad-hoc Select Committees. It was reported

that co-optees had become an accepted part of the Council's approach to overview and scrutiny. The Council's commitment to co-optees was demonstrated when the training and development courses for elected members were also made available to co-opted members.

Merthyr Tydfil's co-option arrangements were cited by WLGA / CfPS (2010) in a report on citizen-centred scrutiny. It was reported that all co-opted members have made a great contribution to scrutiny. These contributions have included providing background specialist information to committees, leading certain task and finish groups and fully participating in committee meetings. Each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees have 2 co-opted members and 1 voluntary sector co-opted member nominated by Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil (VAMT) as stated in its practical guide to scrutiny (2012). The applications for co-opted scrutiny committee membership are publically available online. A formalised application process has been established, where applicants need to outline their experience and background relating to the Scrutiny Committee that they would like to join.

Wakefield Metropolitan District Council has 5 Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Each committee contains 11 Councillors, from all political parties, and at least 6 Co-opted Members from outside of the Council according to the Council's literature on applying to be a co-opted scrutiny committee member.

#### **5.2.6. Public Consultation for Research Purposes**

Various local authority scrutiny committees have engaged with the public for specific research purposes. In one local authority members of the public were recruited as peer lead researchers.

In Coventry Council, older people were used as peer researchers during a health scrutiny review of the hospital discharge process. The Leadership

Centre for Local Government [no date] explained how this enabled the patients' experiences of health and social care to be reported in a sympathetic and empathetic fashion.

Wrexham County Borough Council's scrutiny team conducted research into public engagement in the scrutiny process (WLGA / CfPS 2010). The Scrutiny Co-chairs' Coordinating Group considered the findings of a public survey, and incorporated many of the issues raised into forward work programmes. It is reported that a survey of 2,500 local people was commissioned, aiming to identify their understanding of local democracy and the scrutiny function, public issues relating to Council and partner organisations and how best to engage the public. The key findings were that 63% of respondents wanted to know more about scrutiny committees, with 53% being interested in suggesting topics for scrutiny.

The London Borough of Redbridge set up a scrutiny review to consider how services worked together to provide high quality care, and to identify how patient choice was supported. This scrutiny review was cited by the CfPS as good practice, for which an 'involving communities 2012' award was given. The CfPS report (2012) outlined how an 'end of life care event' was organised through the scrutiny review. During this event a number of stakeholders, including members of the public and specialists were brought together, to discuss and share ideas and improve patient experiences. It was reported that the main impact of the scrutiny review was the delivery of a more joined up approach to end of life care. This has particularly involved more effective information sharing between different organisations, and the provision of training on end of life care to care home staff.

Monmouthshire County Council's Adults Select Committee engaged with the public to identify the types of services needed by the growing ageing community (WLGA / CfPS 2010). This was reportedly achieved through issuing a press release via local media and using a website feedback form requesting the views of older citizens on their daily lives. A number of community clubs, groups, centres and places of residence were visited to

request the public's views in addition to engaging with Action 50+ and other groups which represent the views of older people in the local area. According to the case study, the engagement helped to improve understanding of the services wanted by the public. It also increased the enthusiasm of the scrutiny role among members, and enhanced their interest in co-option to make membership more publically representative.

Newport City Council invited market traders to submit evidence to a Scrutiny Committee, and sought views through the Council's in-house newspaper (Newport Matters) in a review of the Community Safety Warden Service (WLGA / CfPS 2010). Traders additionally joined members and officers on a visit to Swansea market, where the City Centre Partnership Team were met to see if lessons could be learned through considering Swansea's approach. Additionally, during its scrutiny review of the control of dogs in parks and cemeteries, it was reported that public views were sought via a press release / article in Newport Matters and the Council's website. WLGA / CfPS (2010) has reported that through this and other practices, Newport has adopted the CfPS principles of effective scrutiny as a foundation of its scrutiny function, particularly ensuring that scrutiny reflects the public voice.

### **5.3. Communication**

The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012) recommends that a multi-method communication strategy is developed to engage the public. The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012) also recommends that all councils have an accessible guide to the scrutiny function and the local authority's decision making process.

The Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012) recommends that programmes of planned work are publicly available. This has been achieved by a number of local authorities, via the publication of their

programmes of planned work for the municipal year on a dedicated section of their respective council websites.

### **5.3.1. Communication Strategies & Protocols**

Many local authorities have communication plans, which aim to help improve consistency in the delivery of their consultation and media communication processes. With regards to scrutiny specifically, some local authorities have developed communication strategies and others have established protocols to provide clarity in the communication process. Some councils have online information systems to inform members of the public of ongoing scrutiny work and discussions, including the interactive webcast of Scrutiny Committee meetings in one particular council.

An Eden District Council Participation Handbook (2011) was designed to support best practice community engagement and consultation within Eden Council and to help implement their Engagement and Consultation Strategy. It sets out how consultation and engagement should be undertaken, and includes an approach to considering who should be engaged for particular purposes.

Wiltshire County Council has an Overview and Scrutiny Communications Plan, which contains a scrutiny media protocol outlining the procedure for dealing with news releases and enquiries regarding scrutiny. The media protocol sets out the key principles and objectives for communication and the communication mediums used by the scrutiny function.

Buckinghamshire County Council has developed a scrutiny media protocol. This sets out agreed communication procedures including who can speak publically to the media on behalf of Scrutiny Committees or task and finish groups, who should approve press releases and when they should be issued.



West Dorset District Council has a protocol for public engagement. This protocol sets out the arrangements for members of the public to contact a Councillor, attend committee meetings, ask questions at full Council meetings, submit a petition for debate and contribute to scrutiny reviews. The protocol is publically available, and outlines the various arrangements for members of the public to engage with the Council and present their views. Providing a clear framework to the public of the mediums through which they can engage with the Council and the Scrutiny Function could make citizens more informed and aware of how they can present their views to the Council.

### **5.3.2. An Outline of the Local Authority Decision Making Process**

A large number of local authorities provide a publically available outline the decision making process within the council and the role and influence of the scrutiny function on their respective websites. Some local authority websites contain an outline of the decision making process within scrutiny including: Solihull Council; Rochdale Council; Hackney Council; Bristol Council; London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames; Bradford Council; Forest Heath District Council; Wyre Forest and North Lincolnshire. Furthermore, there are a number of local authorities that have also issued scrutiny handbooks, which are available electronically and provide more detailed information on the work and role of scrutiny committees.

