

Cardiff Council

Participation Strategy 2023-27



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd. This document is also available in Welsh.



**STRONGER
FAIRER
GREENER**



Foreword

Promoting civic participation and giving the people of Cardiff a voice in shaping the decisions that affect their lives represent key priorities for the Council. They are also issues that are close to my heart.

We are therefore committed to doing everything we can to ensure every voice is heard when we are making decisions. This means giving everyone an opportunity to contribute whilst amplifying the voices of those who are currently less likely to get involved in the decision-making process.

Everyone in the city should have opportunities to influence decisions and shape service provision and we, for our part, must be ready to listen and respond. We may not always go forward with the public's preferred option but when we do not, we need to be clear and transparent, and explain why not.

This Participation Strategy will have two distinct components:

- Consultation and engagement to promote citizen voice in decision-making, and;
- Promoting participation in the democratic process.

We want all communities to feel supported, have a say on the big decisions the Council will be taking and play a key role in local service delivery, whilst ensuring that the diversity of the city is reflected in our work.

This strategy is therefore focused on engaging and collaborating with our communities, empowering citizens to have their say on what matters for their local area and promoting participation in democracy



Councillor Julie Sangani

Cabinet Member for Tackling Poverty, Equality and Public Health
(Public Health and Equalities)



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Background and Purpose

The Importance of Public Participation

Public participation is essential to ensuring that the voices of citizens are at the heart of decision-making. It provides an opportunity for the needs and aspirations of communities to be heard and allows public service providers to respond. This Participation Strategy sets out our commitment to strengthening participation and engagement, and a series of actions to ensure that every voice in the city can be heard.

The purpose of this Participation Strategy is to establish a relationship with communities based on trust, a commitment to listen to all voices, and that those voices are heard as we work together to address local priorities.

Meeting our Legislative Requirements

Local Government and Election (Wales) Act 2021

The Local Government and Election (Wales) Act aims to provide local government with new ways to support and serve their communities and to reinvigorate local democracy in Wales. Part 3 of the Act places a duty on Cardiff Council to promote and encourage participation in council decision-making, including the publication of a participation strategy. Part 6 of the Act requires the Council to undertake a review (self-assessment) of the extent that it is exercising its functions effectively, and whether we are using our resources efficiently. Engagement and consultation are an integral part of this self-assessment process.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act brought together and replaced previous anti-discrimination laws and, under the Act, Cardiff Council must involve and engage all those with Protected Characteristics. Protected Characteristics, listed below, are aspects of a person's identity which makes them who they are, and everyone in Cardiff will have a few of these characteristics.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Re-assignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Ethnic Group – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership (in terms of discrimination in employment)

It is essential that we reach out and engage with everyone across Cardiff, so we understand the views of people with each of these characteristics and can capture their lived experiences. This will inform our understanding of the impact of our actions.

Welsh Language Measure 2011

In Wales, the Welsh language should not be treated any less favourably than the English language. People in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so. The official languages of the Council are Welsh and English. When carrying out engagement we must work in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. This includes the delivery of engagement bilingually.

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (Section 62)

The local government scrutiny role is integral to helping people feel they are able to influence what goes on in their locality. Scrutiny has an important role in stimulating connections between different individuals and groups, and channelling community intelligence into the improvement processes of the Council and our partners. Engaging the public more deeply in scrutiny activity may be regarded as a hallmark of healthy democracy. Better communication about local decision-making processes and greater representative participation will help ensure that more direct experiences of community life inform strategic thinking and operational practice. Section 62 of the Measure places a requirement on local authorities to make arrangements that enable all persons who live or work in the area to bring to the attention of the relevant overview and scrutiny committees their views on any matter under consideration by the committee.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Consultation and engagement are critical components of how Cardiff Council embeds the Well-being of Future Generations in its day-to-day work. Involving people in decision-making and ensuring their views reflect the diversity of the city is a key part of applying the sustainable development principle and making sure that involvement is a key feature of how the Council goes about its business.

The Future Generations Commissioner's Office has produced a range of [tools](#) to support local authorities to engage with diverse communities, and these provide valuable insight when designing consultation and engagement activity.

National Principles and Standards

There is more to consultation and engagement than compiling a list of questions. In Wales, engagement should follow the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales to ensure it is done effectively, whilst consultations are clearly defined by well-established legal requirements. The Gunning Principles, for example, are four considerations which underpin consultation law. They set out steps which must be taken before and after consultation takes place, which includes ensuring that:

- Proposals being consulted on are still at a formative stage,
- Sufficient supporting information is made available to allow 'intelligent consideration' in appropriate formats,
- There is adequate time for consideration and response, and
- 'Conscientious consideration' is given to the consultation responses before a decision is made.



Cardiff Council's Constitution

The Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Some of these processes are required by law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose. The Constitution is divided into 15 Articles which set out the basic rules governing the Authority's business with more detailed procedures and codes of practice provided in separate rules and protocols at the end of the document.

Legislation allows the discharge of functions by its Executive or "Cabinet" as it is more commonly known. These [Cabinet functions](#) are identified in the Council's Constitution. The Council also determines which decision-making part of the Council is responsible for any [local choice functions](#). Those decisions, which are not identified as being a Cabinet function, are considered as [Non-Executive functions](#) which are also detailed in the Constitution.

Delegations can also be made to [Council officers](#) which reflect the level of responsibility and the role of the officer. The delegation includes the obligation on officers to keep Councillors properly informed of activity arising within the scope of these delegations.

Council approves the [Terms of Reference](#) for each of its committees which defines the remit of each Committee and the scope of the activity which can be undertaken when making decisions.

"A Guide to the Constitution" is being developed to provide an overview of the constitution which explains its content in clear and simple language.



Our Approach

Cardiff Council's Participation Strategy has two distinct components: Part One focusing on **consultation and engagement to promote citizen voice in decision-making** and Part Two focusing on **promoting participation in the democratic process**.

- **Participation Strategy Part One: Consultation and Engagement to promote citizen voice in decision-making**

- Providing and promoting opportunities for residents to provide feedback to the Council, including comments and other types of representation
- Engaging regularly on service delivery priorities and understanding satisfaction with services
- Engaging directly with service users receiving or accessing specific services
- Providing opportunities for everyone to engage with service change proposals, the development of new strategies and policies, and meeting all statutory consultation requirements
- Ensuring the citizen voice is captured within the Council's decision-making

- **Participation Strategy Part Two: Promoting Participation in the Democratic Process**

- Promoting awareness of the functions the Council undertakes
- Sharing information about how to become a Councillor (Elected Member), and what the role of a Councillor involves
- Providing greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made, by the Council
- Arrangements made, or to be made for bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees
- Promoting awareness to Councillors of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents



Delivery and Monitoring Arrangements

This Strategy will be formally reviewed after each ordinary election (the first review year being 2027) and, as required by the legislation, a consultation exercise on any revisions to the Strategy will be undertaken as part of the review.

As this will be a live document, with the Council continuing to experiment, learn and adapt its approach to engagement in response to what works well and increases engagement levels, the action plan may be reviewed and updated over time.

The supplementary Participation Strategy Action Plans outline actions needed in order to enhance internal control and provide greater assurance in relation to good governance and the overall control environment.

Delivery will be embedded in the Council's Planning and Performance Framework, with an update provided via Directorate Delivery Plans, the Mid-Year Self-Assessment of Performance and End-of-Year Self-Assessment of Performance.



Participation Strategy Part One:

Consultation and Engagement to Promote Citizen Voice in Decision-Making

*Putting the voice of our citizens
at the heart of decision-making*



Participation Strategy Part One: Consultation and Engagement to Promote Citizen Voice in Decision-Making

Part One of the Participation Strategy focuses on consultation and engagement to help ensure that citizen voice is at the heart of decision-making.

