



Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21

DRAFT



Contents

1.	Chair’s Foreword	1
2.	Swansea Scrutiny Results Scorecard 2020-21	3
3.	About the Indicators	4
3.a	How much scrutiny did we carry out?	4
3.b	How well did we do?	8
3.c	How did scrutiny impact on the business of the Council?	12
3.d	What were the outcomes of scrutiny?	18
4.	Impact	20
4.1	How Scrutiny Councillors have made a difference	20
5.	Feedback and Improvement	22
5.1	Improving scrutiny	22
5.2	Scrutiny Improvement Objectives	23
	For further information	25
Appendices:		
	1 - Scrutiny Dispatches Impact Report	

1. Chair's Foreword

Councillor Peter Black, Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee



I am proud to present the fourth annual report of this Council term, as Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee. This report covers the work of scrutiny between October 2020 and May 2021.

It has been another challenging year for the Council and has included living with the COVID pandemic. I am pleased to say that scrutiny activity has continued to be responsive and flexible taking into account pressures on the organisation. As a consequence of the pandemic the 2020/21 Council year was a short one, therefore the amount of scrutiny activity is not that of a typical council year, making comparison with other years less meaningful.

Scrutiny remains a vital part of local democracy and good governance. The work covered by this report ensures the Council remains accountable and transparent, effective and efficient. Questioning and providing challenge to decision-makers also helps the Council to achieve its objectives and drive improvement.

We have continued to conduct all scrutiny meetings on-line via Microsoft Teams, which has proved to be no less effective in carrying out our work.

Our report focuses on how scrutiny has made a difference in Swansea, and our efforts to support continuous improvement and good practice.

Measuring the performance of scrutiny in a meaningful way is not particularly easy, however we have taken a 'results based' approach to tell you about:

- How much scrutiny we carried out
- How well we did it
- How scrutiny impacted on the business of the Council
- What the outcomes of scrutiny were

We hope that this report provides you with assurance and confidence that councillors involved in scrutiny are contributing to better services, policies and decision making in Swansea.

Finally, I would like to give my thanks to all of the councillors who have led or participated in scrutiny over the past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Black', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Peter Black

DRAFT

2. Swansea Scrutiny Results Scorecard 2020-21

Scrutiny Practice	A. How much scrutiny did we carry out?	B. How well did we do?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of Committee meetings = 7 ↓ (18) 2. Number of Panel & Working Group meetings = 31 ↓ (54) 3. Number of in-depth inquiries completed = 0 ↓ (1) 4. Number of Working Group topics completed = 2 ↑ (1) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Average councillor attendance at scrutiny meetings = 86% ↑ (73%) 6. Backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny = 66% ↑ (62%) 7. Meetings with public observers = 24% ↓ (50%) 8. Meetings with public input = 13% ↓ (21%) 9. Meetings attracting media coverage = 32% ↓ (33%)
Scrutiny Outcomes	C. How did scrutiny impact on the business of the Council?	D. What were the outcomes of scrutiny?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Number of Chairs' Letters sent to Cabinet Members = 46 ↓ (77) 11. Average time for Cabinet Member response letter = 24 days ↑ (22) 12. Letters responded to within 21 day target = 52% ↓ (69%) 13. Number of scrutiny reports to Cabinet = 0 ↓ (2) 14. Cabinet action plans agreed = 0 ↓ (3) 15. Follow ups undertaken = 1 ↓ (3) 16. Number of Cabinet reports subject to pre decision scrutiny = 3 ↓ (5) 17. Number of Cabinet reports subject to Call-in = 0 ↔ (0) 18. Cabinet Members who attended at least one Scrutiny meeting = 100% (n/a) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Scrutiny recommendations accepted or partly accepted by Cabinet = n/a (90%) 20. Recommendations signed off by scrutiny as completed = n/a (48%)

(Last year in brackets) ↓↑ = notable change, ↓↑ = small change, ↔ no change

3. About the Indicators

A. How much scrutiny did we carry out?

3.1 Number of Committee meetings = 7

The Council has a single overarching Scrutiny Committee, called the Scrutiny Programme Committee, which is scheduled to meet every 4 weeks, with extra meetings added as necessary. During 2020/21 the Committee met 7 times (not including the meeting following Council AGM to elect the Committee chair/vice-chair).

