



An inquiry report of the:  
**Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee**

# **Scrutiny Impact Assessment Model**

**May 2020**



**Cardiff Council**

## CONTENTS

<b>CHAIR'S FOREWORD</b> .....	3
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b> .....	5
<b>CONTEXT</b> .....	6
<b>REVIEW OF SCRUTINY IMPACT TO DATE</b> .....	9

<b>THE MODEL</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>PART A: Assessment of Scrutiny Output</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>PART B: Tracking of Implementation</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>PART C: Non-quantifiable Measures of Scrutiny Impact</b> .....	<b>28</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>INQUIRY METHODOLOGY</b> .....	38
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b> .....	38
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b> .....	38
<b>POLICY REVIEW &amp; PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP</b> .....	39
<b>COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE</b> .....	40
<b>APPENDIX 1: Glossary of Terms</b> .....	41
<b>APPENDIX 2: Full List of Data Sets for the Model</b> .....	45
<b>APPENDIX 3: Primary Research</b> .....	<a href="#">Review of Scrutiny Impact</a>
<b>APPENDIX 4: Primary Research</b> .....	<a href="#">Assessing Scrutiny Impact</a>

## CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Twenty years ago the Local Government Act of 2000 introduced the Executive (Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee) model of local government, offering a tangible role for all elected Members of a Council in the decisions made by its ruling administration. Cardiff Council was a leading and enthusiastic adopter of the model. I have been fortunate to hold a Chair of Scrutiny role for a number of those years and have often felt that scrutiny lacks a mechanism for truly capturing the value it adds to the governance and decision-making of the Council.

What became clear, particularly throughout financially challenging years, is how difficult it is to evaluate and measure the contribution good scrutiny makes. I was therefore keen that the Committee undertake an inquiry that explored the extent to which the agreed recommendations of Task and Finish reports were implemented and, where they had been introduced, the outcomes that they achieved.

We therefore set ourselves the task of carrying out research into good practice elsewhere and developing a mechanism for capturing the impact of the work of all five scrutiny committees, and the value of the scrutiny function to the organisation resulting from the implementation of its recommendations.

The key output of the inquiry is a practical model that, when applied, will collect data and evidence throughout the municipal year. This evidence will provide the basis for performance assessment of the scrutiny function and an evidence based annual report to Council. The self-assessment process outlined in the proposed model extends beyond the scrutiny function to service areas, requiring their own self-assessment and reporting of the implementation of accepted scrutiny recommendations. Data collected will enable service areas to review how well they action scrutiny recommendations and assess the outcomes, thereby assisting the Council in meeting the self-assessment requirements of the forthcoming Local Government (Wales) Act.

The work of this Task and Finish inquiry is firmly based on research following reference to organisations such as the National Assembly for Wales, UK Parliamentary Select Committees, the Centre for Public Scrutiny, the Association for Public Service Excellence, the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee, the Constitution Unit of University College London and the Welsh Local Government Scrutiny Officer network.

We did not locate evidence of work in these organisations which replicated exactly our terms of reference and objectives to evaluate implementation and outcomes. Our work therefore explores new ground which, in our view, could provide new insights with the ambition to become a practical and universally applicable model.

We recognise the value of capturing quantitative and qualitative impact, introducing the concept of 'substantiveness' as a key measure in determining the level of influence or impact that scrutiny recommendations have on corporate policy.

We are recommending that Cabinet pilots and adopts the model for capturing the impact of scrutiny. We will closely evaluate the success of the pilot, refine the model and aspire to share it as best practice with other public bodies and local authorities.

My sincere thanks go to my committee colleagues Councillors Norma Mackie and Joe Boyle for their timely, informed and balanced contributions. I also offer my appreciation to Principal Research Officer, Gladys Hingco, who has established the base evidence for the Model we now commend as a Committee, and to Principal Scrutiny Officer, Nicola Newton, who provided invaluable support in shaping the final report and its recommendations.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Walker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Councillor David Walker**

**Chair, Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee**

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. 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 in the future. The Terms of Reference for the inquiry were agreed 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

2. The key output from this investigation 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.
3. The Committee agreed that membership of the task & finish group would comprise:  
Councillor Joe Boyle<sup>1</sup>  
Councillor Norma Mackie  
Councillor David Walker (Chair)

---

<sup>1</sup> Following a change in the balance of the Council in June 2019 Councillor Boyle was unable to retain his seat on the PRAP scrutiny committee, he contributed to early research and discussion.

## CONTEXT

4. Cardiff Council has a long held reputation for committed and successful scrutiny arrangements. The function has previously been recognised for its best practice both nationally and locally. Organisational processes and procedures are in place that routinely factor scrutiny into the decision making process. The arrangements in place aspire to equality between scrutiny and policy making, resulting in what can be considered a positive scrutiny culture. Maintaining this culture requires all parties, Scrutiny, Cabinet and senior managers to understand and commit to the value and impact of scrutiny within the organisation.
5. Over the past five years Scrutiny has been the subject of two national Wales Audit Office (WAO) reviews. In July 2018 the Overview and Scrutiny – *Fit For the Future?* Review concluded that “*scrutiny arrangements in Cardiff are well-developed and supported by a culture that makes them well-placed to respond to current and future challenges.*” The auditor found evidence that the Council recognises and values the importance of its scrutiny function; scrutiny committee meetings are well-run; the Council proactively engages key stakeholders in the work of its task and finish groups whilst recognising it could improve public involvement in its scrutiny activity; and the Council could explore different ways of working to improve the impact of scrutiny activity and maximise the resources available.
6. Prior to the 2018 review, in 2014 the WAO *Good Scrutiny? Good Question!* Scrutiny improvement study recommended that all councils ensure that the impact of scrutiny is properly evaluated and acted upon to improve the function’s effectiveness; including following up on proposed actions and examining outcomes.
7. In November 2019 the Welsh Government published the draft Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill. The Bill has implications for the performance and governance of all Councils, requiring an increased focus on self-assessment and peer review. It also recommends that scrutiny committees receive prior notice of ‘key decisions’ with a significant financial implication or effect on local communities.