It sets out the arrangements the Council currently has in place to support engagement with the public and key stakeholder groups. It also details the result of the Council's baseline assessment of its approach to consultation and engagement, which identifies groups of people who are often under-represented. Based on this assessment, Part One of the strategy sets out the improvement actions identified following engagement with key stakeholders.



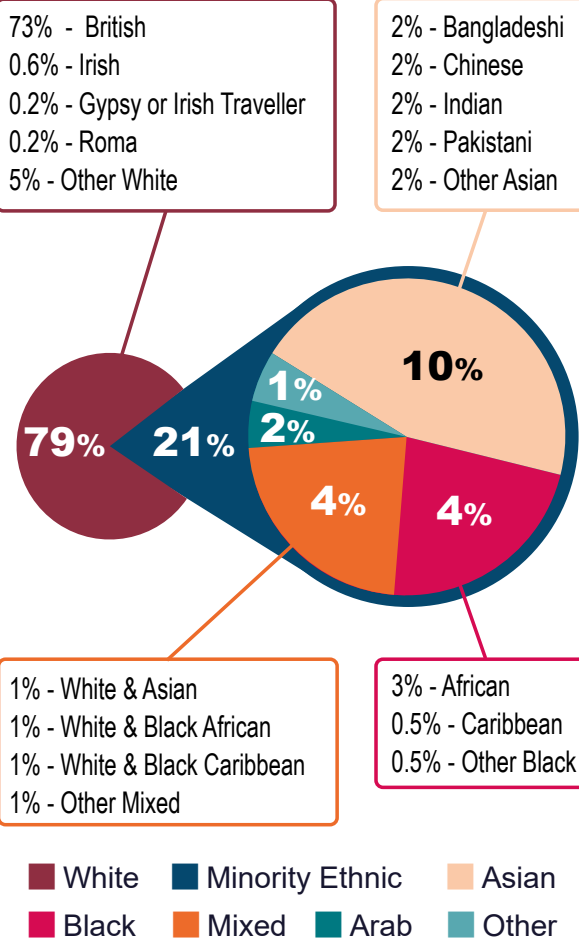
Cardiff Demographic Profile

THIS IS CARDIFF

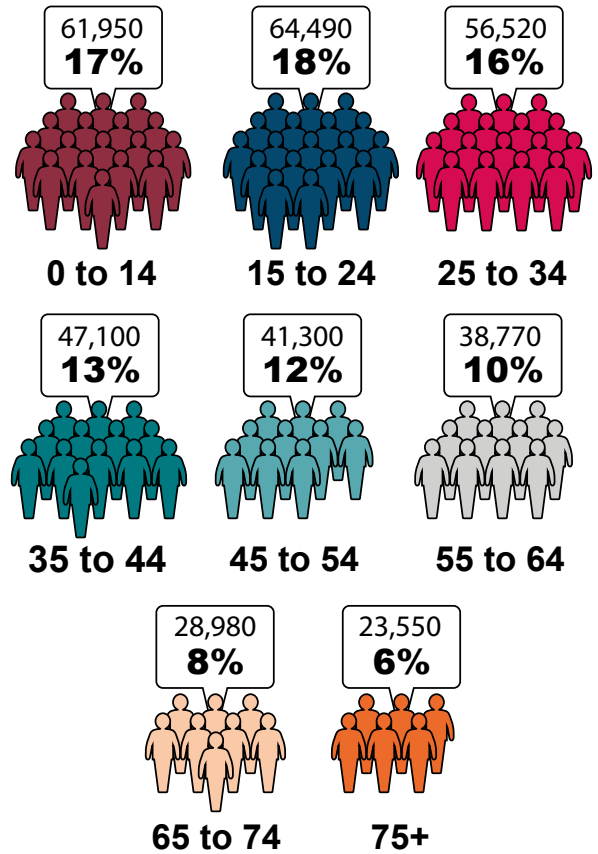


POPULATION
362,660

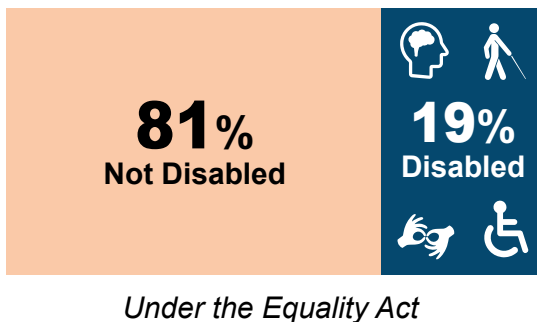
ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN



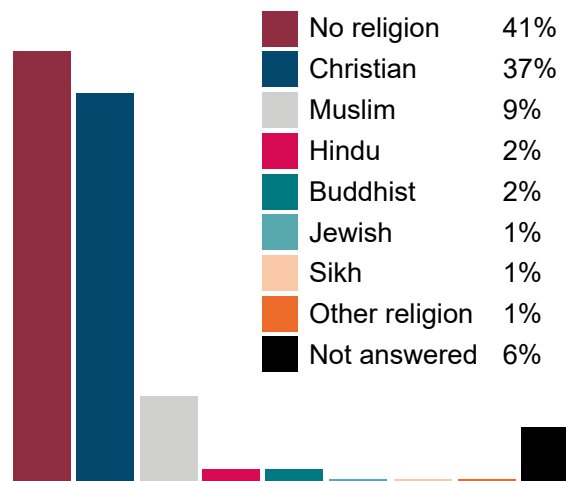
AGE RANGE



DISABILITY



RELIGION OR BELIEF



THIS IS CARDIFF









POPULATION
362,660

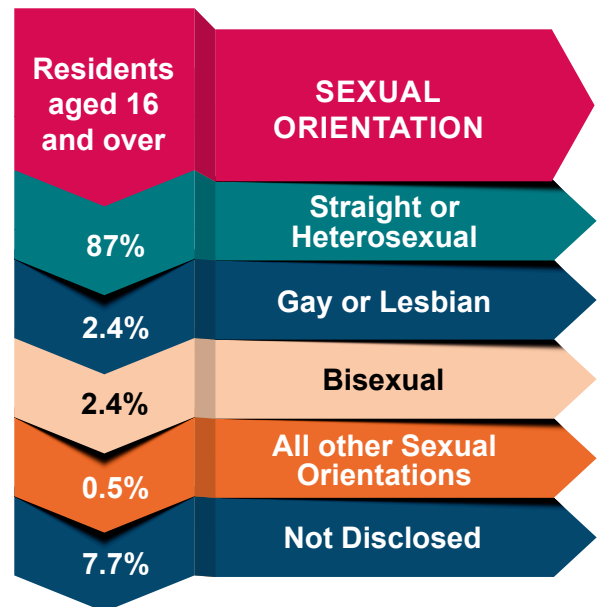
GENDER IDENTITY

Residents aged 16 and over.



- 93%  Same as registered at birth
- 0.2%  Different from registered at birth
- 0.1%  Trans woman
- 0.1%  Trans man
- 0.2%  All other gender identities
- 6.4%  Not answered

SEXUAL ORIENTATION



WELSH LANGUAGE

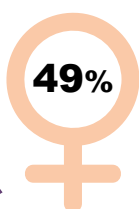
Non Welsh Speakers
72%



Welsh Speakers
28%



SEX



MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership. **2%**

Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner. **5%**

Divorced or civil partnership dissolved. **8%**

Married or in a registered civil partnership. **37%**

Never married and never registered a civil partnership. **48%**

Consultation and Engagement: Existing Practice

Cardiff Research Centre

The Council is committed to effective consultation and engagement, and has invested in its capacity and capability to engage with the residents of the city. The Cardiff Research Centre (CRC) is the Council's consultation and engagement team which has established a track record of producing high-quality research. The CRC works with teams across the Council, and external partners, to:

- Develop engagements and consultation projects
- Support effective engagement through:
 - Stakeholder mapping
 - Developing supporting information
 - Ensuring engagement materials are accessible
 - Understanding what equipment may be needed
 - Identifying suitable venues for in-person engagement
- Analyse and interpret data
- Prepare independent and impartial reports that feedback results
- Offer advice and support to teams undertaking consultation and engagement work

The CRC also helps to ensure all engagement work meets legal requirements and best practice, including the Gunning Principles and the National Principles for Public Engagement.