The Committee is responsible for developing and managing the overall Scrutiny Work Programme. Overarching priorities were shaped by a work planning conference, which took place in October 2020 (open to all non-executive councillors), that heard a range of perspectives on what should be included. All councillors can suggest particular topics of concern for possible scrutiny.

The councillor-led Scrutiny Work Programme is guided by the overriding principle that the work of scrutiny should be strategic and significant, focussed on issues of concern, and represent a good use of scrutiny time and resources.

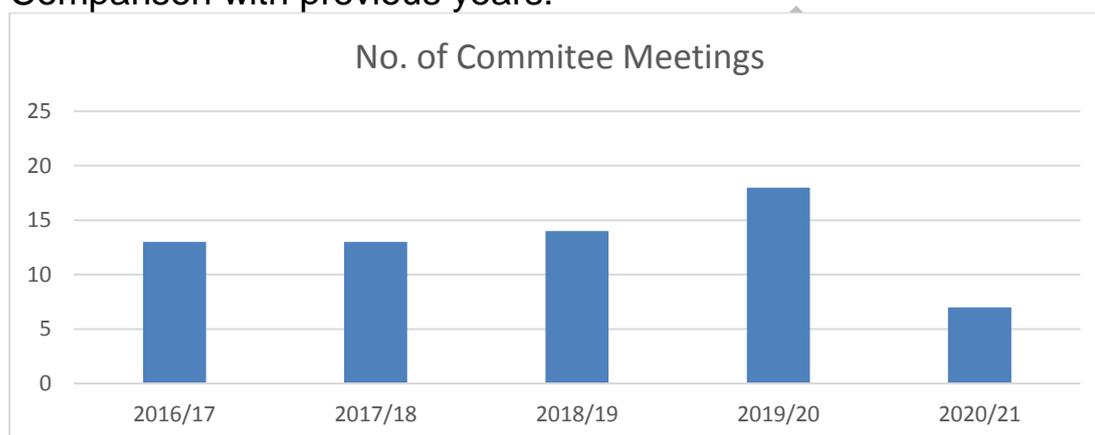
The Committee agreed a work programme that would cover the period until the end of the current Council term, in May 2022. Specific scrutiny activities included in the work programme are carried out either by the Committee or by establishing informal Panels and Working Groups. All meetings are held in public.

Formal Committee meetings gave councillors the opportunity to hold cabinet members to account and provide challenge on a range of policy and service issues. Except for a standing questioning session with the Leader of the Council, for 2020/21 the Committee moved away from routine monthly Cabinet Member Q & A sessions to a more targeted approach, creating space within its own work plan to focus on specific issues of concern, and address any gaps in the scrutiny work programme. The Committee is also the Council's designated Committee for statutory scrutiny of Swansea Public Services Board, and Crime & Disorder Scrutiny of the Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership.

The following topics were also examined by the Committee:

- COVID-19 - Update on Impact and Response
- Council's Recovery & Transformation Plan
- Active Travel Consultation Process
- Children & Young People's Rights Scheme
- Delivery of Homelessness Strategy

Comparison with previous years:



3.2 Number of Panel & Working Group meetings = 31

It is important that the Scrutiny Work Programme strikes a balance between community concerns and strategic issues. The Committee considers what specific topics should feature in the programme so that it is focussed on the right things.

Most of the work of scrutiny is delegated to informal topic based Panels and Working Groups. Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups are established by the Scrutiny Programme Committee, with an appointed convener (chair), to carry out specific scrutiny activities.

There are two types of panels:

Inquiry Panels - these undertake in-depth inquiries into specific and significant areas of concern on a task and finish basis, usually around six months, and will produce a final report at the end of the inquiry with conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet (and other decision-makers), informed by the evidence gathered.

Topics examined	Convener	Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement Key Question: What is the Council doing to ensure it procures locally, ethically, and greenly while being cost effective and transparent in its practices? 	Cllr. Chris Holley	Pre-inquiry planning meeting held 24 Oct 2019 to agree focus of inquiry. Work was placed on hold in later 2019 due to resources and then delayed due to the pandemic. The Inquiry was re-started in June 2021.