Scrutiny handbooks have been issued by a number of local authorities which explain the roles of each of their scrutiny committees. Examples of councils which have issued scrutiny handbooks include Durham Council, Merton Council, Basildon Council, Kirklees Council, Newham Council and Leicester Council. Some local authorities have provided further information on the decision making processes within scrutiny committees. This has been achieved by including protocols, templates, tools and techniques which are used in the scrutiny working and decision making processes within the scrutiny handbook. Councils which have published some of the above

information within their scrutiny handbooks include Sunderland Council, Cornwall Council, Lancaster Council, and Dorset Council.

### **5.3.3. Publishing Forward Work Programmes**

The Guidance from the Local Government Measure 2011 (2012) recommends that programmes of planned work are publicly available.

A number of local authorities publish their scrutiny forward work programmes as a means of informing the public on the areas and topics which are being considered by their Scrutiny Committees. Examples of local authorities which publish their forward work programmes include: the Vale of Glamorgan; Wrexham Council; Cambridgeshire Council; North East Lincolnshire Council; Bridgend Council; Rotherham Council; Winchester Council; Hounslow Council; Bristol Council; Brent Council; The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham; Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.

### **5.3.4. Publication of Awareness Raising Literature.**

Awareness raising literature is published by local authorities in order to inform the public of the work being undertaken by scrutiny committees and in some instances to invite citizens to participate in scrutiny activity. Some local authorities have published scrutiny bulletins and leaflets, and others have issued calendars of planned engagement and consultation activity and enabled the public to sign up for email alerts relating to their particular areas of interest.

Camden published a Scrutiny Bulletin to publicise the work of Overview and Scrutiny. According to the ODPM (2002), the Scrutiny Bulletin is issued four times a year and explains the purpose of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny.

It outlines past and current scrutiny investigations and asks readers to contribute to scrutiny. This Bulletin is sent to 2000 community, voluntary and statutory organisations, and to libraries, district housing and social services offices and sports centres. Whilst the Bulletin aims to improve public awareness of the scrutiny function, it also provides guidance on how members of the public can present their views. It outlines how citizens can suggest topics for the scrutiny panel to investigate and send / present their views to a scrutiny panel. It also explains how citizens could participate as a co-opted member of a scrutiny panel.

Maidstone Council uses a wide range of methods to publicise its work to the local community. The ODPM (2002) outlined how informative leaflets and email bulletins have been used to support the information on the work of Scrutiny Committees included on the Council's website. Leaflets were distributed in local shopping centres, supermarkets and housing estates outlining scrutiny committee structures and their purposes. Maidstone Borough Council was cited by CfPS [no date] for using a number of methods to maximise public involvement in scrutiny, including an interactive scrutiny website, 'e-agendas' and a monthly 'e-bulletin' which is sent to over 250 subscribers to raise their awareness of committee work.

Hounslow London Borough has webcast Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings over the internet. This could reduce potential barriers to the observation of scrutiny committee meetings by the public.

More generally, there are local authorities which provide a facility for residents, interested organisations and groups to sign up for email alerts from their consultation pages for particular areas of interest. These include Milton Keynes Council, West Berkshire Council and Merton Council.

A number of councils also publish a calendar of planned engagement and consultation, including Birmingham Council, Oxfordshire Council and Kent Council.

## **5.4. Engagement at a Corporate Level**

Many local authorities engage with members of the public at a corporate level. Whilst this engagement is not instigated by the scrutiny function, the public views and opinions received on council services could be used by scrutiny committees to inform their work priorities.

At a corporate level, some local authorities have public engagement strategies. Additionally, some local authorities have appointed specific engagement officers / managers in order to improve consultation and engagement with stakeholders. Some local authorities have held public consultation events, such as meetings and listening days. Local authorities have also used online consultation functions, including e-panels, e-forums and e-polls. Engagement monitoring tools have been used by local authorities to collect engagement data, which could be analysed to identify public opinions and views, and to quantify the engagement activity achieved. Finally, a number of local authorities use networking and partnership arrangements as a means of developing engagement opportunities.

### **5.4.1. Public Engagement Strategies**

A Practitioners' Manual for Public Engagement has been developed by Participation Cymru on behalf of the Welsh Government (2012). The aim of the manual was to help public sector practitioners and others to develop and undertake effective public engagement in accordance with the National Principles of Public Engagement (2011). These principles have been endorsed by the Welsh Government and aim to offer a consistent approach and good standard for public engagement across Wales. The manual provides engagement guidance, decision making tools, techniques, methods and approaches which could be used to inform engagement strategies at a corporate or scrutiny committee level.

Carmarthenshire County Council is reported as creating a co-ordinated and planned approach to citizen engagement by the Wales Audit Office (2012). The Council is reported as developing internal networking, overseen by the Assistant Chief Executive and a joint working approach with Local Service Board partners to reduce duplication.

Bridgend Council developed a Citizen Engagement Strategy. According to the Wales Audit Office (WAO) the Strategy identified clear aims and outcomes, to support, encourage and enable local communities to better engage with the Local Service Board. WAO reported that this will also help ensure that the agencies on the Local Service Board engage with citizens and service users in a coordinated manner. The Council has also taken a lead role in the establishment of a Local Service Board Citizen Engagement Steering Group, which comprises key partner organisations, and aims to ensure that the Strategy is implemented successfully. A new website has been developed, to enable and encourage citizens to engage with Local Service Board partners online. The Wales Audit Office has reported that through these initiatives the Local Service Board has set foundations for effective and co-ordinated public engagement. The Local Service Board anticipates that consultation and engagement will be more effective, with reduced costs and the avoidance of 'consultation fatigue' by citizens.