How we engage

Recognising that there is no 'one size fits all' solution to engagement, the most appropriate method of engagement is identified to seek the views of the people of Cardiff. This could include:

- **Consultation:** This is a formal event or activity with a clearly defined start and end. The Council seeks the opinions of the public when decisions need to be made on important matters that may affect them (like changes to services, new plans or policies). Here, people can influence and change the outcome of a decision.
- **Engagement:** This provides opportunities on an ongoing basis for people and communities to have a conversation to share their views and ideas. It allows the Council to learn about people's lived experience.
- **Sharing Information:** This involves providing people with information and keeping them informed about local events, services, policies and decisions which might affect or interest them. The Council does this in various ways, including through our website, social media platform, newsletters, leaflets, groups and forums.
- **Co-Production:** Council services and communities work together, making an equal contribution towards shaping and delivering services, projects and community events.

A range of methods are available to support engagement with the public, including:

- Surveys (online and hard copy)
- Face-to-face interviews
- Focus groups
- In-depth interviews
- Workshops
- Drop-in sessions
- Bespoke activities for children and young people (e.g. incorporating engagement into schools' lesson plans)

Live examples can be seen on the Council's website [Live Consultations \(cardiff.gov.uk\)](https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/live-consultations)



How we promote engagement opportunities

Cardiff Council has a robust engagement infrastructure for promoting consultation and engagement opportunities, which includes:

- A mature social media platform with a substantial number of followers:
 - 📘 Facebook – 56, 251 followers
 - 📷 Instagram – 15,411 followers
 - 🐦 Twitter – 106,601 followers
- Cardiff Gov App – 74,203 people registered
- Active communication arrangements with the Corporate Communications and Media Team, who promote awareness of Council activities via social media and produce press releases which are shared with news outlets
- An extensive network of Community Hubs and Libraries
- Extensive partnership arrangements – such as with Cardiff Third Sector Council – to amplify reach
- Working with local ward councillors to share information and increase our reach into communities
- Community organisations
- Citizens Panel – which brings together over 5,000 residents who support the Council with consultation and engagement
- Working with Public Services Board partners to undertake joint consultation

Languages of Engagement

It is important that everyone can access our engagement materials regardless of their proficiency in Welsh and English. Consideration is therefore given to other languages that are used in Cardiff, particularly when publishing corporate consultations, such as the annual consultation on the Council's budget proposals.



Current Arrangements: Areas of Strength

In developing the Participation Strategy, the Council assessed areas of good practice with regard to consultation and engagement. This includes:

Regular Programme of Engagement on Resident Satisfaction and Service Priorities

The Council undertakes a series of major consultation exercises with the public on a regular basis. For example:

- **The Ask Cardiff Survey:** *An annual residents survey which captures views on a variety of topics, including gathering trend data on satisfaction with Council and public services, housing, the economy, the environment and community safety, plus topical themes such as the impact of the pandemic or the cost-of-living crisis.*
- **The Budget Consultation:** *An annual consultation on the Council's budget proposals for the forthcoming financial year.*
- **The Child Friendly City Survey:** *A bi-annual survey sent to all primary and secondary schools in Cardiff, as well as to children who are educated other than at school, covering topics including Children's Rights, education, health and wellbeing, and local communities.*

Comparator analysis reveals that few other major cities regularly undertake resident satisfaction work of this kind, which has allowed Cardiff to build time series data on a range of issues relating to citizen views.

High Response Rate for City Wide Surveys

When undertaking consultation, the Council regularly receives a significant response and comparator analysis with other local authorities reveals strong relative performance. For example:

- Over 62,000 responses to consultations and surveys in 2021/22, up 40% since 2019.
- The Ask Cardiff Survey 2022 received almost 4,000 responses.
- The Budget Consultation 2023/24 received almost 6,000 responses.
- The Child Friendly City Survey received 7,600 responses, with good representation across age groups, geography, gender and ethnicity.

A larger response rate - or "sample size" - is important because it is likely to be representative of the population and will therefore provide more accurate results. Smaller sample sizes are at greater risk of having the results skewed.

Larger response rates therefore provide stronger and more reliable results because they reveal smaller margins of error but also allow the results to be broken down by different groups of responders. If the response rate is big enough, it allows the Council to understand what different groups of people think about an issue, such as young people and older people, men and women, or people living in more deprived communities.



Robust response rate relative to other Local Authorities

The Council's relative performance compared to other Welsh Authorities and Core Cities is particularly strong. For example, compared with these authorities, Cardiff received at least three times the number of responses to the Budget Consultation for 2023/24, where results have been published. Whilst, as the biggest local authority in Wales, Cardiff could expect to receive more responses than other authorities, the Council often exceeds response rates seen for national surveys. The Cardiff Research Centre is known beyond the Council for the quality of its work, and regularly works with partner organisations to support or manage engagement projects.

A Mixed Approach to Engagement

The Council recognises that many people struggle to engage online or via electronic surveys and so a range of engagement methods have been developed to encourage participation. Many of these are set out in this Strategy.

A Large and Active Citizens Panel

The Citizens Panel is made up of residents from across Cardiff who have agreed to give their views on a number of consultation topics throughout the year. Panel members share their views by completing surveys and occasionally taking part in other activities like focus groups, workshops, or forums. This is a reliable and cost-effective way of finding out what the people of Cardiff think about the services available to them and learning more about the experiences of specific groups or communities. The Panel has over 5,000 active members. Engagement with the Panel in March 2022 revealed that 63% rated their experience as a member of the Panel as 'excellent' or 'good', compared to just 3% who felt it was 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Extensive Statutory Consultation

Internal controls are in place to ensure statutory consultation requirements are discharged across the Council e.g. planning and licensing applications, school admission policy etc.



Service User Engagement across Directorates

The Council has good practice guidelines across directorates to enable in-depth engagement with service users on service satisfaction and to help shape service delivery. This provides a mechanism for voices that are not traditionally heard in consultation and engagement work. For example:

- **Children's Services - Bright Sparks:** This is a youth club for care experienced children and young people. Members meet fortnightly to allow young people to meet others in similar situations to informally discuss rights, entitlements and provide feedback to help shape service delivery. Members have supported the development of a new toolkit called 'In Focus' to strengthen Cardiff Children's Service provision. Trained members sit on young person's interview panels for residential children's homes to provide their perspective when recruiting new members of staff.
- **Child Friendly City:** Cardiff is committed to becoming a UNICEF Child Friendly City and, as such, children and young people have the opportunity to influence the decisions that will affect them. This builds on existing good practice such as the Child Friendly City Survey which is conducted every two years and regular engagement between the Council's political and managerial leadership and the Cardiff Youth Council.
- **Neighbourhood regeneration:** The Neighbourhood Regeneration Team regularly undertake face-to-face community engagement on proposals with businesses and residents. Schemes have included the Grangetown Regeneration programme, Clifton Street, South Riverside Business Corridor and Cowbridge Road East Regeneration. Schemes are fronted by officers dedicated to help answer questions and capture feedback.
- **Age Friendly City:** The Council works with Carers Wales and care recipients to help shape service delivery, with focus groups to understand views on the assessment process for those applying for care services. A series of newsletters (Age Friendly Cardiff and Health & Wellbeing News Cardiff) are available digitally and in hard copy. These are distributed to all community buildings and GP surgeries across the city.



