

Scrutiny Website Pages – Proposed Text

What does the Scrutiny Committee do?

The Scrutiny Committee's role is to examine various functions of the Council, to question how some key decisions have been made, and to investigate issues of local concern to residents. For this to happen effectively, the Scrutiny Committee needs the help of local residents, users of services, community organisations, and – where relevant – local businesses.

The Scrutiny Committee's role is –

1. To monitor the performance of the Council towards achieving its policy objectives and priorities in relation to Council services.
2. To review the effectiveness of the Council's work against agreed standards, targets and budgets for the levels of services provided.
3. To act as a focus for value for money and service quality exercises.
4. To manage the "call-in" procedure for the examination of decisions of the Executive.

The Scrutiny Committee works alongside the Executive Committee in the Council's decision making structure. The Executive Committee manages the services of the Council, and the Scrutiny Committee monitors that management.

Scrutiny Code of Practice

The Scrutiny Committee has agreed a code of practice for its work going forwards –

- Maintaining a focus on substantive issues
- Maintaining an apolitical, non-partisan approach to its investigations
- Being proactive and innovative in its work, not solely reactive
- Ensuring flexibility in the way it works
- Using an inclusive and corporate approach, drawing in elements out-with the members of Scrutiny themselves
- Carrying out reviews and investigations in a manner that is intensive, thorough, proportional, objective and informed
- Any findings and conclusions of reviews and investigations being presented in a constructive manner that helps to drive improvement
- Remaining at all times accountable to the Council and to the wider public.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee will demonstrate the following characteristics individually and collectively when carrying out their work:

- Being honest and open with each other, with colleagues in the Council, and with the wider public
- Demonstrating courage in the objectivity and the integrity of their work
- Ensuring that their conclusions are shaped solely on the facts and therefore that their work is carried out in a manner which ensures that all relevant information is available to them
- Working to achieve a relationship of mutual respect with other sectors of the Council

- Demonstrating integrity in relationships with individuals or groups who may be asked to give evidence or provide information to Scrutiny
- Promoting a non-adversarial manner of working
- Ensuring that confidentiality is maintained as appropriate
- Ensuring that all conclusions, findings and recommendations are realistic and capable of being actioned in practice, and
- Ensuring that open communication is maintained, both from and to, stakeholders.

What is a Scrutiny Review?

Reviews provide the opportunity to take a hard look at services, policies, and any other areas of concern in which the Council has control or input.

Care is taken that reviews are balanced and that any recommendations for change to any service or policy are achievable. Although every review is different, the approach to them is similar. The Committee will decide exactly what the review will look at (the scope); gather information through background research, inviting "expert witnesses" to attend meetings to answer questions and provide evidence; analyse that information and evidence; make recommendations. Reviews can either be undertaken by the full Scrutiny Committee at one of its regular meetings, or the Committee can choose to set up a Working Group to undertake the review. A Working Group will comprise members of Scrutiny, other Councillors who are not on the Executive Committee, and sometimes people from outside the Council if they have experience or knowledge of the subject under review. Working Groups do not make decisions but report their findings and recommendations to the full Scrutiny Committee, which will then decide what recommendations to make to the Executive Committee.

How to request a Scrutiny Review

If you would like to suggest a topic or issue for the Scrutiny Committee to look into, then please click here [link]. You need to clearly state what you would like Scrutiny to investigate and your reasons for this. You can click here to submit your request [link], or ask one of your local Councillors [link] or Community Councillors to put forward your suggestion.

You should note:

- Your suggestion should not be an individual concern or complaint. If you do have such a concern or complaint, then please click here [link]
- The Scrutiny Committee will not hear petitions or deputations, those matters are dealt with through the Petitions and Deputations Committee [link]

Checking on Executive Decisions – the "call-in" process

A decision made by the Executive Committee can be "called-in" by any 5 Councillors, who must give a clear and specific reason for wishing the decision to be reviewed. It is the job of the Scrutiny Committee to investigate the reasons for the call-in and make any recommendations on the original decision back to the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee does not accept the

recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee, then the matter will be referred for a final decision to full Council.

Scrutiny Committee meetings

The Scrutiny Committee meets about once per month. All the dates of meetings, agendae, reports and minutes are available in the Council's Committee section of the website [\[link\]](#).

Scrutiny Committee Membership

Councillor Gavin Logan (Chairman) [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Rory Stewart (Vice Chairman) [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Willie Archibald [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Alastair Cranston [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Keith Cockburn [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Iain Gillespie [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Simon Mounford [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Alec Nicol [\[link\]](#)

Councillor Jim Torrance [\[link\]](#)