#### **5.4.2. The Appointment of Engagement Officers / Managers**

A number of local authorities have recruited community engagement officers / managers. These officers have been recruited in order to improve consultation and engagement with key stakeholders. However, the engagement posts identified through this research have predominantly operated at a corporate level, rather than within the scrutiny function. Flintshire Council was the only local authority identified through the research which had an engagement post holder (Member Engagement Manager) who was directly involved in scrutiny work. The full nature of this post is not

publically available, although the Member Engagement Manager receives requests from members of the public for scrutiny topics to be included in the work programme.

The local authorities which have engagement officers / managers at a corporate level include Durham County Council, South Ribble Borough Council, Portsmouth Council, Solihull Council, Teignbridge District Council, Rossendale Borough Council, Harrogate Council and Lewes Council.

### **5.4.3. Communication Practices**

Some councils have not just informed members of the public, but have developed mechanisms for citizens to consult with, and participate in council activity. This level of engagement has been delivered through the use of public meetings and listening days and via online debating functionality, including e-panels, forums and polls. The views and opinions identified through these communication mediums could prompt changes in council services by the Cabinet or respective service areas. Equally, this information stream may be useful to Scrutiny Committees, who could use it to review the extent to which the design of council services has adapted in response to the needs of the public. The following local authorities have developed communication mediums at a full council level.

The Wolverhampton Partnership has an e-panel which aims to provide a mechanism for engaging people in forums and online polls. The Wolverhampton Partnership involves the Council, NHS and other public bodies, who answer queries and respond to citizens' comments.

Bristol City Council has a 'Have Your Say - 'Ask Bristol' website, which includes information on the latest consultations and petitions, which members of the public can get involved in. The website also provides details of forthcoming committee meetings and Twitter feeds.

Let's Talk Newcastle has been cited by the LGA (2012) as a medium of engaging and involving local people in Council decisions. This is delivered through a dedicated website, which gives local residents an opportunity to participate in online council surveys and discussions. It has been reported that since its launch, let's talk Newcastle has involved over 8,000 people, whose views influenced the Council's 2012 budget proposals and long term planning for the future. The LGA has reported that the approach has enabled two way dialogue to promote a wider understanding of Council services with feedback received of a quality much higher than that generated by traditional surveys.

TalkBack Bexley Residents' Panel was reported by CfPS (2008) as being a crucial part of the Council's commitment to consultation. TalkBack is a medium through which Bexley Council can identify what residents think about the services provided by the Council and other resident issues.

Lancashire County Council has developed a Cabinet Question Time arrangement which involves 7 cabinet members including the Council Leader and Deputy Leader. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (2006) cited this as an effective mechanism for improving community consultation and public participation. It allowed the Cabinet to have a wider dialogue with the general public, as well as to break down perceptions that they were detached from citizens. According to Lancashire Council's website, any member of the public can turn up to the Cabinet Question Time events and raise their views and questions on the Council and its services. This mechanism has enabled members of the public to scrutinise the Cabinet directly.

'The Bucks Debate' was a public consultation and engagement arrangement which aimed to identify the opinions of the public on what services were valued the most, which services should be provided in the future, and where money could be saved. The debate took place in Buckinghamshire in 2010 and engagement with the public was undertaken through a number of

mediums including, public meetings and an online discussion forum. Buckinghamshire Council's website stated that all feedback from the public was analysed and considered in the way forward.

Denbighshire empowered and involved the community in decision making on the proposed closure of leisure facilities (Wales Audit Office 2012). The Council engaged directly with the public and faced opposition. Through engagement, the reasons for the opposition were identified with residents, and a budget was offered to residents to spend on alternative facilities. The Wales Audit Office reported that the impact of this consultation was to change the perceptions of the public and lessen the potential for criticism and resentment through engagement at all stages of the review with the public.

The 'Big Debate', also in Denbighshire, was cited by the Wales Audit Office (2012) as a means of consulting with the public on the Council's proposed programme of efficiencies over the next four years. The aim was to prioritise key objectives identified by the public. The project used web-based consultation and written responses in what the Wales Audit office termed a pragmatic and open process.

The London Borough of Newham ran a series of 'listening days' which were cited by Warwick Business School [no date]. It was reported that 60 managers and Councillors interviewed shoppers and householders about their views of the Council, and whether they would like to be involved in deciding spending priorities. The results informed a range of Council policies and were reported to the community through public meetings and via the issuing of booklets.

Greenwich Council has made considerable progress in developing a commitment to, and mechanisms for, community consultation and engagement (Greenwich Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2006). The Council used a residents' online panel as an engagement mechanism, involving forums, surveys and consultation groups. Consultations via the residents' panel can be initiated by the Council or a partner organisation, such



as the Health Service or the Police. The aim is to use the views of local citizens to improve public services.

Thurrock Council used a proactive neighbourhood engagement approach to decision making (ODPM 2005). The Council was reported to be successful in developing the ability and opportunity for communities to influence local services. This was achieved through the establishment of an area committee, and a programme of community training to develop the public's capacity to be involved. According to the ODPM, local democracy has been made more relevant to the people of Thurrock and as a result there has been an increase in turn out at local elections of 10%.

Derbyshire Community Engagement Group (DCEG) is a network which involves the voluntary sector, in addition to local authorities and statutory partners (police, fire service and the health sector). According to the LGA [no date] the partnership has been set up to co-ordinate engagement activity across the county, build capacity and reduce duplication. It was reported that key achievements include the creation of Derbyshire Facilitators Network to enable public participation and partnership working, and a citizen's panel, which comprises 8,000 residents.

#### **5.4.4. Public Engagement Monitoring Tools**

Some local authorities utilise public engagement monitoring tools. These tools collect engagement data, which could be analysed to identify public opinions and views, and to quantify the engagement activity achieved.

Brighton & Hove City Council is cited by the Leadership Centre for Local Government [no date] as using social media as one aspect of a wider strategy to improve engagement with local residents. The Council was reported as researching into the perceptions residents held of the Council. They mapped public views of the Council, and put together a strategy to address the

negative perceptions and to improve the public image of the Council. The communications unit firstly used social media, and introduced a 'buzz' monitoring tool to identify sentiment and conversation about the Council online. A social media training programme was subsequently rolled out across the organisation.

Powys Councils Public Consultation and Engagement website Portal was cited by the Wales Audit Office (2012) for providing a good base to maintain and record engagement. It was reported that an additional benefit was the availability to further develop the portal for partners to use and share effective feedback from engagement activity.