Identifying Areas of Improvement: Baseline Assessment

To inform the development of the Participation Strategy and identify areas of improvement, a baseline assessment was undertaken. This included an assessment of core processes, a benchmark analysis of respondents to identify any under-represented community groups and an extensive programme of engagement with community stakeholders to understand barriers to engagement and to co-develop new proposals.

Assessment of Corporate Practice

A review of corporate consultation and engagement processes was undertaken across service areas to ensure good practice and governance. As a result, the following key issues were identified:

- Inconsistent survey and consultation methodology was occasionally adopted when service areas undertook engagement work without consulting with the Cardiff Research Centre.
- There is a need to better understand new survey software and engagement technology to support disabled people or those with impairments.
- There is a need to review the colour scheme used to present findings to ensure it is accessible for the 8% of the population who are colour blind.
- Citizen voice needs to feature more consistently across the Council's Planning & Performance Framework.

Closing the Feedback Loop

Feeding back results of consultation and engagement is one of the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales, which recommends *"Timely feedback is given to participants about their contribution, and the decisions or actions taken as a result, using methods and forms of feedback that take account of participants' preferences."*

Discussions with stakeholders, including members of the public, Elected Members and community organisations all commented on the importance of the feedback loop, and how this could be improved. This should include both feeding back the findings of the engagement, and how these will be used in the decision-making process, including where survey responses have driven actions, or reasons why they haven't.

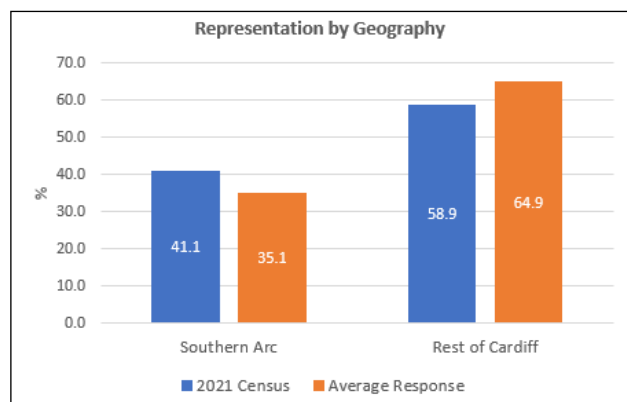
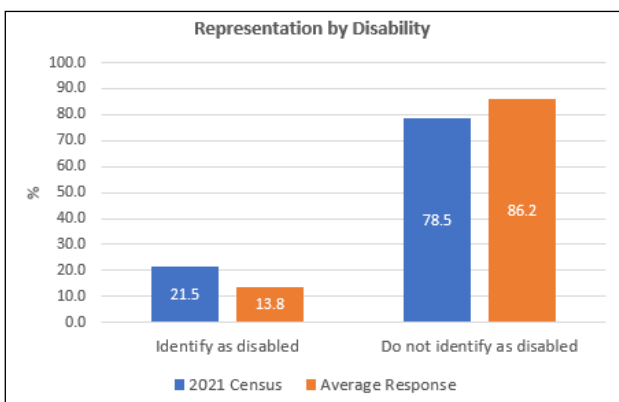
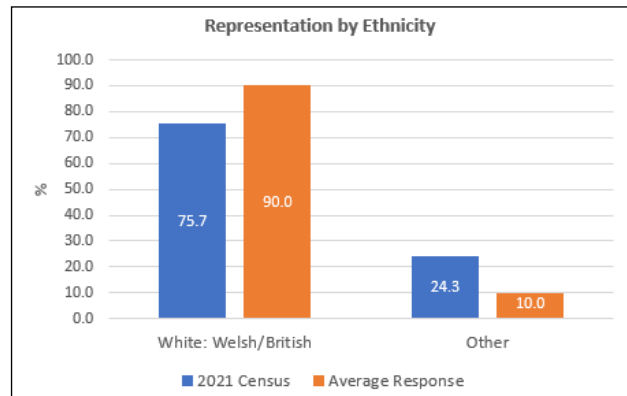
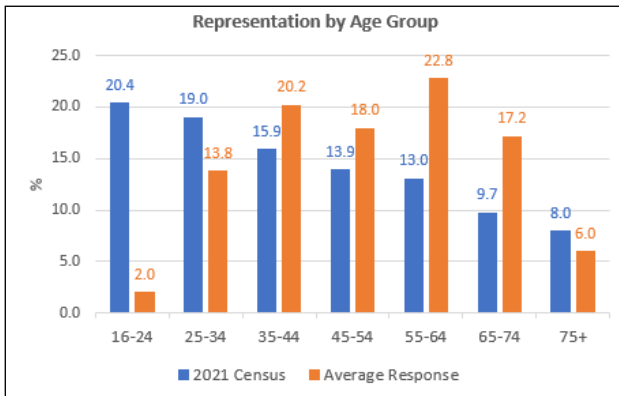
Baseline Assessment of Responses

An analysis of the core surveys listed on page 16, was undertaken to identify and develop a demographic profile of survey respondents. The data was analysed and compared with demographic data taken from the 2021 Census and Mid-Year Population Estimates. The analysis identified a lower response rate evident for the following groups:

- Lower socio-economic wards – Southern Arc
- Older People (+75 years old)
- Children and Young People
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities
- People who identify as Disabled



Respondent Analysis (Census results are based on adults 16+)

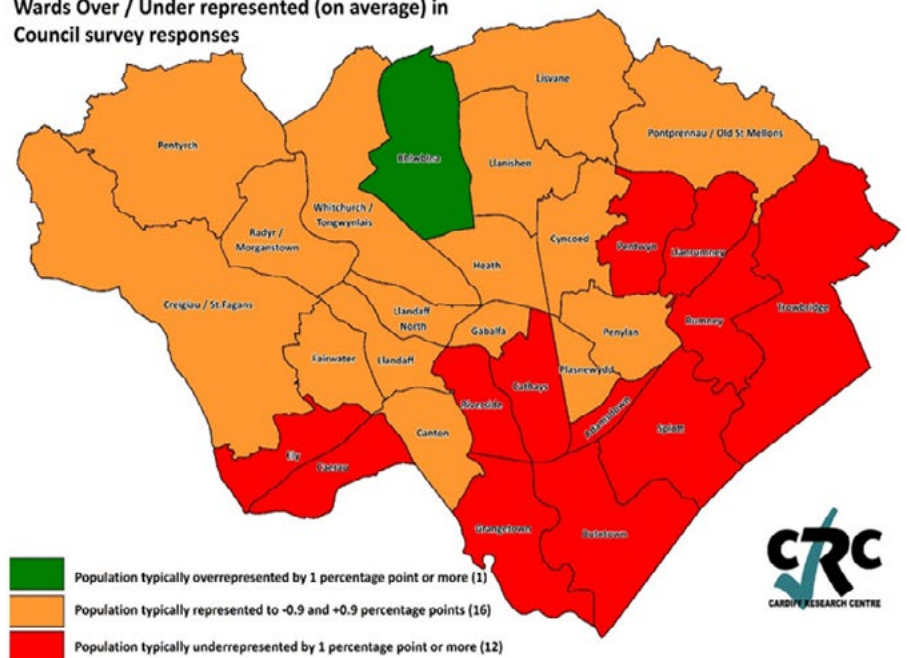


Ward Analysis

The baseline assessment of responses, where full postcode data had been provided, against the profile of Cardiff as a whole, revealed a number of wards, predominantly in the Southern Arc, were consistently under-

Ward	Under-representation
Cathays	-5.0%
Butetown	-1.8%
Adamsdown	-1.6%
Ely	-1.6%
Caerau	-1.3%
Grangetown	-1.3%
Llanrumney	-1.1%
Trowbridge	-1.0%

Wards Over / Under represented (on average) in Council survey responses



¹Spatial analysis relies on the provision of a full postcode, which a notable proportion of respondents choose not to provide.