Performance Panels - these provide in-depth performance / financial monitoring and challenge for clearly defined service areas.

The following key changes were agreed at the start of the municipal year:

- Changing the frequency of the Adult Services & Child & Family Services Performance Panels, aligning them both to a 6-weekly cycle, reflecting their equal importance.
- Increasing the frequency of the Natural Environment Performance Panel from quarterly to every two months, reflecting the growing seriousness of issues around biodiversity and climate change and their importance.
- Removing the Public Services Board Performance Panel – this work now carried out by the Committee.

Performance Panels	Convener
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Improvement & Finance (monthly) • Education (monthly) • Adult Services (6-weekly) • Child & Family Services (6-weekly) • Development & Regeneration (every two months) • Natural Environment (every two months) 	Cllr. Chris Holley Cllr. Lyndon Jones Cllr. Sue Jones Cllr. Paxton Hood-Williams Cllr. Jeff Jones Cllr. Peter Jones

Performance Panels are expected to have on-going correspondence with relevant cabinet members in order to share views and recommendations, arising from monitoring activities, about services. Performance Panels will hold relevant Cabinet Members to account with clear opportunities for questioning, to explore their work, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact. Performance Panel conveners provide a regular update to the Committee to enable discussion on key activities and impact.

Working Groups are one-off meetings established to enable a 'light-touch' approach to specific topics of concern, to consider a specific report or information, resulting in a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member(s) or report to Cabinet with views and recommendations.

Four one-off Working Groups were included in the work programme, to be completed as time and resources allow. The following Working Group meetings were held during 2020/21:

Working Groups	Convener
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workforce• Digital Inclusion	Cllr Cyril Anderson Cllr Lesley Walton

3.3 Number of in-depth inquiries completed = 0

The planned re-start of the previously identified inquiry on Procurement was delayed during 2020/21 due to the pandemic and its impact on the scrutiny work programme. The inquiry was re-convened at the start of the 2021/22 municipal year, in June 2021.

3.4 Number of Working Group topics completed = 2

Work on the following topic(s) was completed through meetings of Working Groups:

- Workforce
- Digital Inclusion

NOTE: There are also regional scrutiny arrangements that Swansea is involved in, which enabled scrutiny councillors to look at the work of the Education Through Regional Working (ERW) School Improvement Consortia, and progress / delivery of the Swansea Bay City Region City Deal programme.

B. How well did we do?

3.5 Average councillor attendance at scrutiny meetings = 86%

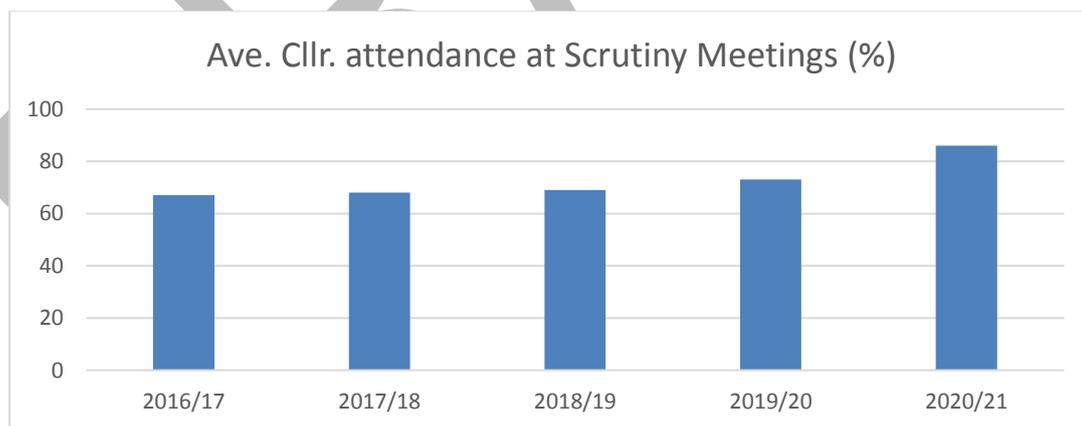
The rate of councillor attendance measures an important aspect of effectiveness as it reflects the engagement of councillors in the scrutiny process.