Caerphilly Council has a public consultation and engagement website portal which uses new technology to collect, store and share public engagement activity among partners and the public (Wales Audit Office 2012). It is reported as providing a good base to maintain and record engagement.

#### **5.4.5. Networking and Partnership Arrangements**

A number of local authorities use networking and partnership arrangements as a means of developing engagement opportunities. Networking and partnership arrangements have been used to engage with stakeholder and community groups. The following engagement examples are corporate in nature and not specific to scrutiny. However, they could offer a means of identifying the public's views, opinions and needs, which could be used to inform scrutiny work.

The Tower Hamlets Partnership brought together stakeholders to give all community groups and service providers equal say on issues affecting the future of the Tower Hamlets (ODPM 2005). Partnership members include the Council, Police, the Primary Care Trust, public services, voluntary and community groups, faith communities, local businesses and residents.

According to the Tower Hamlets website, the partnership gives residents more powerful input in the way services are provided and helps to deliver the Council's Community Plan objectives, which thousands of people have contributed to.

Kent County Council is an exemplar of partnership working, according to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (2005). It has established an annual Stakeholders' Conference which was open to any interested parties. A wide range of stakeholders were invited to contribute their views and monitor the partnership's progress to achieving the 'Vision for Kent', which is a countywide strategy for the social, economic and wellbeing for the communities in Kent.

A Bristol Disability Forum (BDEF) is consulted on a range of matters related to the Council's service provision and proposals for improvements (ODPM 2005). It is reported that the BDEF has representation on a number of key decision making forums, including a Council Scrutiny Committee.

Croydon Council successfully engaged with many users of Supporting People services and their representatives according to an Audit Commission Inspection Report (2005). This was achieved through partnership boards and a bi-annual inclusive forum. In the social services department, partnership boards were created for the majority of client groups. Each partnership board had an associated service user forum or network. The Supporting People programme used these partnership boards as a mechanism to reach and consult with service users. An inclusive forum was established in Croydon in 2002. It is held at least twice a year to enable adult social care service users and their carers to meet with service managers and to comment on a full range of issues that affect adult social service users in the borough. The Council was awarded ODPM beacon status in 2005 for engaging with communities.

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council undertook a strategic review, resulting in an organisational re-structure, and the establishment of a new corporate

planning process aimed at improving processes and outcomes for customers. The ODPM (2005) has reported that through discussion with stakeholder groups, nine 'corporate ambitions' emerged. At the community level, the corporate ambitions helped the Council to focus on the delivery of customers' needs. Six area boards were established as community networks, and local 'listening days' were established for residents. It has been reported by the ODPM (2005), that the results of the listening days and surveys show that customers are seeing and feeling the benefits of the changes made.

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## 7. Appendices

### 7.1. Appendix A - PICK Scoring System

(Stockton-on-Tees Democracy Services, 2011. Scrutiny Toolkit)

#### PICK Scoring System

**P**ublic Interest: the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen

Score	Measure
0	no public interest
1	low public interest
2	medium public interest
3	high public interest

**I**mpact: priority should be given to the issues which make the biggest difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area

Score	Measure
0	no impact
1	low impact
2	medium impact
3	high impact

**C**ouncil Performance: priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other agencies, are not performing well.

Score	Measure
0	'Green' on or above target performance
1	'Amber'.
2	low performance 'Red'

**K**eep in Context: work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

Score	Measure
0	Already dealt with/ no priority
1	Longer term aspiration or plan
2	Need for review acknowledged and worked planned elsewhere
3	Need for review acknowledged

Each topic will be scored under each category as indicated above. Where a category is not applicable, no score will be given.

## 7.2. Appendix B – Topic Selection Criteria Template

(East Lindsey District Council, 2007. Scrutiny Toolkit)

### Topic Selection Criteria Template

#### Initial Topic Selection Criteria and Developing a Rationale

Topic:

Suggested by:

Date:

#### Step 1 – Initial selection criteria:

Selection Criteria	Rejection Criteria
Improvements to services would be likely	The topic is already being addressed
High public concern shown through consultation	Scrutiny is unlikely to result in service improvements
Poor performing service	Matter sub-judice or prejudicial to the Council's interests
Enhances the Council's Priorities	The issue is more appropriately addressed by a body other than Overview and Scrutiny
High budgetary commitment	The objective cannot be achieved within given timescales
New guidance or legislation has recently become available	The subject topic is too broad to make a review realistic

Select: ☐ Reject: ☐

#### Step 2 – Should a suggested topic pass the initial selection criteria a rationale will need to be developed:

Rationale for Scrutiny Enquiry	
Rationale	
Evidence	
Evidence	
Desired Outcome	
Risks	

### 7.3. Appendix C – Prioritising Topic Template

(East Lindsey District Council, 2007. Scrutiny Toolkit)

#### Prioritising the Topic Template

Topic:

Suggested by:

Date:

Use the rationale and the following scoring guide to gauge the importance and impact of the subject:

Score	Importance	Impact
0	No evidence of links to Aims and Priorities	No potential benefits
1	No evidence of links to Aims and Priorities, but a subject of high public concern	Minor potential benefits affecting only one ward / customer / client group
2	Some evidence of links, but indirect	Minor benefits to two groups / moderate benefits to one
3	Good evidence linking both Aims and Priorities	Moderate benefits to more than one group / substantial benefits to one
4	Strong evidence linking both, and has a high level of public concern	Substantial community-wide benefits

Importance score:

Impact score:

Importance	4	Possible Topic For Scrutiny But Not a Priority	Priority Topic For Scrutiny		
	3				
	2	Reject Topic For Scrutiny	Possible Topic For Scrutiny But Not a Priority		
	1				
	0	1	2	3	4
	Impact				

Outcomes:

Reject Topic for Scrutiny - Reject:

☐

Possible Topic for Scrutiny - Place on reserve list:

☐

Priority Topic for Scrutiny - Select:

☐



# NATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN WALES

EGWYDDORION  
CENEDLAETHOL AR  
GYFER YMGYSYLLTU  
Â'R CYHOEDD YNG  
NGHYMRU

## 1. Engagement is effectively designed to make a difference

Engagement gives a real chance to influence policy, service design and delivery from an early stage.