8. Given the current context, the WAO recommendation that all councils ensure that the impact of scrutiny is properly evaluated and acted upon to improve the function's effectiveness (*including following up on proposed actions and examining outcomes*), and the forthcoming Local Government & Elections (Wales) Bill (*in which Welsh Government propose an increased focus on self-assessment and peer review*), it is timely that the Committee has prioritised the development of a mechanism and model to evaluate the benefit of a commitment to scrutiny.
9. The key practical output of this inquiry has therefore been the development of a model to record and capture the impact of scrutiny in Cardiff Council. It aims to provide a framework on which scrutiny can demonstrate its value in line with the growing self-assessment agenda.
10. The self-assessment process outlined in the proposed model extends beyond the scrutiny function and will also enable service areas to self-assess the extent to which they have implemented accepted scrutiny recommendations and evaluated the outcomes.
11. This report will focus on a proposed model, developed following primary research, to evaluate scrutiny's impact and the outcomes resulting from the implementation of its recommendations. That process of evaluation should, in itself, facilitate a process of self-assessment by service areas involved and by the scrutiny function. A full summary of the evaluation of scrutiny impact to date within Cardiff Council is linked at **Appendix 3**.
12. Members subsequently commissioned the scrutiny research function to review the methodologies used by Local Government Scrutiny Committees; National Assembly for Wales Committee and Research Services, UK Parliamentary Select Committees and related organisations. The aim was to identify approaches relevant to assessing the impact of scrutiny in a local government context. The findings reflected in the model presented in this report have referenced and adapted some of the successful methodologies used in scrutiny impact assessment by the various sources listed above. The full review is linked at **Appendix 4**.

13. The proposed model, developed following this research, enables the measurement and analysis of the quantity *and* types of scrutiny activity within Local Authorities. Importantly, it sets out to assess and measure the impact and outcomes achieved in the planning and delivery of Council services.

## REVIEW OF SCRUTINY IMPACT TO DATE

14. There are currently five Scrutiny Committees in Cardiff Council, each with clearly defined Terms of Reference. They are:

- Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee (CASSC)
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (CYP)
- Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee (E&C)
- Environmental Scrutiny Committee (ENV)
- Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee (PRAP)

15. The Chair of the PRAP task group commissioned primary research to inform the inquiry of the impact of Cardiff Council's Scrutiny function during the previous and current political terms. The research methodology took three reports for each of Cardiff's five scrutiny committees, their corresponding Cabinet responses, and progress report updates from the service areas involved and analysed different types of impact achieved following each report where evidence of impact existed. The scrutiny topics and inquiries selected for the review are those considered to have made a significant impact on service provision in Cardiff Council. The full report can be referenced by clicking on the link at **Appendix 3**.

16. It is widely recognised that determining the impact of scrutiny is not a simple process. Scrutiny delivers both quantitative and qualitative outputs and results as well as direct and indirect impacts. A key challenge in determining scrutiny impact is the causality between *scrutiny activity* and the range of *outcomes* that stem from the scrutiny activity. For the purposes of the research, we evidenced and analysed findings on the impact of Cardiff's scrutiny function using the three key outcomes identified and endorsed by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CFPS) and the Wales Audit Office (WAO) as indicators of effective scrutiny. These are:

- Driving improvement by raising awareness, highlighting key local issues, and improvements in policies and processes – *Better Outcomes*

- Holding to account by identifying poor service performance and policies and decisions – *Better decisions*
- Contributing to and facilitating democratic debate and in ensuring engagement with the public and key stakeholders. – *Better engagement*

17. The initial review of scrutiny impact used this CfPS framework for effective scrutiny to analyse the impact to date. A number of headlines emerged to capture the ways in which scrutiny can make an impact, as summarised below. Here we briefly outline the success of Cardiff's scrutiny function, however examples of scrutiny outputs that illustrate each headline can be seen in the full research report, [A Review of Cardiff Council's Scrutiny Impact \(Appendix 3\)](#). The key types of scrutiny impact in Cardiff to date are:

- i. **A Spotlight on important issues** - the review of selected evidence found that scrutiny has made significant impact in driving improvement in Cardiff Council by placing a "spotlight" on important local issues. The Cabinet has considered issues highlighted by scrutiny, both in reviewing existing policies and in developing new policies and strategies.
- ii. **Highlighting key stakeholder issues** - Scrutiny activities have brought forward key stakeholder issues, such as the support needs of adult carers and public perceptions of the Council's effectiveness in litter enforcement.
- iii. **Highlighting the need to develop new strategies and areas for improvement in existing service performance to address current demand for service** - in driving improvement within the Council, the evidence reviewed demonstrated that scrutiny activities have made significant impact in identifying key improvement areas in service provision.
- iv. **Identifying areas of improvement for service area staffing and leadership**, such as highlighting the need for appropriate management arrangements to co-ordinate improvements to the Central Market.
- v. **Highlighting workforce areas for improvement** - scrutiny inquiries have highlighted workforce improvement areas, identifying subject areas where

knowledge and skills sets of, for example, social care staff, key external partners and vulnerable groups could be improved.

- vi. **Highlighting best practice in service provision** - where scrutiny makes a significant contribution in highlighting internal or external best practice in service provision or in generating member and officer awareness of innovative arrangements and practices.
- vii. **Holding to account decision making** - scrutiny's role in holding to account decision making within the authority is evidenced by its effectiveness and impact in terms of performance review and monitoring, such as the scrutiny of the budget and the use of scrutiny call in.
- viii. **Creating opportunities for stakeholders, partners, voluntary organisations and members of the general public to be involved in a democratic debate** on the effectiveness of current service provision and in shaping future policies and strategies on service delivery. Scrutiny Committee Meetings, Task and Finish inquiries and their research activities provide opportunities for external groups to have their views and concerns heard and considered in making recommendations on a range of issues relating to service provision. Through the conduct of research using qualitative and quantitative methodologies and document reviews, the views of the general public and selected stakeholders are brought to scrutiny for consideration as evidence to inform and challenge recommendations made to the Cabinet.

18. Overall, this review of the effectiveness of scrutiny in Cardiff illustrates that the service has made significant contributions to date. Its key strength lies in:

- Raising member and officer awareness of key issues affecting stakeholders and service provision;
- Highlighting improvement opportunities in policies and service delivery;
- Supporting the development of policy and strategy;

- Its role and contribution to the Council's performance monitoring and self-assessment processes;
- Highlighting innovative arrangements and best practice.

19. In summary, performance monitoring, scrutiny of the budget proposals and scrutiny call-ins have presented constructive challenge to service performance and to the decision making process within the Council. Monitoring of such challenges as sickness absence has contributed to the raising of awareness and to some shifts in policy and performance. Additionally, the scrutiny of budget proposals has helped in the reconsideration of proposed spending and cuts affecting vulnerable service users which have been re-considered. Similarly, the scrutiny call-in example cited in the initial research report demonstrates a constructive challenge that resulted in a recommendation to strengthen the Council's processes around disposal of Council owned land and resources.

20. Finally, the scrutiny process facilitates and provides opportunities for backbench Members, stakeholders, and key partners to be involved in democratic debate on the effectiveness of current service provision and the future of Council services. Through its task and finish inquiries and scrutiny of specific items, scrutiny brings to democratic debate specialist knowledge and expertise as well as the issues and concerns of stakeholders, service users and the general public. Scrutiny research has enabled Scrutiny Committees to access robust independent information and evidence including citizens' and service users' views and perspectives on key issues being considered by scrutiny.