Council determines the membership of the Scrutiny Programme Committee. However, membership of the various informal Panels and Working Groups is based on interest shown by councillors in the topics under scrutiny. Based on expressions of interest the membership of Panels and Working Groups is determined by the Committee.

Attendance figures for councillors are collected by the Council's Democratic Services Team and published on the Council's website. Our figure is an overall attendance figure that includes the Scrutiny Programme Committee, Panel meetings and Working Groups. Attendance at the Committee meetings was 90%.

It is good to see a healthy increase on previous years, possibly helped by the ability for councillors to join meetings remotely.

Comparison with previous years:

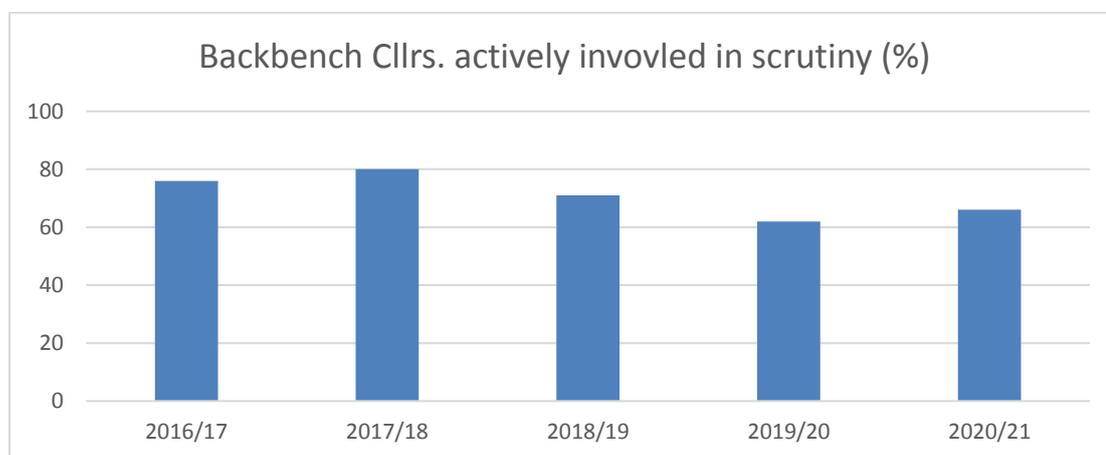


3.6 Backbench councillors actively involved in scrutiny = 66%

All backbench councillors have the opportunity to participate in scrutiny work regardless of committee membership. New scrutiny topics, once agreed, were advertised to all non-executive councillors and expressions of interest sought to lead and/or participate in these activities. It enables councillors to participate based on interest, and enables them to build up specialist expertise.

The majority of backbench councillors were involved in scrutiny, through either the Scrutiny Programme Committee, Panels or Working Groups.

Comparison with previous years:

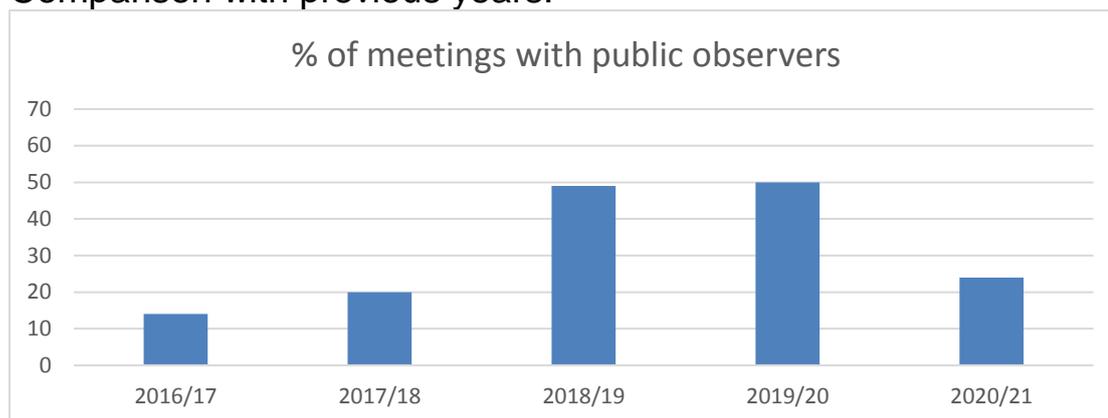


3.7 Meetings with public observers = 24%

Scrutiny is important as a mechanism for community engagement. The extent to which the public observes meetings may indicate whether there is a significant focus of scrutiny on matters of public interest. All scrutiny meetings, whether the Committee or Panels and Working Group, are conducted in public, subject to specific items of business that on rare occasions may contain exempt information. On average, almost a quarter of the 38 scrutiny meetings held were observed by members of the public who joined the remote meeting on request or in order to ask a question.

Committee meetings were live-streamed, however Panel / Working Group meetings were not. However all meetings were recorded, with video subsequently published on the Council's website / YouTube account for viewing. The move to remote meetings during the pandemic has affected our ability to report accurately on the number of public observers, other than those we know to have been specifically invited into meetings. A scan of YouTube views, however, shows Committee meetings seem to attract up to 50 viewers, significantly more people than who would have watched meetings pre-COVID from the public gallery. There are similarly good figures across other scrutiny meetings.

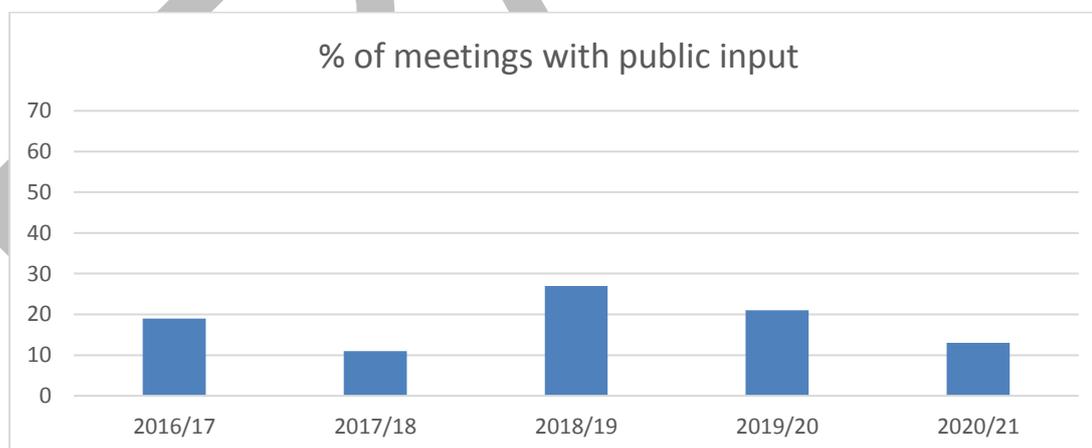
Comparison with previous years:



3.8 Meetings with public input = 13%

As well as attracting interest and observers to listen to what is being discussed, councillors are keen to increase active public involvement in the work of scrutiny. 13% of all scrutiny meetings had some form of such engagement and public input. This input can take various forms, including submission of questions for scrutiny sessions with cabinet members, making suggestions for the scrutiny work programme, contributing evidence to specific items under scrutiny - whether in person or reflected in the meeting agenda.

Comparison with previous years:

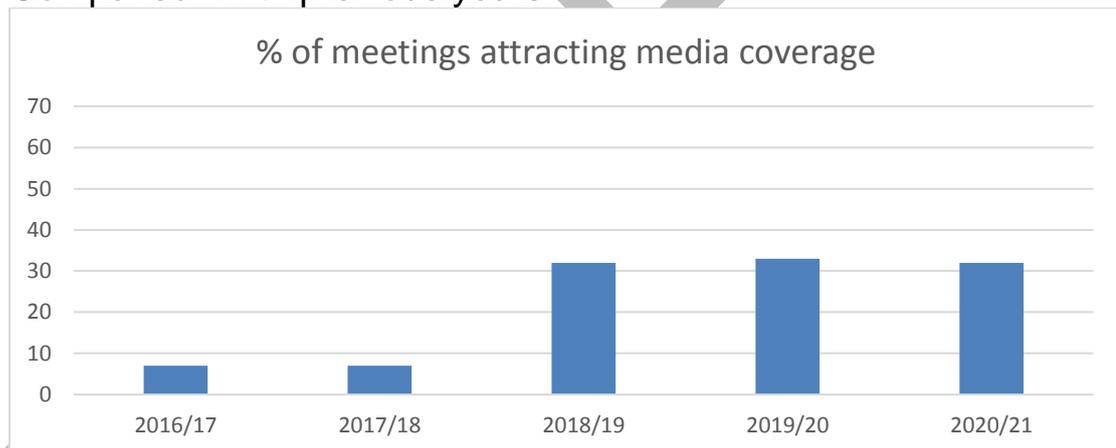


3.9 Meetings attracting media coverage = 32%

As well as attracting interest from individuals and getting members of the public to engage directly, a measure of whether scrutiny is focussed on the right things and is making an impact is the amount of media coverage that scrutiny is attracting. We found that 32% of scrutiny meetings made the news, e.g. in print in the South Wales Evening Post or Western Mail, and/or on websites including WalesOnline, BBC etc. Across all activities there were at least 13 scrutiny discussions reported in the local press (print and on-line).

Issues which generated coverage included scrutiny discussion on: COVID-19 impacts, and particularly the impact on social care services, Mental Health Services, Domestic Abuse, Active Travel, Welsh Housing Quality Standards, Council Budget, Crime & Disorder, and School Buildings.

Comparison with previous years:

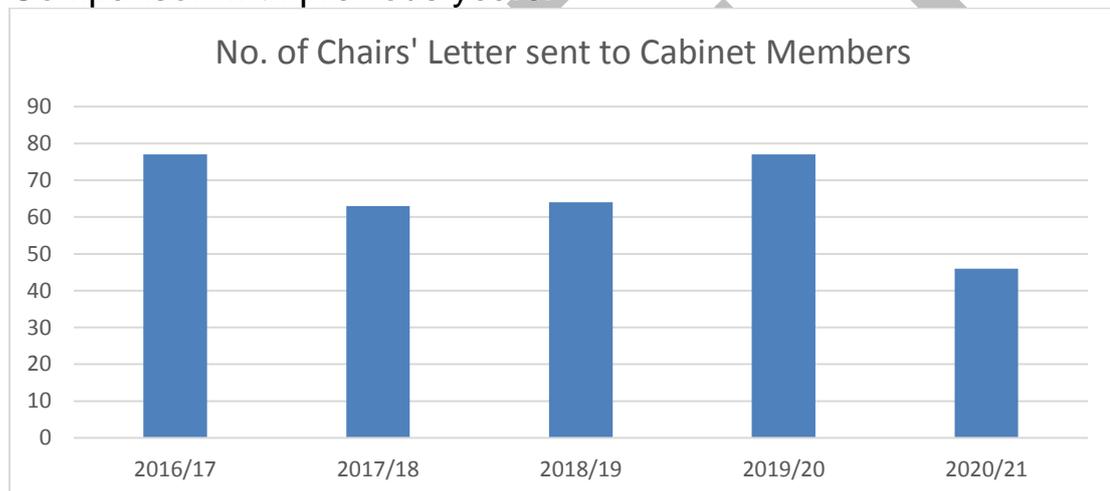


C. How did scrutiny impact on the business of the Council?

3.10 Number of Chairs' Letters sent to Cabinet Members = 46

Chairs letters are an established part of the scrutiny process in Swansea. They allow the Committee and Panel meetings / Working Groups to communicate quickly and efficiently directly with relevant cabinet members. They will send letters to raise concerns, recognise good practice, ask for further information and make recommendations for improvement, reflecting the discussion at Committee / Panel / Working Group meetings. Letters are effectively 'mini-reports' with conclusions and proposals from scrutiny – and where necessary require a response. 46 letters were sent to Cabinet Members.