Driving Improvement

To understand how consultation and engagement could be improved, the Council engaged extensively with a wide range of stakeholders. A stakeholder mapping exercise was undertaken to identify the community groups, community champions and organisations which could help understand and identify barriers, and improve participation rates for the identified groups. Over 25 hours of engagement was undertaken to understand how the Council can better reach out to groups who historically have not engaged in consultations.

Officers engaged with key stakeholders that were identified through the mapping exercise, through various methods - such as virtual meetings, emails and calls - to discuss key issues and barriers to engagement for groups highlighted in the benchmark analysis. Key stakeholders included:

- [Local Ward Councillors](#)
- Community Organisations
- Representative Bodies
- [Employee Networks](#)
- [Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee](#)

The insight and recommendations of the stakeholders helped shape the action plan and are included below.



Cardiff Council Participation Strategy 2023-27: Consultation & Engagement Action Plan

Ensuring Ongoing Engagement with the Public

Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
Undertake Ask Cardiff - a major citizen survey focused on satisfaction with Cardiff, local communities and public services - on an annual basis.	Annual	Cardiff Research Centre
Consult annually on the Council's Budget priorities.	Annual	
Undertake the Child Friendly Cardiff survey with all school children in the city every two years.	Bi-annual	

Improving Corporate Practice

Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
Ensure high standards of consultation and engagement across all service areas by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publishing advice and guidance which sets out the requirements of good consultation practice - Developing a Consultation Log that details all consultation and engagement activity - Creating a staff engagement network to provide advice and guidance and share best practice 	March 2024	Cardiff Research Centre
Improve consultation feedback with respondents and the wider public by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing a new design template and brand for the Cardiff Research Centre, focused on improving the presentation of information - Providing guidance on how to communicate the impact of consultation to service areas - Producing a regular consultation feedback newsletter which details the results and impact of recent consultations 	December 2023	
Review and improve the use of citizen voice in the Council's Planning and Performance Framework by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewing survey and engagement data collected by service areas - Embedding 'Citizen Voice' in Directorate Delivery Plans by working with Directorates to identify the most important sources of information relating to the views of residents and service users - Publishing, alongside the Annual Well-being Report, an annual Citizen Voice report by Well-being Objective 	December 2023	
Further develop the Council's consultation and engagement infrastructure by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying all appropriate Council and partner buildings/services where surveys can be promoted - Developing a Consultation Directory, where all organisations, charities or venues wishing to promote Council surveys can register their interest - Drafting a script to support appropriate frontline staff to promote surveys 	November 2023	
Improve the promotion of survey results and enhance the impact of survey intelligence by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considering how relevant findings can be shared with local stakeholders - Using interactive dashboards to improve the presentation of survey results - Promoting 'good news' stories from actions taken following key surveys 	March 2024	

Improving Engagement with Under-represented Wards		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
Improve engagement rates by ward, with a particular focus on wards with a typically low response rate, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting Local Ward Councillors to promote engagement opportunities within their ward - Increasing the use of face-to-face engagement to supplement survey work with under-represented groups - Encouraging residents to provide their postcode when responding to surveys and continuing to use geotargeting to reach respondents in certain parts of the city - Further developing reach into local online community groups 	November 2023	Cardiff Research Centre
Enhance local community engagement on all major regeneration projects.	December 2024	
Improve engagement with Council tenants by diversifying methods of engagement, such as posting hard copies of surveys directly to tenants.	July 2024	
Explore options to recruit volunteers to promote surveys with certain groups in parts of the city.	January 2024	

Improving Engagement with Older People (75+)		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
Distribute hard copies of surveys to care homes and day centres.	October 2023	Cardiff Research Centre
Promote participation in the Cardiff Citizens' Panel with those over 75.	October 2023	
Use Community Hubs and community groups to promote participation amongst older people.	October 2023	

Improving Engagement with Children and Young People		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
Commit to undertaking the Child Friendly City Survey on a bi-annual basis.	2025, date TBC	Cardiff Research Centre
Develop, where appropriate, child-friendly versions of consultations and surveys.	October 2023	
Establish a new Cardiff Youth Citizen Panel to respond to major Council surveys.	October 2022	
Explore, with Cardiff's Universities and Student Unions, options for improving engagement with students.	October 2023	



Improving Engagement with Minority Ethnic Groups		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
Work with the Council's Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Staff Network, as well as external organisations, including Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC), Diverse Cymru, Race Equality First and Women Connect First, to promote surveys and feedback results.	March 2024	Cardiff Research Centre
Increase the use of face-to-face engagement and group engagement to supplement survey work, for example, the Women Connect First Wales World Café.	December 2023	
Where appropriate, publish Council consultations in community languages, beginning with Arabic, Polish and Bengali, and work with community groups and leaders to promote them.	October 2023	

Improving Engagement with People who Identify as Disabled		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
Review how software and technology could improve access for, and engagement with, disabled people, such as the provision of digital surveys compatible with screen readers or provision of BSL.	September 2024	Cardiff Research Centre
Rebrand Cardiff Research Centre reports to ensure that the colour scheme supports accessibility.	October 2023	
Continue to ensure the Council provides accessible versions of documents e.g Easy Read, Braille, compatibility with screen reader.	September 2023	
Continue to ensure that all consultation and engagement material is plain language.	September 2023	
Continue to ensure that the Council fully considers the accessibility of engagement venues, events and materials, including the need for BSL, Easy Read, Braille and Audio Loop etc as well as the physical accessibility of venues.	September 2023	
Identify barriers and promote opportunities by engaging with representative and advocacy groups, including the Council's Disability Network and Access Equality Group, and partner organisations.	October 2023	



Participation Strategy Part Two:

Promoting Participation in the Democratic Process



Participation Strategy Part Two: Promoting Participation in the Democratic Process

Part Two of the Participation Strategy focuses on promoting participation in the democratic process to help ensure everyone feels confident and empowered to take part.

It sets out the arrangements the Council currently has in place to support public participation and the involvement of key stakeholder groups. The Council's baseline assessment identified opportunities to improve public awareness of its the Council's existing democratic participation arrangements and the strategy sets out appropriate improvement actions.



Cardiff Councillors Demographic Profile

Following the Local Government Elections in 2022, Elected Members completed a Diversity Survey with the results summarised below.

- **Age**

There is a lower proportion (78%) of Elected Members who are within the working age range, i.e. aged 16-65 years old which compares to 83.3% (of those aged 16+) identified in the census data in this age range. There was a 10% reduction in the number of Elected Members over 65 years old.

- **Disability**

The majority of Elected Members (83%) identified that they are not disabled which compares to 78.5% of residents aged 16+ in Cardiff in the census. A lower proportion (17%) of Elected Members do identify as disabled.

- **Ethnicity**

Although more than three-quarters of Elected Members (78%) are from a white British background, 16% identified as being from a minority ethnic background group. This compares to the 18.6% (of those aged 16+) who belong to a minority ethnic background identified by the 2021 Census for Cardiff.

- **Gender identity**

This was not fully explored during the Elected Member surveys, however subsequent surveys will include gender identity questions.

- **Marriage and civil partnership**

More than half of the current Elected Members (58%) are married. The survey also identified an increase to 14% of Elected Members who are co-habiting or living together with their partner. There is also a higher number of Elected Members who declared that they are either single (17%) or separated/divorced (9%). There is a notable difference when compared to the census data identifying that 36.8% of residents aged 16+ were married or in a civil partnership, 48.6% who have never married or registered a civil partnership and 7.8% who are divorced.

- **Religion or belief**

The survey identified an increase to 48% in the number of Elected Members who did not regard themselves as belonging to any particular religion. Of those Elected Members who identified themselves with a particular faith, the largest proportion (39%) consider themselves to have Christian beliefs. A lower proportion of Elected Members confirmed that they are Muslim (7%), Jewish (2%) with a further 2% identifying as Hindu, Sikh and other faiths. The 2021 census found slightly higher levels of residents aged 16+ with faith or religious beliefs, although lower levels of residents identifying as having no religion. (This question was voluntary in the Census, so not all residents chose to answer.)