21. Notwithstanding the usefulness of the CfPS model for assessing the effectiveness of scrutiny, this report now seeks to develop a more formalised approach to capturing the impact of scrutiny, taking a further step forward by focussing more closely on the *types of impact* that scrutiny can achieve by developing and applying a new model. The rationale for this proposed new model is that it attempts to construct quantitative and qualitative measures of the impact of scrutiny on policy development and performance.

22. To develop this proposed model, a second research project was undertaken that reviewed the various approaches and methodologies used by various local

government Scrutiny Committees, the National Assembly for Wales Committee and Research Services, the UK's Parliamentary Select Committees and related organisations to assess the impact of scrutiny activity. The key findings of this report can be found in the full research report [Assessing Scrutiny Impact \(Appendix 4\)](#), which identifies and describes a range of key methodologies and approaches that could be adopted to establish the impact of scrutiny activity in local government. The model that follows has been tailored to deliver a practical option for application in Cardiff Council.

## THE MODEL

23. Pages 14-35 of this report present in detail a model for gathering a quantitative and qualitative picture of the impact of scrutiny's work. It requires the recording of data by both the Scrutiny function and the Cabinet or service area in terms of actions taken in response to the accepted recommendations made by Scrutiny. It aspires to validate the effectiveness of scrutiny, provide frameworks for measuring the substantiveness of recommendations and their delivery and to offer a way of measuring scrutiny impact in the future.
24. In applying this model the resulting analysis of performance will provide a framework to address forthcoming Welsh Government legislative requirement for greater self-assessment and develop a mechanism for evaluating the responsiveness of Cabinet to Scrutiny.
25. Importantly, definitions of the terms and measurements used in the Model can be found in the Glossary of Terms at **Appendix 1**.
26. For clarity, the purpose and potential uses of the Scrutiny Impact Model are:
- To **assist self-assessment** of each scrutiny committee's performance.
  - To **assist service area self-assessment** of the implementation of accepted scrutiny recommendations.
  - To **assess scrutiny impact** on Council policy and performance
  - To feed into the Council's performance monitoring framework to **evaluate the performance** of the scrutiny function.
  - To provide a **quantitative base**, and a **qualitative overview**, for the publication of one scrutiny annual report to Council, to be supplemented by five bespoke committee summaries.

27. For illustrative purposes the model uses SC1–SC5 (Scrutiny Committees 1-5) in tables used to collect data sets. The model can be adapted for use in other Local Authorities or bodies where there are more or fewer scrutiny committees.

28. The proposed model that follows has three components:

**Part A: Assessment of Scrutiny Output:** this part has two clear sections:

- **Section 1** of Part A - involves *a quantitative assessment of the types of scrutiny activities and outputs* that are achieved during the year.
- **Section 2** of Part A - involves the *monitoring of the number of recommendations made* and the immediate outcome that is achieved as demonstrated by the acceptance or rejection of these recommendations. The concept of “**substantiveness**” will be used as a key measure in determining the level of influence or impact that these recommendations have on policy.

**Part B: Recording and Tracking the Implementation of Recommendations.**

This section of the model proposes that service areas record the extent to which they have implemented scrutiny recommendations accepted by the cabinet. It will require the co-operation of service areas, and an agreed process for tracking the implementation of recommendations between scrutiny and service areas.

**Part C: Non-quantifiable Measures of Scrutiny Impact**

This section attempts to broaden the concept of capturing scrutiny’s impact, by recognising that its influence is not always quantifiable, and yet it can make a tangible qualitative difference to the way in which the Council delivers its services

## Part A – Assessment of Scrutiny Output – *scrutiny self-assessment*

### A1. Scrutiny Outputs - Volume and Type of Work

#### A1.1 Number and Types of Scrutiny Activity

This involves the collection of data on the number and types of scrutiny activity undertaken and the tasks that are completed throughout the year. This information is important because it will **illustrate the volume of work** undertaken by scrutiny committees. Data will be collected monthly on the various activities and tasks, and will be summarised to reflect the volume of work undertaken in each year. It will also provide comparative data on the activities undertaken by the different scrutiny committees in the year.

**Table 1:** Annual number of scrutiny meetings

Number of scrutiny meetings	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5
Formal Committee Meetings					
Task and Finish Meetings					
Panel Meetings					
Call-ins					
Informal Committee Meetings					
Other					
Total Number of Meetings					

**Table 2:** Annual summary of scrutiny activity by type

Type of Scrutiny Activity	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5
Policy Development/Review					
Pre-decision Scrutiny					
Performance Monitoring					
Briefing/update					
Short Scrutiny					
Task and Finish Inquiry					
Call-in					
Primary Research					
Other					
Total Scrutiny Activity					

(Note: SC: Scrutiny Committee. Definitions of Types of Scrutiny Activity set out in **Appendix 1, Table A**)

## A1.2 Number and Types of Scrutiny Output

Additionally, a summary of the types of output produced by the various scrutiny activities can be collated. This information is important as these outputs represent each Committees' substantive intervention in the policy process.

**Table 3.** Number and Types of Scrutiny Output.

Type of Scrutiny Output	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5
Committee Letter to Cabinet Member					
Task & Finish Inquiry Report to Cabinet					
Total					

(Notes: 1. Committee Letters include decision letters issued to a Cabinet member following a call-in.  
2. Task & Finish Reports include Short Scrutiny Reports.)

## A1.3 Types of Committee Engagement in Policy Process

A key role of scrutiny inquiries is to influence policy and hold the Cabinet to account. Data can be collected on the specific ways that scrutiny activities (committees, inquiries and panels) engage with the policy process, providing information on how much of the work undertaken by scrutiny committees shapes the Council's agenda, or reviews progress that has been made. The data will also indicate whether a committee's work in influencing policy is proactive or reactive, driven by the corporate agenda or reflective of challenges and shortcomings identified independently by the committee.

**Table 4.** Type of Scrutiny Engagement in Policy Process, by Committee

Type of Engagement in Policy	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5
Inquiry Title					
Opening debate in new policy areas					
Examining cabinet or directorate proposals e.g. policies, projects, strategies					
Responding to perceived policy failures					
Responding to external policy initiatives					
Follow-up from previous inquiry					

(Note: Definitions of Types of Scrutiny Engagement in Policy are set out in **Appendix 1, Table B**)

#### **A1.4 Stakeholder Contributors to Scrutiny**

A key role of scrutiny is to provide an opportunity for the public and stakeholders to have their views and perspectives considered in the Council's decision making process. This can be achieved by gathering data on internal and external contributors to scrutiny activities.

