
Scrutiny Impact Assessment

Reason for the Report

1. To present Members with an opportunity to consider the final draft report of the Committee's inquiry into Scrutiny Impact Assessment.

Background

2. The Policy Review and Performance (PRAP) Scrutiny Committee, as part of its 2018/19 work programme, committed to a Task and Finish Inquiry that would review the impact of Cardiff Council's Scrutiny function to date, and develop a model to capture the benefits of scrutiny activity as an established function of the Council's decision making process.

3. The terms of reference for the inquiry were agreed by Committee as follows:

To evaluate the impact of the scrutiny function on the delivery of Council services, by:

- Reviewing existing evidence of scrutiny impact on Council decision-making and service development since 2012.

To propose a mechanism for capturing the future impact of scrutiny, by:

- Identifying theoretical models for recording and capturing scrutiny impact;
- Seeking evidence of successful approaches to monitoring impact by other Councils and public bodies in England and Wales;

- Identifying a practical model for recording and capturing scrutiny impact, appropriate for use in Cardiff.
- Acknowledging that calculating impact/ value of scrutiny can be subjective and there are differing types of impact – immediate, short term, longer term, strategic, operational, financial, and quality of service delivery

4. Members of the Task & Finish group were:

Councillor David Walker (Chair)

Councillor Norma Mackie

Councillor Joe Boyle

5. Following a change in the political balance of the Council in June 2019 Councillor Boyle was unable to retain his seat on the PRAP scrutiny committee, however up to this point contributed to early research and discussion.

6. The key output from this review was to be a practical model for recording and capturing scrutiny impact appropriate for use in Cardiff. The model should also be applicable for use by other Authorities and public sector bodies who share an interest in using a mechanism for capturing the benefits and outputs of scrutiny.

7. The nature of the topic under review required a research heavy approach, therefore the task & finish group commissioned two primary research projects, undertaken by the scrutiny research function, seeking evidence, both in person and from published findings of the following organisations:

- APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence)
- CFPS (The Centre for Public Scrutiny).
- Welsh Local Government Scrutiny Officer network

- House of Commons, Communities and Local Government Committee - Effectiveness of local authority overview and scrutiny committees.
- National Assembly for Wales. Assembly Commission. Face to face interview with National Assembly for Wales Committee and Research staff.
- The Constitution Unit. University College London.

Way Forward

8. Attached at **Appendix 1** is the final draft report of the task group. Members are particularly referred to the **Recommendations (page 35)** and the Model proposed (*pages 13-34*).
9. Members may wish to consider the report, raise any matters for clarification with the task group, and agree whether to approve the report and refer it for consideration by the Cabinet.

Legal Implications

10. 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 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 of 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

11. 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the Scrutiny Impact Assessment Model, a report of its Task and Finish Group.
2. Agree the report, subject to any comments the Committee wishes to make, and agree that it is forwarded for consideration by the Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

DAVINA FIORE

Director of Governance and Legal Services

5 March 2020