- **Sex**

There was an increase of 10% in female Elected Members which better reflects the female population of Cardiff when compared to the 2021 Census data.



- **Sexual orientation**

When asked about their sexual orientation, the majority of Elected Members (86%) confirmed that they are 'heterosexual or straight'. Around 10% indicated that they are 'Bisexual' with a lower proportion (<3%) identifying that they were 'Gay'. The wider sexual orientation options were not included in the survey i.e pansexual, asexual, and queer.

- **Welsh language**

The majority of Elected Members consider themselves as Welsh with their first language as English. It is worth noting that this survey identified that there is a higher number and proportion of Elected Members whose first language is Welsh (10%) and other languages (9%). There are more Elected Members (46%) who have a level of Welsh language skills (basic to fluent skills) and there has been a slight reduction to 32% in the number of Elected Members not able speak any Welsh.

Current Arrangements: Areas of Strength

In developing the Participation Strategy, the Council assessed areas of good practice with regard to consultation and engagement. These include:

Promoting awareness of the functions the Council carries out for residents, businesses and visitors

The Council's Website

[Cardiff Council's website](#) provides a variety of information to:

- [Residents](#) including; housing, schools and libraries, roads and travel, recycling and waste, parks and culture, Social Services.
- [Business](#) including; planning, property, building control, environmental health, licensing and permits, tenders and commissioning, business rates and support and finance for businesses.
- [Visitors](#) including: Visit Cardiff, Outdoor Cardiff, public transport and travel advice.
- [Your Council](#) including: Council funding, Strategies Plans and Policies, comments, complaints and compliments, and a section for the public to "have your say".

Ward Councillors

Councillors are able to inform their constituents of the services and duties of the Council during their ward surgeries, in ward newsletters and at meetings with community groups.



Sharing information about how to become a Councillor (Elected Member), and what the role of Councillor involves

The Council is composed of 79 Councillors who are elected every five years. Councillors are democratically accountable to residents of their electoral ward. The overriding duty of Councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.

The next Local Government Elections will be held in May 2027. Information on how to stand for election can be found on the [Voting and Elections](#) webpages. Links are also available to the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) [“Be a Councillor. Be the Change”](#) website which provides a useful guide for prospective candidates.

Diverse Council Declaration

While Cardiff performs better than many Councils in terms of Councillor diversity, people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, women, younger people and disabled people are not yet proportionately represented in the Welsh capital’s Council chambers.

The Council approved the [Diverse Council Declaration](#) in 2022 which identified how the Council intended to:

- Broaden local democratic representation,
- Support involvement with local decision-making, and
- Support Councillors to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

This has been demonstrated by:

- Providing flexibility in Council business and activities to support Elected Members and allow them to meet their personal, professional, cultural and caring commitments and responsibilities.
- Providing a duty of care for Councillors by providing access to counselling services and by having regard for the safety and wellbeing of councillors whenever they are performing their role as councillors.
- Ensuring that all Elected Members have the opportunity to take up the allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all Elected Members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of an Elected Member is not limited to those who can afford it.
- Continuing to promote the highest standards of behaviour and conduct from Elected Members and those intending to stand for office on the Council.

Other elements of the Declaration will be integrated into the Participation Strategy Action Plan.



Role Descriptions

The Council approved the adoption of Elected Member [Role Descriptions](#) which can be used to inform the public and potential candidates of the various roles that Councillors undertake. It should be noted that these documents do not reflect any roles that Councillors may undertake in respect of their political groups or party. These role descriptions will be used as the basis for the development of Cardiff-based role descriptions that will be developed during the 2022-27 administration to better reflect the roles of Elected Members in Cardiff.

Remuneration

Councillors receive a salary which is determined annually by the [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales \(IRPW\)](#). The Council approves the [Members' Schedule of Remuneration](#) which identifies which salaries that are payable, the requirements to claim travel and subsistence costs, contribution to costs of care and personal assistance for Councillors when they carry out their approved duties.

All payments made to Councillors are made publicly available on the Council's [Members Remuneration and Allowances](#) webpage in accordance with the IRPW's Annual report.

Standards of Conduct

Councillors must observe the provisions of the Councillors' [Code of Conduct](#) which is included in the Council's Constitution when they are undertaking their duties i.e. when attending meetings.

Providing greater access to information about decisions that have been made, or that will be made, by the Council

The Council publishes an annual [programme of meetings](#) for the forthcoming year. This programme provides the framework for Cabinet to determine, schedule and publish its [Forward Plan](#) of the decisions that are to be made in the next three months. The five [Scrutiny Committees](#) use the [Forward Plan](#) as the basis for developing their own Work Programmes which are also published on the Council's website every quarter.

Scheduled meetings will give at least three clear working days' notice of any formal meeting by electronically posting the details of the agenda items that are to be considered to the Council's website. The public are able to register on the website to [subscribe to updates](#) by committee or item of interest. This facility will then automatically send an email to the subscriber when any new information related to their preferences is published.

This information enables the public to determine if they wish to attend the meeting in person or view them by using our webcasting service. The public may be excluded from those parts of a meeting when exempt or confidential information is being discussed.



Members of the public who reside or work in the Cardiff area may ask questions of Cabinet Members or of the Chairpersons of Committees at ordinary meetings of the Council in accordance with the [Council Procedure Rules](#) in the Council's Constitution. A total of ten public questions were considered at the seven Ordinary Council meetings in 2022-23.

The Council's Petition Scheme

Petitioning is one way that individuals, community groups and organisations can participate in the democratic process, by raising issues of public concern with the Council and allowing Elected Members to consider the need for change. It is acknowledged that petitions can have positive outcomes that lead to change or inform debate. The Council's latest [Petition Scheme](#) was approved in March 2022 and petitions were submitted to each of the ordinary meetings of Council in 2022-23.

Petitions may also be submitted to a Committee and if there are over 50 signatories of the petition, the Lead Petitioner will be invited to present the Petition at the Committee meeting.

Webcast meetings

Current legislation only requires Council meetings to be broadcast. However, with the implementation of the Council's Multi-Locations Meeting Policy in May 2022, it was determined that Cabinet, Planning Committee, Scrutiny Committees, Governance & Audit Committee, and Standard & Ethics Committee meetings would also be live streamed or recorded for subsequent viewing on the Council's [Webcasting library](#) for up to 12 months.

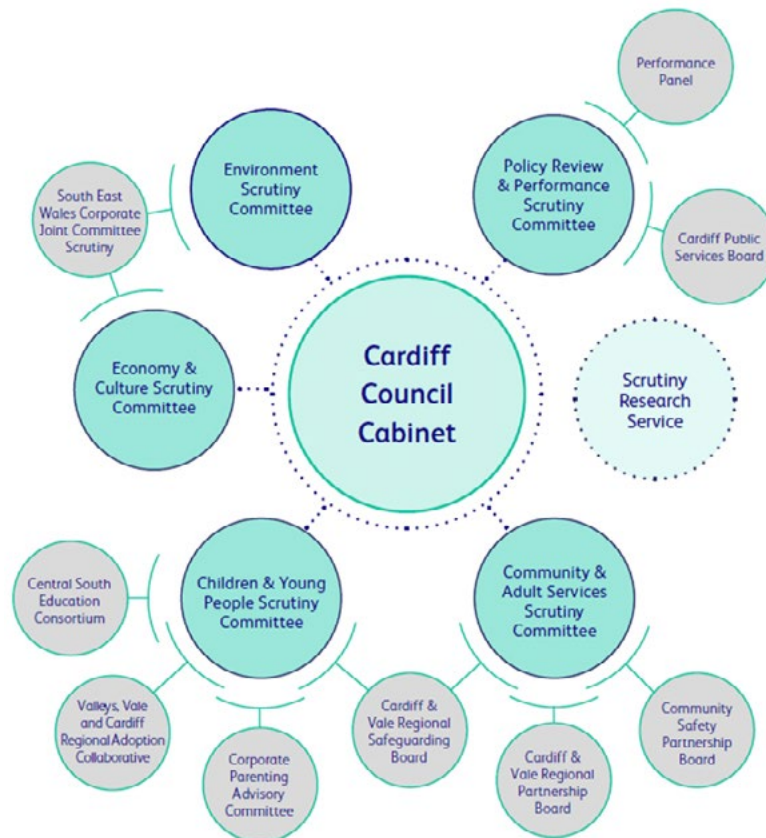
Records of Decisions

Following an open meeting the Council will make the minutes of formal Council and Committee meetings or the [record of decisions](#) taken by the Cabinet available on its website for a period of six years after a meeting.