### Guidance notes:

- Be clear from the start as to whether engagement is needed or not.
- Being clear about what can and can't be achieved is important from the very beginning.
- Engagement may tell us that change is not needed at this time.
- Measuring the outcomes or results of the engagement process is important to show how it has made a difference.

## 1. Cynllunnir yr ymgysylltu'n effeithiol i wneud gwahaniaeth

Mae ymgysylltu'n rhoi gwir gyfle i ddylanwadu ar bolisiâu, ar gynllunio gwasanaethau ac ar gyflwyno gwasanaethau o gyfnod cynnar.

### Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Rhaid bod yn glir o'r dechrau ynghylch a oes angen ymgysylltu ai peidio.
- Mae bod yn glir ynghylch beth ellir ac na ellir ei gyflawni'n bwysig o'r dechrau un.
- Gall ymgysylltu ddweud wrthym nad oes angen newid ar hyn o bryd.
- Mae mesur canlyniadau neu allbynnau'r broses ymgysylltu'n bwysig er mwyn dangos sut mae wedi gwneud gwahaniaeth.

## 2. Encourage and enable everyone affected to be involved, if they so choose

The people affected by an issue or change are included in opportunities to engage as an individual or as part of a group or community, with their views both respected and valued.

### Guidance notes:

- Engagement means giving people the chance to be involved. It is a matter of choice.
- Care should be taken to make sure that anyone who may have an interest in taking part is identified.
- Different groups of people can be contacted through many community and special interest groups that already exist.

## 2. Annog a galluogi pawb a effeithir i gymryd rhan, os ydynt yn dewis hynny

Cynhwysir y bobl a effeithir gan fater neu newid mewn cyfleoedd i ymgysylltu fel unigolion neu fel rhan o grŵp neu gymuned, ac mae eu safbwyntiau'n cael eu parchu a'u gwerthfawrogi.

### Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Mae ymgysylltu'n golygu rhoi cyfle i bobl gymryd rhan. Mater o ddewis ydyw.
- Dylid bod yn ofalus er mwyn sicrhau y tynnir sylw at unrhyw un sydd â diddordeb mewn cymryd rhan.
- Gellir cysylltu â gwahanol grwpiau o bobl drwy gyfrwng nifer o grwpiau cymunedol a grwpiau diddordeb arbennig sydd eisoes yn bodoli.

## 3. Engagement is planned and delivered in a timely and appropriate way

The engagement process is clear, communicated to everyone in a way that's easy to understand within a reasonable timescale, and the most suitable method/s for those involved is used.

## 3. Cynllunnir a chyflwynir yr ymgysylltu mewn ffordd amserol a phriodol

Mae'r broses ymgysylltu'n glir ac yn cael ei chyfathrebu i bawb mewn ffordd hawdd i'w deall ac o fewn amserlen resymol. Hefyd, defnyddir y dull/iau mwyaf addas ar gyfer y rhai sy'n cymryd rhan.

## Guidance notes:

- There are many levels of engagement and the most suitable should be decided upon before any engagement activity is planned.
- A varied range of methods is available to match people's different preferences and abilities to take part.

## 4. Work with relevant partner organisations

Organisations should communicate with each other and work together wherever possible to ensure that people's time is used effectively and efficiently.

## Guidance notes:

- Before beginning an engagement process it is important to check that your organisation or a partner organisation does not already have the information you need.
- A number of Local Service Boards have developed joint databases of consultation and engagement work so that they can work more effectively with the public.
- If public and third sector bodies work closely together the on-going engagement process will be far more effective.

## 5. The information provided will be jargon free, appropriate and understandable

People are well placed to take part in the engagement process because they have easy access to relevant information that is tailored to meet their needs.

## Guidance notes:

- Making use of 'easy read' information available in a variety of formats e.g. large print, audio, DVD.
- To make sure that information is available in Welsh and English as well as other ethnic minority languages.
- To make sure that information is culturally and religiously sensitive.
- Also important not to over burden people with irrelevant information.

## Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Ceir sawl lefel o ymgysylltu a dylid penderfynu ar yr un fwyaf addas cyn cynllunio unrhyw weithgarwch ymgysylltu.
- Mae ystod amrywiol o ddulliau ar gael i gyfateb i wahanol hoffterau a galluoedd pobl i gymryd rhan.

## 4. Gweithio gyda sefydliadau partner perthnasol

Dylai sefydliadau gyfathrebu â'i gilydd a chydweithio lle bo modd er mwyn sicrhau bod amser pobl yn cael ei ddefnyddio'n effeithiol ac yn effeithlon.

## Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Cyn dechrau ar broses ymgysylltu, mae'n bwysig gwneud yn siŵr nad yw'r wybodaeth rydych ei hangen gan eich sefydliad neu sefydliad partner eisoes.
- Mae nifer o Fyrddau Gwasanaeth Lleol wedi datblygu basau data ar y cyd o waith ymgynghori ac ymgysylltu, fel eu bod yn gallu gweithio'n fwy effeithiol â'r cyhoedd.
- Os bydd cyrff cyhoeddus a chyrff y trydydd sector yn cydweithio'n agos, bydd y broses ymgysylltu parhaus yn llawer mwy effeithiol.

## 5. Ni fydd unrhyw jargon yn rhan o'r wybodaeth a ddarperir a bydd yn briodol ac yn hawdd i'w deall

Mae pobl mewn sefyllfa dda i gymryd rhan yn y broses ymgysylltu oherwydd mae gwybodaeth berthnasol sydd wedi'i haddasu i ddiwallu eu hanghenion ar gael iddynt yn hwylus.

## Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Gwneud defnydd o wybodaeth 'hawdd i'w darllen' sydd ar gael mewn ffurfiau amrywiol e.e. print mawr, sain, DVD.
- I sicrhau bod yr wybodaeth ar gael yn y Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg, yn ogystal â mewn ieithoedd ethnig lleiafrifol eraill.
- I sicrhau bod yr wybodaeth yn sensitif yn ddiwylliannol ac yn grefyddol.
- Mae hefyd yn bwysig peidio â rhoi gormod o faich ar bobl o ran gwybodaeth amherthnasol.