**Table 5:** Number of Stakeholders and Contributors to Scrutiny Activities

<b>Quarter 1 Committee</b>	<b>External contributors</b>	<b>Internal contributors</b>	<b>Total contributors</b>	<b>Webcast hits</b>	<b>Social media hits</b>
SC1					
SC2					
SC3					
SC4					
SC5					

#### **A2. Committee Recommendations - Monitoring the Number and Types of Recommendations**

Scrutiny recommendations are regarded as the primary means by which committees can require the cabinet to address a specific issue, consider a course of action, disclose or provide information or provide an update to the committee on a particular area. The current Cardiff Council Constitution requires the cabinet to provide a formal written response to scrutiny committee recommendations as soon as is practicable.

The collection and monitoring of scrutiny committee recommendations is key to enabling a quantifiable assessment of the influence and impact made by scrutiny committees. The research that was undertaken endorses the use of the quantitative approach previously applied by the UCL Constitution Unit in determining the impact of Parliamentary Select Committees in 2011 in the collection and monitoring of the success achieved by scrutiny committee recommendations.

Importantly, recommendations can be generated following a formal Committee meeting by letter, following a Short Scrutiny by extended letter, following a full Task & Finish

inquiry by publication of a report; or by letter following an informal Panel meeting or Call-in.

The following Tables illustrate the data that would need to be collected to evidence the actions, influence and impact that Scrutiny Committees are seeking to achieve from recommendations.

## A2.1 Number of Recommendations

**Table 6:** Number of scrutiny committee recommendations (outputs) by activity per month, totalled to provide annual data.

Committee	Mtg 1	Mtg 2	Mtg 3	Mtg 4	Mtg 5	Mtg 6	Mtg 7	Mtg 8	Mtg 9	Mtg 10	Mtg 11	Annual Total
SC1												
Committee Letter to Cabinet Member												
Task & Finish Report to Cabinet												
Total												
Repeat for all 5 Committees												
Monthly TOTAL												

(Note: Committee Letters include any decision letter issued to the Cabinet following a Call-in)

## A2.2 Type and Nature of Recommendations

In monitoring recommendations, it is important that we establish the type or the nature of recommendations made. Data on the nature of recommendations can be captured using the concept of the “**Substantiveness of Recommendations**”. The UCL Constitution Unit considers this is a key measure to enabling **a meaningful assessment and analysis of the levels and the scope of influence** that recommendations can have on the policy process. “Substantiveness” can be determined using the following two components.

- **Level of policy change** - the level of alteration that a recommendation calls for.
- **Level of policy significance** - the scope or significance of the policy that the change will be applied to.

### A2.2.1 Recommendations by Level of Policy Change called for

Collecting this data will **provide a measure of the level of policy change that scrutiny recommendations are seeking to achieve**. The types of change called for can be categorised as follows and can be allocated the corresponding numerical values:

Policy change	Value
No change	0
Small change	1
Medium change	2
Large change and/or complete reversal of the policy	3

(Note: definitions of the level of change a recommendation may call for are set out in **Appendix 1, Table C**)

The data in Table 7 below provides a summary of the number recommendations made in relation to the types of action called for. These data sets will be indicative of the level of influence that each Committee is seeking/has sought to achieve. Note that some recommendations do not propose a policy change and therefore are not allocated a numerical value.

**Table 7:** Number of Recommendations by the level of change called for

Activity: Recommendations	Small change	Medium change	Large change
R1	x		
R2		x	
R3			x
R4	x		
R5			x
Total Recommendations	2	1	2

(Note: Activity can be either a committee letter or a task and finish report)

This analysis should be completed for each scrutiny activity (written in a letter or report) that generates recommendations. This can be summarised in an annual report at the end of the municipal year.

### A2.2.2 Recommendations by Level of Policy Significance

Collecting this data will **provide a measure of the relative importance or significance of the specific policy that scrutiny recommendations will impact on.**

The level of policy significance that scrutiny recommendations will impact on can be allocated a corresponding numerical value.

Policy Significance	Value
Minor policy	1
Medium policy	2
Major policy change and/or complete reversal of the policy	3

The data in Table 8 below provides a summary of the number recommendations made in relation to the significance of the policy that it will impact on. This data set will be indicative of the influence that recommendations are seeking to achieve in relation to the importance or significance of the policy

**Table 8:** Number of recommendations by policy significance

Activity : Recommendation	Minor policy	Medium policy	Major policy
R1		x	
R2		x	
R3			x
R4			x
R5			x
R6		x	
<b>Total Recommendations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

(Note: definitions of the level of policy significance recommendations will impact upon are set out in **Appendix 1, Table D**)

Each activity that generates recommendations should be recorded and an annual summary collated at the end of the municipal year.

### **A2.2.3. Recommendations by Substantiveness**

The use of the term ‘substantiveness’ refers to the overall policy importance of scrutiny committee recommendations. This is a combined measure of the two components, *level of policy change* and *level of policy significance*, that determine the policy importance of a recommendation. This measurement will enable an analysis and measure of the overall policy importance of recommendations that have been formulated by scrutiny committees each year.

**Substantiveness = (Level of policy change called for) x (policy significance)**

The substantiveness of a recommendation is calculated by multiplying the values associated with the different categories of policy change by the values associated with the different levels of policy significance on which the recommendation would impact.

The resulting categories of substantiveness of recommendations are as follows;

0	No change regardless of policy significance
1	Small change to a minor policy
2	Small change to a medium policy Medium change to a minor policy
3	Small change to a major policy Large change to a minor policy
4	Medium change to a medium policy
6	Medium change to a major policy Large change to a medium policy
9	Large change to a major policy

The data in Table 9 below will enable analysis of the number of recommendations and the policy importance of recommendations made by the each Scrutiny Committee.

**Table 9.** Annual summary of number of substantive recommendations

Committee	Number of Substantive Recommendations							Total	% 0-2	% 3-6	% 9
	0	1	2	3	4	6	9				
SC1											
SC2											
SC3											
SC4											
SC5											
Total											

To enable this analysis, each recommendation in a Letter or Report will need to be allocated a substantiveness rating. These ratings can then be collated for each scrutiny committee monthly and annually, and for the whole scrutiny function by adding together the ratings for all five committees. If required it will be possible to make a comparative analysis of the work of different scrutiny committees for performance measurement purposes by virtue of numbers of recommendations and their substantiveness. A framework for the allocation of a substantiveness rating to a recommendations will be developed by the scrutiny team and applied consistently across all committees. This will avoid the risk of subjective assessment, establishing clear parameters of what constitutes each level of change, and clarity on the categories of policy significance.

**A3. Tracking the Success of Recommendations– *acceptance and implementation***

The model has established that recommendations generated by scrutiny activity constitute potential service area outputs. Tracking the acceptance and implementation of scrutiny recommendations is therefore an important aspect of determining the impact of scrutiny as it provides evidence of the degree of success that scrutiny recommendations have achieved in influencing Council Policy and effecting change. The work of Rush (1985) as cited in the scrutiny research undertaken, stated that ‘tracing the fate of recommendations’ is ‘no doubt one of most important measures of the impact of the Committee’.