Arrangements made, or to be made for bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees

Cardiff Council has five Scrutiny Committees which have responsibility for scrutinising different areas of the Council and partnership working. These committees review and scrutinise decisions and actions taken by the Council’s Cabinet in relation to the delivery of services or to improve the wellbeing of residents. They also shine a light on the effectiveness of local partnership working in which the Council plays a leading role.



Each Scrutiny Committee is made up of nine Elected Members. Additionally, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has four co-opted members, comprising two parent governor representatives, a Roman Catholic representative, and a Church in Wales representative. The Economy and Culture, Environmental and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committees offer a seat to a representative of the Cardiff Youth Council, enabling young voices to add their voices to the decision-making process.

Scrutiny wants to ensure their work reflects the needs of Cardiff residents. Its Work Programmes are developed to reflect the challenges faced by Council services and the public are encouraged to contact Scrutiny to share their views and highlight any concerns regarding Council policies and services that Scrutiny is examining. It is important to be aware that the Scrutiny Committees do not deal with individual queries, concerns, or complaints.



Cardiff Council is committed to encouraging greater public participation in its work. Scrutiny welcomes contributions from people who live and work in Cardiff. Sharing the views and experiences of the public enables their voice to be heard, helps to strengthen Scrutiny and improve the democratic accountability of the Council.

Scrutiny Committees, and Task and Finish Groups, regularly invite and involve internal and external subject matter experts, providing their professional views and insight into the topics being considered to support the Committee to develop its recommendations as part of the decision-making process.

Getting involved with Scrutiny

Anyone wishing to get involved with Scrutiny is able to complete and submit the '[Scrutiny Contact](#)' form, available on the Council's website. Alternatively, the completed form can be emailed to scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk or posted to Scrutiny Services, County Hall, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF10 4UW.

Anyone who lives or works in Cardiff is welcome to:

- **Propose the inclusion of a topic for Scrutiny consideration.**
The proposal will be checked and evaluated using agreed criteria. The Scrutiny Committee will use the evaluation to inform their decision as to whether to include it in their Forward Work Programme. This decision is entirely at the discretion of the Scrutiny Committee and individuals will be notified of the outcome of their proposal.
- **Submit written evidence to a Scrutiny Committee on a topic they are already considering.**
The Forward Work Programme for each Scrutiny Committee shows the topics due to be considered in the next few months. However, sometimes other items emerge that require Scrutiny. The agenda for individual Scrutiny Committee meetings, showing the items being considered, are made available on the Council's website three clear days before the Committee meeting is held.

Written evidence must be submitted by **4pm two working days** before the relevant Scrutiny Committee meeting. *(For example, if the Scrutiny Committee meeting falls on a Monday, written evidence should be received by 4pm on the preceding Thursday. If the Scrutiny Committee meeting falls on a Wednesday, written evidence should be received by 4pm on the Monday.)*

Written evidence will be evaluated using appropriate criteria and the Scrutiny Committee Chair will use this evaluation to inform their decision as to whether to allow the submission of written evidence. The individual will be notified if the evidence has been accepted or provided with clear reasons why it has not.

- **Speak to a Scrutiny Committee on a topic they are already considering.**
A member of the public is able to submit a contact form to request to speak to a Scrutiny Committee on an item they are considering. The form must be received by **4pm two working days** before the relevant Scrutiny Committee meeting. *(For example, if the Scrutiny Committee meeting falls on a Monday, the form should be received by 4pm on the preceding Thursday. If the Scrutiny Committee meeting falls on a Wednesday, the form should be received by 4pm on the Monday.)*



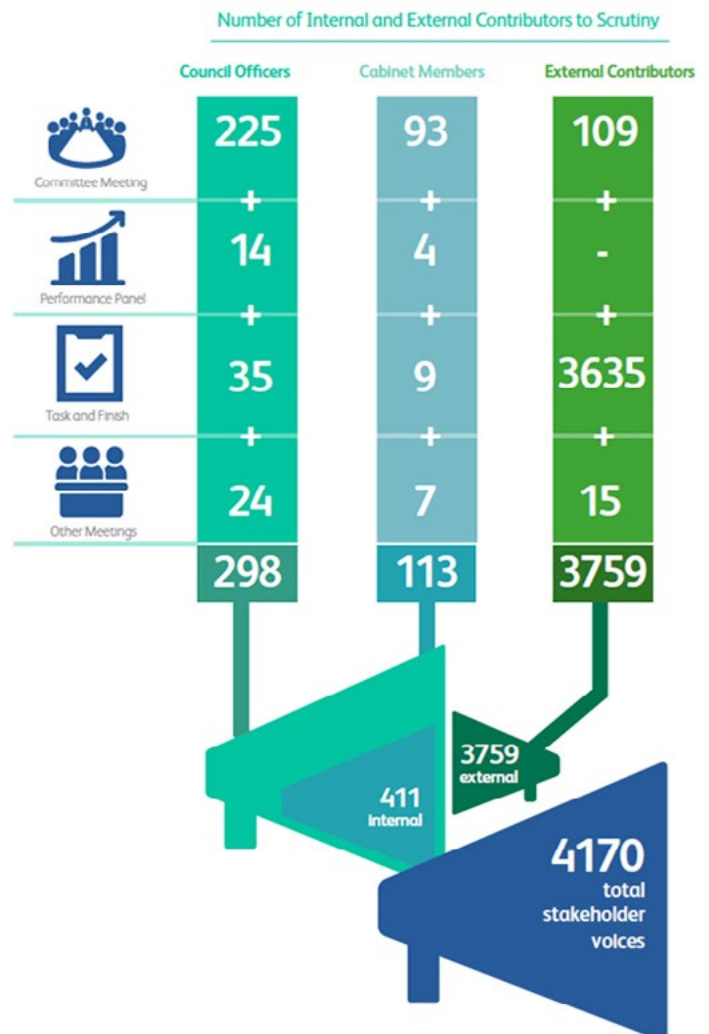
Research and Engagement with Scrutiny

Scrutiny in Council has a dedicated research service that provides original, robust, independent information and evidence to support an effective and impartial Scrutiny function. This often involves the systematic collection and analysis of information and evidence on service users’, stakeholders’ and residents’ perspectives on the impact and effectiveness of current service delivery or proposed policies and strategies. This brings Scrutiny and the Council new information not previously available for consideration in service or operational reviews, policy development and democratic debate.

Research is usually undertaken on topics being considered in detail as part of a Scrutiny Committee meeting and their “Task and Finish Inquiry” work. The engagement and research undertaken for Scrutiny can involve a range of quantitative or qualitative methodologies and/or document reviews including:

- Surveys of residents and service users;
- Focus groups, workshops and case studies and in-depth key informant interviews of service users and stakeholder experience;
- Benchmarking analysis and best practice review;
- Document and literature-based evidence reviews.