## 6. Make it easier for people to take part

People can engage easily because any barriers for different groups of people are identified and addressed.

### Guidance notes:

- All of us can experience barriers to taking part depending on the issue and the situation. Any barriers for different people (including the professionals involved) should be identified for each circumstance and reasonable steps taken to overcome them.
- Organisers of engagement activities should be aware of and address typical barriers such as different languages, sight or hearing impairment, disability, transport access etc. as well as more specific needs and preferences whether cultural, LGB or other.
- Participants should have the opportunity to identify issues they feel are barriers to their involvement rather than professionals/organisers alone.
- Many groups of people with particular needs or preferences will need specific approaches and opportunities to engage them, as well as the opportunity to be involved in mainstream engagement.

## 7. Enable people to take part effectively

Engagement processes should try to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence of all participants.

### Guidance notes:

- Engagement is not just about getting people's views on a specific issue.
- Engagement is part of developing people's ability to take part in community and political activities; approaches and methods of engagement should try to make engagement a positive experience in terms of building skills, knowledge and confidence.  
(See 'Values and Principles, p7, National Strategic Framework for Community Development in Wales)

## 6. Ei gwneud yn haws i bobl gymryd rhan

Gall pobl ymgysylltu'n hawdd oherwydd mae unrhyw rwystrau i wahanol grwpiau o bobl yn cael eu datgan ac yn cael sylw.

### Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Gall pob un ohonom brofi rhwystrau'n ein hatal rhag cymryd rhan, gan ddibynnu ar y mater a'r sefyllfa. Dylid datgan unrhyw rwystrau ar gyfer gwahanol bobl (yn cynnwys y gweithwyr proffesiynol cysylltiedig) ar gyfer pob amgylchiad a dylid cymryd camau rhesymol i'w goresgyn.
- Dylai'r rhai sy'n trefnu'r gweithgareddau ymgysylltu fod yn ymwybodol o rwystrau nodweddiadol, a rhoi sylw iddynt, fel gwahanol ieithoedd, nam ar y golwg neu'r clyw, anabledd, argaeledd trafndiaeth ac ati, yn ogystal ag anghenion a hoffterau mwy penodol, boed yn ddiwylliannol, pobl sy'n lesbiaid, yn hoyw neu'n ddeurywiol neu arall.
- Dylai'r cyfranogwyr gael cyfle i ddatgan y materion sy'n teimlo fel rhwystrau'n eu hatal rhag cymryd rhan, yn hytrach na'r gweithwyr proffesiynol/ trefnyddion yn unig.
- Ar gyfer y grwpiau niferus o bobl ag anghenion neu hoffterau arbennig, bydd raid wrth ddulliau a chyfleoedd penodol i'w hymgysylltu, yn ogystal â chyfle i gymryd rhan mewn ymgysylltu prif ffrwd.

## 7. Galluogi pobl i gymryd rhan yn effeithiol

Dylai'r prosesau ymgysylltu ceisio datblygu sgiliau, gwybodaeth a hyder y cyfranogwyr i gyd.

### Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Nid dim ond ceisio barn pobl am bwnc penodol mae ymgysylltu'n ei olygu.
- Mae ymgysylltu'n rhan o ddatblygu gallu pobl i gymryd rhan mewn gweithgareddau cymunedol a gwleidyddol; dylai'r dulliau o ymgysylltu geisio gwneud yr ymgysylltu'n brofiad cadarnhaol o ran meithrin sgiliau, gwybodaeth a hyder.  
(Gweler 'Gwerthoedd ac Egwyddorion, t7, Y Fframwaith Strategol Cenedlaethol ar gyfer Datblygu Cymunedol yng Nghymru)
- Deallir na fydd ymgysylltu bob amser yn gadarnhaol o ran rhoi safbwynt cyfranogwr ar

- ➔ It is understood that engagement will not always be positive in terms of a participant's view being put into practice.
- ➔ This does not just apply to ongoing engagement over a long period; experience of a single focus group can be confidence building or undermining for example.
- ➔ The principle applies to professionals as well as to community participants. Many public services professionals are not trained or skilled to be effective facilitators.

## 8. Engagement is given the right resources and support to be effective

Appropriate training, guidance and support are provided to enable all participants to effectively engage, including both community participants and staff.

### Guidance notes:

- ➔ Ineffective, or even negative, experiences of engagement are often because organisations and staff concerned try to short cut engagement to use less staff time and money.
- ➔ Good management and leadership within organisations are crucial if effective engagement is to be carried out.
- ➔ It takes time, people and resources to reach out to participants, make engagement accessible and informed, and provide a range of ways for people to express their views or decisions.

## 9. People are told the impact of their contribution

Timely feedback is given to all participants about the views they expressed and the decisions or actions taken as a result; methods and form of feedback should take account of participants' preferences.

### Guidance notes:

- ➔ The key to motivating people to engage again is that they see the benefit and result from their contribution. Timely feedback is essential for participants to be able to see the results of their input.

waith.

- ➔ Nid dim ond i ymgysylltu parhaus dros gyfnod hir o amser mae hyn yn berthnasol; er enghraifft, gall profiad grŵp ffocws unigol feithrin neu danseilio hyder.
- ➔ Mae'r egwyddor yn berthnasol i weithwyr proffesiynol ac i gyfranogwyr cymunedol. Ceir llawer o weithwyr proffesiynol yn y gwasanaethau cyhoeddus nad ydynt wedi'u hyfforddi nac yn fedrus i fod yn hwyluswyr effeithiol.

## 8. Rhoddir yr adnoddau a'r gefnogaeth briodol i ymgysylltu er mwyn iddo fod yn effeithiol

Darperir hyfforddiant, cyfarwyddyd a chefnogaeth briodol er mwyn galluogi'r cyfranogwyr i gyd i ymgysylltu'n effeithiol, yn cynnwys cyfranogwyr cymunedol a staff.

### Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- ➔ Ceir profiadau aneffeithiol, neu negyddol hyd yn oed, mewn perthynas ag ymgysylltu oherwydd bod sefydliadau yn aml iawn, a'r staff dan sylw, yn ceisio torri'n ôl ar ymgysylltu er mwyn defnyddio llai o amser y staff ac arian.
- ➔ Mae rheoli ac arwain da mewn sefydliadau'n hanfodol os am sicrhau ymgysylltu effeithiol.
- ➔ Mae angen amser, pobl ac adnoddau er mwyn estyn allan at gyfranogwyr a gwneud ymgysylltu'n hwylus a phriodol, a darparu amrywiaeth o ffyrdd i bobl fynegi eu safbwyntiau neu eu penderfyniadau.

## 9. Mae pobl yn cael gwybod beth yw effaith eu cyfraniad

Rhoddir adborth amserol i'r cyfranogwyr i gyd am y safbwyntiau a fynegwyd ganddynt a'r trafodaethau a'r camau gweithredu a gafwyd o ganlyniad; dylai dull a ffurf yr adborth roi ystyriaeth i hoffterau'r cyfranogwyr.

### Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- ➔ Yr allwedd i gymell pobl i ddechrau ymgysylltu eto yw drwy iddynt weld manteision a chanlyniadau eu cyfraniad. Mae adborth amserol yn hanfodol er mwyn i'r cyfranogwyr allu gweld canlyniadau eu mewnbyn.

- Not every contribution will be acted on but explanation for decisions in response to participants' views can build trust that organisations at least listen and consider those views.
- Different participants have different needs and preferences for receiving feedback which should be taken into account – this links to overcoming barriers in principle 6.
- This principle refers to feedback to participants who have taken part in an engagement process, and to wider stakeholders. Feedback from people about services that are currently being delivered is a different issue and part of information gathering.
- Good feedback needs to be a mix of general information to all stakeholders about an engagement process and the results (e.g. via a general newsletter); but should also include more specific and perhaps more detailed feedback to the smaller number of active participants in the process (e.g. a summary to participants in a focus group or workshop).

- Ni weithredir ar bob cyfraniad ond gall yr eglurhad dros y penderfyniadau fel ymateb i safbwyntiau'r cyfranogwyr feithrin ymddiriedaeth bod sefydliadau'n gwrando o leiaf, ac yn ystyried y safbwyntiau hynny.
- Mae gan wahanol gyfranogwyr gwahanol anghenion a hoffterau ar gyfer derbyn adborth, a dylid eu hystyried – mae hyn yn cysylltu â goresgyn rhwystrau yn egwyddor 6.
- Mae'r egwyddor hon yn cyfeirio at adborth i gyfranogwyr sydd wedi cymryd rhan mewn proses ymgysylltu, ac i randdeiliaid ehangach. Mae adborth gan bobl am wasanaethau sy'n cael eu cyflwyno ar hyn o bryd yn fater gwahanol ac yn rhan o gasglu gwybodaeth.
- Mae'n rhaid i adborth da fod yn gymysgedd o wybodaeth gyffredinol i'r rhanddeiliaid i gyd am broses ymgysylltu a'r canlyniadau (e.e. drwy gyfrwng cylchlythyr cyffredinol); ond dylai hefyd gynnwys adborth mwy penodol, a manylach efallai, i'r nifer llai o gyfranogwyr a gymerodd ran yn y broses (e.e. crynodeb i gyfranogwyr mewn grŵp ffocws neu weithdy).

## 10. Learn and share lessons to improve the process of engagement

People's experience of the process of engagement should be monitored and evaluated to measure its success in engaging people and the effectiveness of their participation; lessons should be shared and applied in future engagements.

### Guidance notes:

- This principle is about the process of engagement itself and its effectiveness, but not the topic of the engagement directly and the results.
- The results for the issue will also need monitoring and evaluating as part of the usual planning, action and review cycle. Maybe this needs elaborating upon for those who may not have experience around this cycle?
- The evaluation should be made available to participants in an accessible and appropriate format. It may form the basis for a further stage of engagement to review and design the process and improve it for the future.

## 10. Dysgu a rhannu gwersi i wella'r broses o ymgysylltu

Dylid monitro a gwerthuso profiadau pobl o'r broses ymgysylltu er mwyn mesur ei llwyddiant o ran ymgysylltu pobl ac effeithiolrwydd eu cyfranogiad; dylid rhannu'r gwersi a ddysgir a'u defnyddio mewn ymgysylltu yn y dyfodol.

### Nodiadau cyfarwyddyd:

- Mae'r egwyddor hon yn ymwneud â'r broses ymgysylltu ei hun a'i heffeithiolrwydd, ond nid y pwnc ymgysylltu'n uniongyrchol, na'i ganlyniadau.
- Hefyd, bydd raid monitro a gwerthuso'r canlyniadau ar gyfer y mater fel rhan o'r cylch cynllunio, gweithredu ac adolygu arferol. Efallai bod angen ymhelaethu ar hyn ar gyfer y rhai nad ydynt wedi cael profiad perthnasol i'r cylch hwn?
- Dylid sicrhau bod y gwerthusiad ar gael i gyfranogwyr mewn fformat hwylus a phriodol. Gall fod yn sail ar gyfer cam ymgysylltu pellach er mwyn adolygu a chynllunio'r broses, a'i gwella ar gyfer y dyfodol.

## Definitions:

These are working definitions for the purposes of these Principles. It is recognised that different organisations will use a variety of terminology to mean similar things.

**Engagement:** An active and participative process by which people can influence and shape policy and services that includes a wide range of different methods and techniques.

**Consultation:** A formal process by which policy makers and service providers ask for the views of interested groups and individuals.

**Participation:** People being actively involved with policy makers and service planners from an early stage of policy and service planning and review.

These Principles were developed by Participation Cymru working with TPAS Cymru, under the guidance of the Participation Cymru partnership.

Endorsed by The First Minister of Wales, The Right Hon. Carwyn Jones AM on behalf of the Welsh Government. March 2011

### Organisations on the Advisory Panel:

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales  
Association of Chief Police Officers in Wales  
Countryside Council for Wales  
Her Majesty's Courts Service  
National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare  
One Voice Wales  
Participation Unit, Save the Children Wales  
Tenants Participation Advisory Service Cymru  
Wales Association of County Voluntary Councils  
Wales Audit Office  
Wales Council for Voluntary Action  
Welsh Assembly Government  
Welsh Local Government Association  
Welsh NHS Confederation

## Diffiniadau:

Dyma ddiffiniadau gweithredol at ddibenion yr Egwyddorion hyn. Cydnabyddir y bydd gwahanol sefydliadau'n defnyddio terminoleg amrywiol i olygu pethau tebyg.