The Cabinet formal response to scrutiny recommendations provides immediate confirmation of scrutiny's influence on policy and performance. However, the take-up or acceptance of recommendations, only represents a partial or limited measure of a committee's influence, it does not provide definitive evidence that recommendations are acted upon nor the outcomes that their implementation achieves or fails to achieve. Scrutiny's influence can be over-estimated when only acceptance of recommendations is taken into account. When service areas fail to implement accepted recommendations or when scrutiny makes recommendations that are less than challenging this can lead to low levels of impact on the Council's performance.

The acceptance of recommendations, even with its limitations, is worthy of measurement however as it enables committees to evaluate their influence. It also provides a direct comparison between committees on this key starting point in the process of making impact.

The acceptance of recommendations can be tracked via a Cabinet formal response to a Scrutiny task and finish report or a Cabinet Member response to a Committee letter. The categories that can be used to track immediate acceptance are determined as:

• Fully Accepted
• Partially Accepted
• Rejected

(Note: definitions of the above responses are set out in **Appendix 1, Table E**)

Once a data set of recommendation responses has been recorded over time, a variety of analyses can be generated, as illustrated in the following two tables.

Each set of recommendations accepted, partially accepted or rejected, can be transformed into implementation goals and action plans by the relevant service area. Part B of the Model therefore requires the service area to track its own implementation of scrutiny recommendations.

**Table 10:** Annual summary of recommendations by committee

Committee	Accepted	Partially Accepted	Rejected	Total	Accepted/Partially Accepted (%)	Rejected (%)
<b>SC1</b>	45	10	20	75	73%	27%
SC2						
SC3						
SC4						
SC5						
<b>Total</b>						

(Figures used for illustrative purposes only)

Establishing the substantiveness of accepted recommendations, as illustrated in the Table below, provides a more accurate picture of the level of influence that scrutiny recommendations have achieved.

**Table 11:** Annual summary of the substantiveness of accepted recommendations.

Committee	Substantiveness Activity						Total Accepted	Substantiveness 1-3 (%)	Substantiveness 4-6 (%)	Substantiveness 9 (%)
	1	2	3	4	6	9				
SC1		35		20	5	5	65	54%	38%	8%
SC2										
SC3										
SC4										
SC5										
<b>Total</b>										

(Figures used for illustrative purposes only)

## Part B – Tracking of Implementation – *service area self-assessment*

### Tracking Implementation of Recommendations

In addition to monitoring the acceptance of scrutiny recommendations, this model proposes recording the extent to which they have been implemented by the cabinet through service areas. Such monitoring provides further evidence of the degree of impact of scrutiny recommendations, and evidence of a committee's longer-term influence.

The process for tracking the implementation of scrutiny recommendations within the Council will need to be agreed between scrutiny and the cabinet, and then in detail through directors and service area management teams. Responsibility for capturing such detail and relaying it to scrutiny could possibly sit with service area performance leads and compliment a refreshed performance and planning framework introduced to meet the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill. It will be important to clarify the *types of evidence* required to confirm implementation of a recommendation, and the timescales for reporting on progress made towards implementing recommendations. Where appropriate, evidence would constitute a summary of actions taken or intended to address the implementation of a recommendation.

The following implementation categories are proposed:

• Fully implemented
• Partially implemented and in progress
• Not yet implemented

(Note: definitions of the above categories are set out in **Appendix 1, Table F**)

Once a data set of responses for recommendations implemented has been accumulated a variety of analysis can be generated. It is suggested that the service

area concerned should prepare a report within 6 months of Cabinet formally accepting a set of recommendations resulting from an inquiry. Such a report should take each accepted or partially accepted recommendation and provide an assessment of progress towards its implementation. To clearly identify outputs as a result of the implementation of scrutiny recommendations in reporting implementation status a progress update should support the analysis. The following 2 tables illustrate how the implementation of scrutiny recommendations can be analysed. It is therefore proposed that the following two tables are populated by the service area receiving a scrutiny recommendation for improvement:

**Table 12:** Analysis of recommendations by acceptance and implementation status.

Report Title/Letter Topic:	Acceptance Status	Implementation Status	Progress update
R1	Accepted	Full	
R2	Partially Accepted	Not Implemented	
R3	Accepted	In progress	
R4	Accepted	No Evidence	

Such an analysis for a set of recommendations can later be summarised on an annual basis.

**Table 13:** Annual summary of implementation of accepted recommendations by committee

Committee	Number of Accepted Recommendations	Full	Partial	No Evidence	Not Implemented	Total	Fully and Partially Implemented (%)
SC1							
SC2							
SC3							
SC4							
SC5							
Total							

## **Part C – Non-quantifiable measures of Scrutiny Impact**

The third element in measuring the impact of scrutiny acknowledges that scrutiny's influence is not always quantifiable, and yet its influence can make a tangible qualitative difference to the way in which the Council delivers its services. The primary research cites various reports that note the limitations of tracking Scrutiny committee recommendations as the sole means for assessing Committee influence within the local authority. Simply relying on tracking the take-up of recommendations can exaggerate a committee's influence, for there is a risk that Committees can tailor recommendations to make them easier for the Cabinet to accept, thereby inflating the acceptance rate. Additionally, it must be recognised that a positive formal response from the Cabinet to a Committee report or Committee letter to the Cabinet will not necessarily translate into immediate action. The success rate of Scrutiny Committee recommendations only accounts for part of a Committee's influence. Various aspects of a Committee's work, such as the conduct and process of running an inquiry and other non-inquiry work can effect change in the organisation.

The assessment of the influence or impact of scrutiny should therefore examine various areas of scrutiny influence and contribution to policy work in the authority. Research undertaken by the UCL Constitution Committee, the Institute for Government (2015) and by CFPS and APSE (2017), has identified and highlighted several key areas where scrutiny makes significant positive contributions and impacts on policy within local government. It is recognised that most scrutiny activities will have contributed to or achieved some success in at least one or a combination of these impact areas. It is also noted that the extent to which these types of influence are achieved varies between committees, varies over time and could be affected by factors such as the nature of policy issues and the character/style of the Committee Chair.

This Model proposes that the beneficial impacts and contributions of scrutiny should be monitored using such tangible qualitative impacts as:

- Evidence Contributions
- New Analysis of Issues and Evidence
- Transparency

- Spotighting
- Learning
- Process Impact
- Holding to Account
- Context and Relationships
- Indirect and Less Tangible Scrutiny Impact; and
- Staff and Member Feedback on Effectiveness of Scrutiny Support

Data for the above can be collected from various scrutiny stakeholders and participants on whether the scrutiny they have been involved in has made an impact in these areas. Responses must be sought from the three key parties involved in the conduct of scrutiny: those conducting the scrutiny, those subject to scrutiny, and other interested stakeholders.