The latest [Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23](#) identifies a significant increase in the level of external contributors from the 386 contributors identified in the previous year’s Scrutiny Annual Report. There were 3,759 external contributors to Scrutiny in 2022-23. This included individuals and stakeholders completing surveys or sharing their views on a range of topics including the Shaping Cardiff’s Post Pandemic Economic Recovery. Individuals also attended Scrutiny Committee meetings to provide their views on the Recycling Strategy and street homelessness with 20 submissions from the public being received via Scrutiny Viewpoints email address. Engagement work has continued with the recent call for evidence request relating to the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP).



Promoting awareness of the benefits of using social media to communicate with residents to Councillors

The Council's corporate social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are supported by officers. Individual Councillors are not provided with social media accounts. However, some Councillors have their own personal social media accounts which they use to communicate with their communities.

The Welsh Local Government Association has provided guidance for Councillors along with some tips and advice in terms of handling online abuse. www.wlga.wales/social-media-and-online-abuse

To address some of the concerns of Councillors when using social media, the Council approved the [Members' Social Media Code of Principles](#) which is included in the Council's Constitution.

Identifying Areas of Improvement

To inform the development of the Participation Strategy and identify areas of improvement, a baseline assessment was undertaken. This included an assessment of core processes, a benchmark analysis of respondents to identify understand barriers to engagement and to co-develop new proposals.

Driving Improvement

To understand how consultation and engagement could be improved, Democratic Services engaged with a wide range of stakeholders. Officers engaged through various methods e.g. virtual, in-person meetings. Key stakeholders included:

- [Councillors](#)
- Diverse 50/50 Campaign including:
 - [Womens Equalities Network Wales](#),
 - [Electoral Reform Society Cymru](#),
 - [Race Council Cymru](#), and
 - [EYST Wales \(Ethnic Youth Support Team\)](#).
- [Cardiff Youth Council](#)
- [Youth Parliament Wales](#)
- [Democratic Services Committee](#)
- [Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee](#)



Improving Awareness

Democracy Portal

The Council's website provides a wide range of information which supports public awareness of information about the Council. The development of a "Democracy portal" would provide a focal point for information specifically relating to the democratic process. The portal would include a series of interactive features, such as videos and easy read documents, to enhance public awareness.

Democratic videos are being developed which would be made available on the portal and provide information on: What the Council can do for you, The importance of diversity in democracy, Making the difference as a councillor, and the support provided for Councillors.

Support for Disabled Candidates Standing for Office

The Welsh Government has approved funding for a pilot scheme to fund reasonable adjustments and support for disabled candidates seeking election to the Local Government elections. Further information is available on the access to elected office and may be viewed at <https://www.disabilitywales.org/projects/access-to-elected-office-fund-wales/>.



Promotion of Democratic Activities

Although a significant amount of information to support the democratic processes in Cardiff is available, the level of awareness of residents in the city about this information is limited. The information available to support participation in the democratic process will be promoted through development of a “Democracy Communication Plan”. Promoting the role of the Council’s scrutiny function could also improve the current level of awareness and increase public participation, for example increasing the number accessing the “Getting Involved with Scrutiny” online contact form.

Use of Social Media

The Council has a large and well established corporate social media footprint. This strategy seeks to identify new opportunities to promote democratic activities and events. For this reason, opportunities to enhance and promote participation in the democratic process will be progressed through more focussed social media presence.

This would supplement the intention to support Councillors with social media and general media training which would provide technical support for the use of social media and address any practical concerns for using social media to engage with constituents. Wider media training would enhance the confidence of Councillors when engaging with the media and in a public forum.

Improving Engagement

Mentoring and Shadowing

The Council has previously provided mentoring opportunities with organisations including EYST. Following the provision of appropriate training for Councillors it is planned to develop the opportunities to enhance this type of engagement to support mentoring and shadowing programmes with stakeholders and partners including Youth Council and Youth Parliament.

Engagement with under-represented groups and communities

Electoral Services will continue to deliver its Registration and Engagement Plan which will utilise the recently appointed Public Awareness Officer working with a range of stakeholders.

Engagement campaigns include providing a Democracy Ambassador Programme to primary and secondary schools thus supporting the Curriculum for Wales 2022. The programme includes working with other stakeholders to deliver a range of information and workshops with an intent to further involve Councillors to support political literacy within the curriculum.



Electoral Services will improve the engagement with under-represented groups and diverse community groups. Campaigns will be tailored to each group with the Public Awareness Officer identifying suitable support organisations to provide the right level of support and guidance.

Further work is ongoing to progress accessibility for electoral registration and elections, which includes improvements to digital delivery, information in multiple languages and easy to read guidance.

The insight and recommendations of the stakeholders helped shape the action plan.



Cardiff Council Participation Strategy 2023-27: Promoting Participation in the Democratic Process Action Plan

Improving Awareness		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
We will:		
Consider the creation of Democracy social media accounts on appropriate social media platforms.	March 2024	Democratic Services
Develop and publish a Guide to the Constitution of Cardiff Council.	March 2024	
Develop an interactive “Democracy Portal” to provide a focal point for information to support the democratic processes to enhance awareness and engagement.	March 2024	
Develop a “Democracy” Communication Plan to promote the information and opportunities that are available to inform the democratic processes.	March 2024	
Provide “Democracy” videos which would be made available on the Portal and provide information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils in Wales and their differences • The importance of diversity in democracy • Being a Councillor – supporting you to meet the challenge • What the Council can do for you and your local community • Making the difference as a Councillor 	March 2024	
Develop decision-making flow charts to explain the decision-making process of the Council and enhance public awareness.	December 2025	
Develop the use of easy read documents to be made available on the Democracy Portal to enhance public understanding.	December 2025	
Develop Democracy “pathway” documents to inform the Youth Council and other groups who wish to stand for office as a Councillor.	March 2026	
Raise awareness through the use of the “Democracy Portal” and social media facilities to enhance the process for engaging with Scrutiny and informing the Council’s decision-making and policies.	December 2026	
Raise awareness through the use of the Portal and social media facilities of the Council’s Petition Scheme.	December 2026	
Raise awareness of the support for disabled candidates standing for office.	December 2026	



Improving Engagement		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
We will:		
Provide mentoring and shadowing training for Councillors.	December 2024	Democratic Services
Provide Councillors with social media and general media training to encourage them to use these facilities to inform and engage with their constituents.	December 2024	
Liaise with stakeholders to identify and deliver opportunities for mentoring and shadowing Councillors in their role. Stakeholders to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Womens Equalities Network Wales • Electoral Reform Society Cymru • Race Council Cymru • EYST Wales (Ethnic Youth Support Team) • Cardiff Youth Council • Youth Parliament Wales 	March 2025	
Liaise with stakeholders to identify measures to assist those residents with protected characteristics to stand for office.	March 2026	

Engagement with Diverse Communities		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
We will:		
Provide primary and secondary schools in Cardiff with a Democracy Ambassador Programme to support the Curriculum for Wales 2022.	Annual – each academic year	Electoral Services
Identify under-represented groups and diverse communities and tailor electoral registration (throughout the year and annual canvass) and voter participation campaigns (election time).	Annually during the canvass prior to elections	
Develop accessible information and guidance for electors.	January 2027	

Diverse Council Declaration		
Action	Delivery Date	Lead Service Area
We will:		
Review the Council Schedule of Remuneration processes and documentation to ensure ease of use.	March 2024	Democratic Services
Identify opportunities to demonstrate high standards of support and development for our Elected Members .	March 2025	
Enhance awareness and understanding of the role and functions of local Councillors and the Council.	December 2025	
Seek support from all Elected Members and political groups on the Council to work with local party associations to encourage recruitment of candidates from under-represented groups.	March 2026	
Encourage and enable people from under-represented groups to stand for office.	March 2027	