**Ymgysylltu:** Proses weithredol a chyfranogol a ddefnyddir gan bobl er mwyn siapio a dylanwadu ar bolisïau a gwasanaethau sy'n cynnwys amrywiaeth eang o wahanol ddulliau a thechnegau.

**Ymgynghoriad:** Proses ffurfiol a ddefnyddir gan lunwyr polisïau a darparwyr gwasanaethau i holi am farn grwpiau ac unigolion â diddordeb.

**Cyfranogiad:** Pobl sy'n ymwneud â llunwyr polisïau a chynllunwyr gwasanaethau o gyfnod cynnar yn y gwaith o gynllunio ac adolygu polisïau a gwasanaethau.

Cafodd yr egwyddorion hyn eu datblygu gan Cyfranogaeth Cymru trwy weithio gyda TPAS Cymru, o dan arweiniad partneriaeth Cyfranogaeth Cymru. Cawsant eu cymeradwyo gan Brif Weinidog Cymru, Y Gwir Anrhydeddus Carwyn Jones AC ar ran Llywodraeth Cymru.

Mawrth 2011

### Mudiadau ar y Panel Cyngori:

Amgueddfa Cymru  
Asiantaeth Genedlaethol Arwain ac Arloesi mewn Gofal Iechyd  
Confederasiwn GIG Cymru  
Cymdeithas Cyngorau Gwirfoddol Sirol Cymru  
Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru  
Cymdeithas Prif Swyddogion yr Heddlu  
Cyngor Cefn Gwlad Cymru  
Cyngor Gweithredu Gwirfoddol Cymru  
Gwasanaeth Cyngori ar Gyfranogiad Tenantiaid Cymru  
Gwasanaeth Llysoedd Ei Mawrhydi  
Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru  
Uned Cyfranogaeth Achub y Plant Cymru  
Un Llais Cymru





## **APPENDIX 6**

### **INDICATORS RELATING TO PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FROM THE *CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE WELSH SCRUTINY 2014***

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

- **ENVIRONMENT**

- Overview and scrutiny is recognised by the executive and corporate management team as an important council mechanism for community engagement, and facilitates greater citizen involvement in governance. [Better Engagement]

- **PRACTICE**

- Overview and scrutiny is characterised by effective communication to raise awareness of, and encourage participation in democratic accountability. [Better Engagement]
- Overview and scrutiny operates non-politically and deals effectively with sensitive political issues, tension and conflict. [Better Engagement]
- Overview and scrutiny builds trust and good relationships with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders. [Better Engagement]

- **IMPACT**

- Overview and scrutiny enables the 'voice' of local people and communities across the area to be heard as part of decision and policy-making processes. [Better Engagement]

## INDICATORS

- Scrutiny Councillors are able to adopt different styles of information gathering according to the different status of interviewees.
- Scrutiny makes good use of co-optees and 'expert' witnesses in their inquiries.
- The Constitution contains clear guidance for the Call-in procedure which includes public speaking rights for stakeholders which are corporately agreed, understood and applied.
- Scrutiny Units link with Communication and Marketing teams to develop accessible multi-method communication and engagement strategies which differentiate between the 'general public' and those individuals or communities who are relevant to issues identified on a Committee's forward work programme.
- Forward work programmes, agendas, minutes and reports are routinely published on the council's website.
- Councils develop internal mechanisms to better enable members of the public to engage in scrutiny activity. Such mechanisms would include:
  - *Request that an item be placed on an agenda for consideration by an overview and scrutiny committee (providing this is of immediate relevance to a topic included on its FWP);*
  - *Submit evidence (oral or written) to a planned or ongoing scrutiny review or investigation;*
  - *Participate as a co-opted Member;*
  - *Submit evidence (oral or written) relating to a Call-In of an Executive decision.*
- Scrutiny Units send copies of Committee Forward Work Programmes to a range of local stakeholders such as County Voluntary Councils.
- Scrutiny utilises co-option when considered appropriate as a means to develop partner relations and representative participation that may add significant value to the work of scrutiny committees.
- Public engagement activities are cost-effective and add social value to the work of scrutiny committees.
- The Executive, Corporate Management Team and Scrutiny process consider 'public engagement' as a valuable method of social research.

- The scrutiny process develops protocols to manage public expectations in terms of setting out how any information submitted to relevant overview and scrutiny committees will be used and detailing how and when feedback will be provided. Such protocols would cover;
  - *Public speaking arrangements at Scrutiny Committee / JOSC meetings (to include Call-In)*
  - *Public involvement in Sub-Committee and / or Task & Finish Group Meetings*
  - *Managing a request for scrutiny (including petitions)*
  - *Dealing with requests for public co-option*
- Safeguards are built into public engagement processes to protect against committees being lobbied in potentially vexatious ways.
- On occasions where Overview and scrutiny committees refuse public requests to include particular items on their agendas, a clear rationale is provided to the originator of the request.
- Scrutiny Units link with Communication and Marketing teams to develop accessible multi-method communication and engagement strategies which differentiate between the 'general public' and those individuals or communities who are relevant to issues identified on a Committee's forward work programme.
- Scrutiny minutes, agendas and reports communicate complex issues simply.
- There are regular press releases detailing the work of scrutiny committees
- Scrutiny Officers and Chairs meet regularly with voluntary sector representatives as a means to enable more specific representational input into the work of scrutiny committees.
- Councils develop outline role descriptions for co-opted members which clarify the expectations of both committees and potential co-opted members.
- Councils develop recruitment processes when recruiting for co-opted members on an individual or representational basis. These would include core competencies and criteria against which to evaluate the suitability of candidates.
- There is close contact and regular communication between the council's scrutiny function and those organisations or agencies being scrutinised. This includes making effective use of memorandums of understanding and/or informal protocols to clarify working relationships.