The data to establish the contributions and impact of scrutiny in these areas could be collected using qualitative research methods such as focus groups or interviews. However for ease of data collection, a short annual survey can be sent out to Members, participants and witnesses to seek their views on how well scrutiny has achieved these various forms of influence and impact.

The following set of tables address each of the above tangible impact measurements:

**Evidence Contributions** - identifying new evidence that improves the Council's evidence base for decision-making, including related issues, risks or opportunities.

**Table 14:** Evidence contribution to democratic debate

Evidence contribution to democratic debate	YES	NO
Raised Member or Officer awareness and contributed new, original or independent information or evidence for consideration in policy development or operational review		
Presented new or original research on policy in question		
Brought forward new evidence from stakeholders and service users who have not previously been in contact with the Council		
Highlighted best practice arrangements from other bodies		
Raised Officer and Member understanding of a key policy or operational issue or problem		
Raised Member and Officer awareness of a key governmental		

Evidence contribution to democratic debate	YES	NO
consultation in a policy area		
Prompted the Council and its key partners, to gather different or more up to date evidence to inform policy and practice.		
Other		

(Note: whilst 7 key areas are outlined in this table, categories can be edited and defined as required by Members and key officers in the Council.)

**New Analysis of Issues and Evidence** - providing a new or different analysis of the available evidence (including political opinion) which influences the Council's view about what it is doing.

**Table 15:** New analysis of issues and evidence

New analysis of issues and evidence	YES	NO
Provided new analysis of evidence, previously unrecognised trends in evidence informing policy development		
Highlighted a weight of opinion on the evidence of which the Council was unaware		
Changed the understanding and perspective of key decision makers (Cabinet Members and Service area Managers) on an issue		
Other		

**Transparency** - facilitating government openness by obliging Council Officers, Managers and Cabinet Members to explain and justify what they have done.

**Table 16:** Transparency

Transparency	YES	NO
Improved the quality of information that the Council has made publically available		
Increased the quantity and breadth of information provided by the Council		
Facilitated transparency or disclosure of service plans, information and decision making to the public.		
Other		

**Spotlighting** - scrutiny's role in drawing attention to policy issues that may not be receiving adequate attention. These could be relatively smaller areas of government policy, rather than large flagship policies (or they may relate to overlooked details of more central policy topics). When committees focus on these issues this can have the result of changing policy priorities within the department. It has been noted in previous research that committees can have the effect of putting the 'spotlight on certain things and raising them up the departmental and/or corporate agenda'.

**Table 17:** Spotlighting to drive improvement

Spotlighting to drive improvement	YES	NO
Made the Council, other stakeholders and the public aware of a previously, unrecognised issue		
Enabled stakeholders to change or broaden views or the evaluation of an issue		
Identified improvements needed in existing policies and strategies		
Highlighted service user and stakeholder needs that are relevant to policy and service improvements		
Other		

**Learning** - the impact of scrutiny in identifying lessons and learning from previous mistakes or successes by reviewing the development and implementation of policy, operational processes, resources and expenditure.

**Table 18:** Learning

Learning	YES	NO
Enabled the Council and its service areas to review or question its own actions or policies		
Identified lessons or learning areas that can improve policies and how they can be implemented		
Created a positive environment in which lessons can be learned		
Other		

**Process Impact** - scrutiny prompting higher standards or better processes in government through the act of conducting effective scrutiny.

**Table 19:** Process impact

Process impact	YES	NO
Identified and facilitated improvements in the Council or service area's operational processes, performance or policy implementation.		
Identified improvements in staffing resources or workforce development		
Identified improvements in guidance materials for service users and frontline staff and practitioners.		
Assisted the Council in identifying and managing risks.		
Made officers and cabinet prioritise and review their effectiveness.		
Other		

## Holding to Account

**Table 20:** Holding to account

Holding to account	YES	NO
Challenged service performance and performance targets		
Provided opportunity for Cabinet and Council managers to report on progress made on policy development and operational review		
Enabled the representation of stakeholders, public and other external bodies and their views to support the challenge of policy and operational processes and have their views considered by the Council and its services		
Challenged decision making or decisions made for reconsideration		
Exposed wrong doing or poor policies or operational practice		
Other		

## Context and Relationships

**Table 21:** Context & Relationships

Context & Relationships	YES	NO
Helped build relationships or coalitions to support or challenge an issue – brokering role between Council and stakeholder groups		
Helped to improve stakeholders views, relationship and trust in the Council		
Other		

## **Other Indirect and Less Tangible Scrutiny Impact**

Other less tangible and less measurable impacts of scrutiny include:

**Brokering between stakeholders** – Scrutiny can deliver a role in mediating between competing interests, and/or reviewing differing points of view to identify mutually acceptable solutions. Committees can bring discussion from different perspectives together in the public arena. This is not limited to a “brokering role” between backbench members, the Cabinet and Senior Managers, but also involves brokering between the Council, external stakeholders and key partners. For example, this can involve putting forward to the Council a pressing case for policy change on behalf of external stakeholder groups. This can also work in the way that the evidence presented by the Committee can legitimise the Council’s position or delegitimise the claims of critics.

**Indirect/Less Tangible Impact** – Generating Fear is <sup>2</sup>perhaps the least tangible impact of scrutiny, but is often regarded as the most important form of a Committee’s influence, associated with its role in holding to account and exposing poor decision making, wrong doing or questionable policy in the public arena. Such impact specifically relates to how the Cabinet, and its Officers (partners or outside bodies) react and adjust their behaviours in anticipation of how the Committee might respond or react should a certain course of action be taken. This is regarded as a mainly negative form of influence in “discouraging” the local authority (and to a certain extent, outside bodies) from behaving in certain ways, for fear of how the relevant scrutiny committee(s) may react in the future. For example, it has been cited that the anticipation of “appearing before the Committee” has a much bigger influence, with many officers wanting to avoid criticism from the Committee. The knowledge that an action or decision taken by the Cabinet and Officers could lead to defending this at a Scrutiny Committee leads to some degree of “risk management”. However, on some occasions this effect can also “encourage them to adopt a policy, when they know that it is likely to receive a backing” from Committee Members.

---

<sup>2</sup> Selective Influence: The Policy Impact of House of Commons Select Committees. UCL Constitution Unit, June 2011, Meg Russell & Meghan Benton.  
Select Committees under Scrutiny: The impact of parliamentary committee inquiries on government. Institute for Government 2015, Dr Hannah White.

Scrutiny’s “preventative influence” as a result of its capacity to “generate fear” would be more difficult to assess and evidence. It is therefore suggested that the use of more in-depth qualitative methods such as key informant interviews and case studies would be useful tools in illustrating how “generating fear” and “brokering between stakeholders” affect policy work and decision-making.

### **Staff and Member Feedback on Effectiveness of Scrutiny Support**

The effectiveness and influence of the scrutiny process is also affected by the level of support that is available to deliver scrutiny and its processes. It is therefore important that feedback is sought on the effectiveness of the support provided by the Scrutiny team to deliver the Scrutiny service. This data will provide further evidence in determining the effectiveness and influence of scrutiny. Such measures are currently used by the Research and Committee Services of the National Assembly for Wales to monitor the effectiveness of its services.

**Table 22:** Effectiveness of scrutiny support

Area of Support	1 Poor	2	3	4	5 Excellent
Committee Support					
Overall support for Scrutiny Committees					
Support for Committee meetings					
Support for Task and Finish meetings					
Research and independent evidence collection support for Committee work					
Support in developing Member skills in the conduct of scrutiny					
Engagement with the Public and Stakeholders					
Effectiveness in Engaging with Cardiff Council service users and members of the public to be involved in scrutiny					
Effectiveness in engaging with external partners and voluntary organisations					
Effectiveness in promoting the work of scrutiny on media and social media platforms championing the scrutiny function and service with stakeholders and partners					

Feedback on the effectiveness of support can be evaluated on an annual basis by internal and external scrutiny stakeholders, for example scrutiny chairs and members, senior management, cabinet members, and external evidence providers. Such data can be used by the Head of Democratic Services to set performance targets that meet officer and member needs in the delivery of scrutiny services.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The task group recommends:

1. That Cabinet adopts this Model for capturing the impact of scrutiny acknowledging that it represents early compliance with the self-assessment requirements set out in the forthcoming Local Government Election (Wales) Bill. This self-assessment has implications for each Scrutiny Committee, the Scrutiny Function, and for the Service Areas / Directorates accepting scrutiny recommendations that require implementation.
2. That the Scrutiny Function pilots the Model developed by the committee to provide a framework and database on which a quantitative assessment of its impact on Council services can be captured and reported to Full Council annually. This pilot should be reviewed one year from implementation. In addition to the quantitative assessment a non-quantifiable assessment of scrutiny should add value to the overall evaluation of impact, embracing the achievements of all five scrutiny committees.
3. An extension of the governance arrangements currently in place for responding to the recommendations of a scrutiny inquiry, to recommendations generated by the committee in correspondence following scrutiny of a matter at a formal committee. Cabinet is currently required to respond to scrutiny inquiry recommendations as soon as is practicable. Where a scrutiny committee is making a recommendation to a Cabinet Member, that recommendation will be stated clearly at the end of the letter. The Cabinet Member is requested to respond to the letter as a whole, and clearly indicate their response to any recommendations included as being *accepted, partially accepted or rejected*.
4. That the Cabinet Office and Service Areas make arrangements to track and report on the implementation of accepted scrutiny recommendations. A progress report on recommendations made via report or letter would be

expected to be available for presentation to the scrutiny committee within 6 months of the report being approved by Cabinet.

5. That Directors are accountable for reporting progress on the implementation of accepted scrutiny recommendations.
6. That service area tracking of the implementation of accepted scrutiny recommendations needs to integrate with the Council's planning and performance framework. This will enable recommendations to be monitored and their successful implementation evidenced.
7. That Cabinet endorse and support the development and branding of this model as the Cardiff Scrutiny Impact Model for potential sharing as best practice with other public bodies, and other local authorities through a variety of scrutiny networks. This would be offered when the model has been fully piloted and evaluated.

## **INQUIRY METHODOLOGY**

29. This report is delivered following a research-intensive inquiry. The task group commissioned two pieces of primary research to meet the requirements of the Terms of Reference. Both research commissions were delivered by the Scrutiny Research function. The final report agreed for submission to the full committee, and subsequently to cabinet, has been drafted taking account of both extensive research exercises, whilst acknowledging the practicalities of delivering a model that has resourcing implications against a challenging financial backdrop. A full list of reference materials is included within the published research reports.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

30. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Executive/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**

31. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

## POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Councillor David Walker  
**Chair**



Councillor Rodney Berman



Councillor Bernie Bowen Thomson



Councillor Jane Henshaw



Councillor Ashley Lister



Councillor Norma Mackie



Councillor Ali Ahmed



Councillor Rod McKerlich

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To scrutinise, monitor and review the overall operation of the Cardiff Programme for Improvement and the effectiveness of the general implementation of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, including:

To scrutinise, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Council's systems of financial control and administration and use of human resources.

To assess the impact of partnerships with and resources and services provided by external organisations including the Welsh Government, joint local government services, Welsh Government Sponsored Public Bodies and quasi-departmental non-governmental bodies on the effectiveness of Council service delivery.

To report to an appropriate Cabinet or Council meeting on its findings and to make recommendations on measures which may enhance Council performance and service delivery in this area.

**A: Types of Scrutiny activity in policy process**

Type of Scrutiny Activity	Definition
Policy Development	Where the Committee has contributed to the Council's policy development processes by considering draft policy documents.
Pre-decision Scrutiny	Where the Committee has evaluated and commented on policy proposals before they are considered by the Cabinet, providing the Cabinet with an understanding of Scrutiny Member's views prior to making their decision.
Performance Monitoring	Where the Committee has undertaken monitoring of the Council's performance and progress in implementing previously agreed actions.
Briefings	Where timescales have not allowed for pre-decision or policy development scrutiny, and to ensure the Committee is kept informed of developments, proposals or progress
Short Scrutiny	Where a Committee chooses to undertake a short scrutiny as opposed to a task & finish inquiry. A short scrutiny takes place over a period of two or three consecutive Committee meetings in a public setting.
Task & Finish Inquiry	Where the Committee considers there is an opportunity to examine in detail the issues and wider options available, to assist the Council in improving the way a service is delivered:
Call-in	Where a Committee considers a matter called in for scrutiny by a non-executive Member in respect of an Executive Decision

## B: Types of Scrutiny engagement in policy process

Types of Scrutiny Engagement	Definition
Opening Debate	Where a committee proactively seeks to explore new policy directions, fact-find or open debate. The issue may not be an obscure or neglected one but could be something that has become fashionable, and perhaps been promoted by interest groups, but on which the government has not yet reacted substantively. Shaping the agenda by bringing this under-examined area to the attention of a new administration.
Examining proposals	Inquiries responding to government announcements of projects, plans, programmes or funding packages, including publication of initiatives and strategies, white papers, green papers and occasionally legislation
Responding to perceived failures	Inquiries reacting to perceived failures of government action or inaction/negligence. Although other types of inquiry might have identified failure during their investigations, this category was only used for inquiries which were explicitly motivated by a crisis or political storm
Responding to policy initiatives by others	Inquiries which responded to reviews, consultations or initiatives by other bodies, for example Climate Change and the Stern Review: The Implications for Treasury Policy
Responding to external events	Where the committee was responding to an external event that was outside the government's control, eg Brexit, Grenfell
Picking up previous inquiries.	Where the purpose of the report was solely to follow up a previous inquiry

**C: Level of Change a Recommendation Calls for:**

Level of Change	Value	Definition
Small change	0	Recommendations which support or endorse existing Council policy, or recommend at most tweaking or small modifications. Recommendations for disclosure are placed in this category, particularly when this asks the Council to set out its policy on a matter in its response. This code is allocated to recommendations calling on the Council to merely 'consider' something, as well as those calling for a continuation of the status quo.
Medium Change	1	Recommendations that go further, but fall short of a reversal of a Council policy. These recommendations call for new action that is significantly different in terms of policy direction, priority or resources, or call for exploration in areas where policy did not currently exist. Disclosure recommendations can be placed in this category if they called for a change to the department's information policy or for the release of information usually kept out of the public domain.
Large Change or complete reversal of policy	2	Recommendations which significantly deviate from current policy or explicitly call for a reversal of current policy, such as the shutting down of programmes, dropping of targets, ending of funding, or adopting new action or a new policy in clear conflict with existing policy direction

**D: Level of Policy Significance a Recommendation will Impact upon.**

Three different categories of policy significance are suggested as follows:

Policy Significance	Value	Definition
Minor policy area	1	Recommendations to policies that are not referenced in the corporate plan or partnership plan or manifestos of the current ruling political group. These recommendations would impact on policy areas that are not mentioned or would fall within a broad/vague policy area.
Medium-level policy area	2	Recommendations associated with a policy area in the corporate plan or a WAG policy area. These policy areas will not fall under those that are considered as major policy areas.
Major policy area	3	Recommendations on policies that are explicitly mentioned in the corporate plan, PSB plan and other key policy documents of the Council or WAG

## E: Acceptance Categories for recommendations

Categories	Definition
Fully Accepted	Responses where the Cabinet expresses agreement with the committee's recommendation, is explicitly committed to taking the action requested, and makes no suggestion that they would have done so in any case. Also includes 'disclosure' recommendations where the committee requested information, which was provided in the response.
Partially Accepted	Responses which expressed agreement with the general thrust of the recommendation but not to the level of detail required by the committee, or accepted the recommendation in part but ignored (but did not reject) another part. This code is used in cases where the Cabinet claims that what the committee wanted was already in progress, but where there was evidence that the action had been started only after the committee's inquiry began. The assumption in these cases is that the Cabinet had anticipated the content of certain recommendations from the inquiry, and acted prior to publication of the report.
Rejected	This is used for responses where the Cabinet explicitly describes itself as 'rejecting' or 'disagreeing'. It is restricted to cases where the Cabinet says nothing positive or lukewarm at all, and has not suggested it was doing something similar already or that its position might change in the future

## F: Implementation Categories for recommendations

Implementation Status	Definition
Fully implemented	This is used in cases where there is clear evidence of implementation. Evidence of implementation can be provided by the Cabinet either as part of a formal response to an inquiry, or by a periodical update to the Committee e.g. where a recommendation calls for disclosure of information, amended policy, amended guidance, action planning, commissioned research.
Partially implemented (in progress)	This would apply to recommendations where evidence is provided that the Cabinet has implemented the recommendation but not to the degree of specificity required by the committee. This could also apply to evidence of some limited attempts to implementation or where the Cabinet has confirmed that steps are being taken to implement but no further evidence is available to confirm this.
Not yet implemented	Where there is simply no evidence that suggests the Cabinet has taken on board or actioned a recommendation.

**Part A – Assessment of Scrutiny Outputs**

Table	
1	Annual number of scrutiny meetings
2	Annual summary of scrutiny activity by type
3	Number and types of scrutiny output
4	Types of scrutiny engagement in policy process, by committee
5	Number of stakeholders and contributors to scrutiny activities
6	Number of scrutiny committee recommendations by activity per month and annually.
7	Analysis of recommendations by the level of change called for
8	Analysis of recommendations by policy significance
9	Annual summary of number of substantive recommendations
10	Annual summary of recommendations by committee
11	Annual summary of the substantiveness of accepted recommendations

**Part B – Tracking Implementation**

12	Analysis of recommendations by acceptance and implementation status
13	Annual summary of implementation of accepted recommendations by committee

**Part C – Qualitative Measures of Scrutiny Impact**

14	Evidence contribution to democratic debate
15	New analysis of issues and evidence
16	Transparency
17	Spotlighting to drive improvement
18	Learning
19	Process impact
20	Holding to account
21	Context & relationships
22	Effectiveness of scrutiny support

## scrutiny



### Scrutiny Research

Click on link to access report:

## [A Review of Cardiff Council's Scrutiny Impact](#)

Research report for the  
Policy Review and Performance Committee

December 2018



The City and County of Cardiff

scrutiny



---

**Scrutiny Research Team**

**Click on link to access report:**

**[Assessing Scrutiny Impact](#)**

**Research report for the  
PRAP Committee**

**18 September 2019**



The City and County of Cardiff

## Primary Research References

APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) and CFPS (The Centre for Public Scrutiny). (2017) Accountability and scrutiny - The issues for local government in a changing political environment

Characteristics of Effective Scrutiny - A draft performance management framework for local government scrutiny. Welsh Local Government Scrutiny Officers

CFPS (The Centre for Public Scrutiny). Introduction to the self-evaluation framework.

Greer, Scott L, and Matthias Wismar, Monika Kosinsk (2015) Towards Intersectoral Governance: Lessons Learned From Health System Governance.

House of Commons, Communities and Local Government Committee. Effectiveness of local authority overview and scrutiny committees. First Report of Session 2017 – 19. Public Health Panorama. Vol 1 Issue 2 September 2015, p111-2014

National Assembly for Wales. Assembly Commission. Annual Report and Accounts 2017-18. [www.assembly.wales](http://www.assembly.wales)

Interview with National Assembly for Wales Committee and Research staff (2019)

Russel M. and M. Benton (2011) Selective Influence: The Policy Impact of House of Commons Select Committees. The Constitution Unit. University College London.

Research Excellence Framework 2021. Consultation on the draft panel criteria and working methods, REF 2018/02 July 2018

Weyrauch, V. (2012). Toolkit N°3: Design/Establishing the pillars of M&E strategy. In: How to monitor and evaluate policy influence? Buenos Aires: CIPPEC.

White, H. (2015) Select Committees under Scrutiny. The impact of parliamentary committee inquiries on government. Institute for Government. June 2015. [www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk](http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk)

Scrutiny Services, Cardiff County Council  
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)