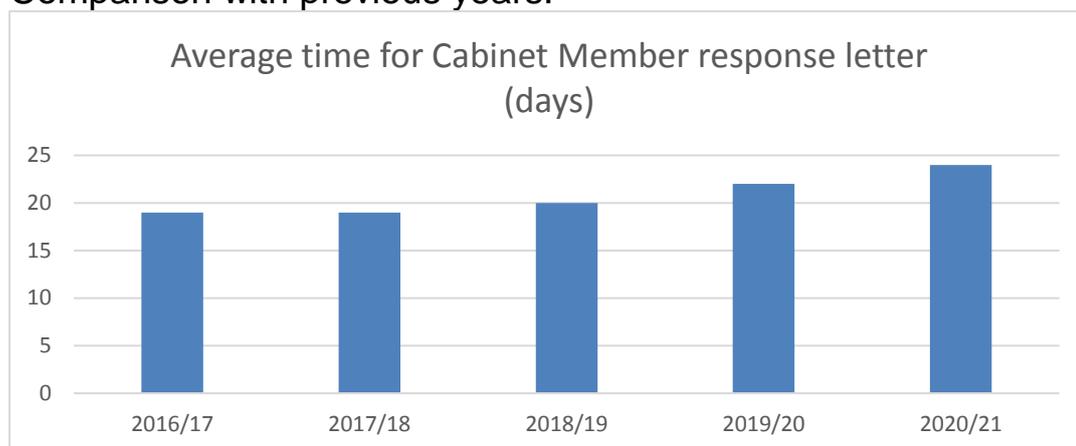
Comparison with previous years:



3.11 Average time for Cabinet Member response letter = 24 days

When scrutiny letters are sent to Cabinet Members and require a response, Cabinet Members are required to respond within 21 calendar days. The average response time for letters sent was 24 days, which indicates that scrutiny is generally getting a timely response to views, concerns, and any suggested action for Cabinet Members.

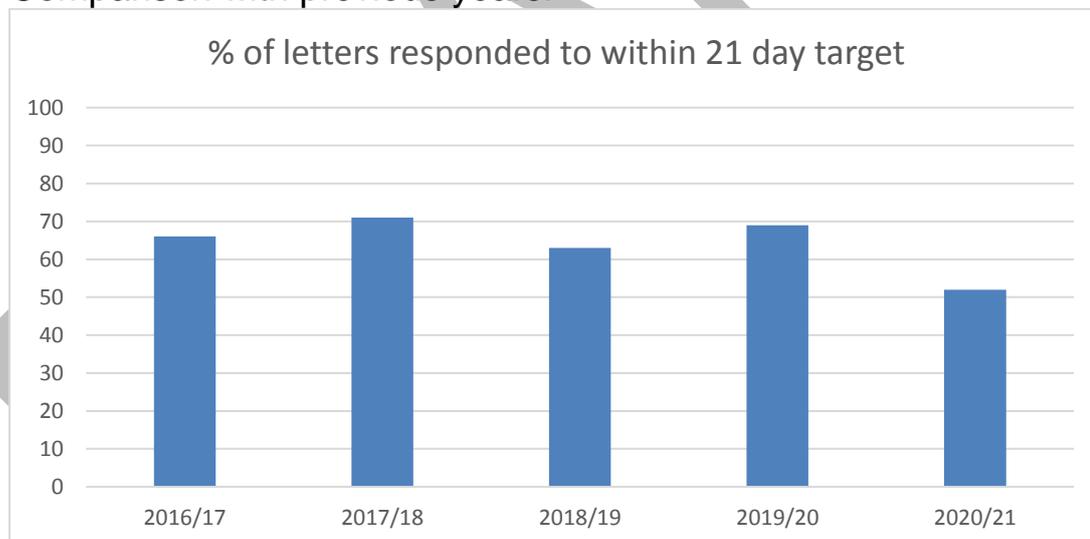
Comparison with previous years:



3.12 Letters responded to within 21 day target = 52%

Whilst the response to scrutiny letters was on average 24 days, some letters did take longer. The number of letters responded to within the 21 day target was 52% (12 out of 23 letters).

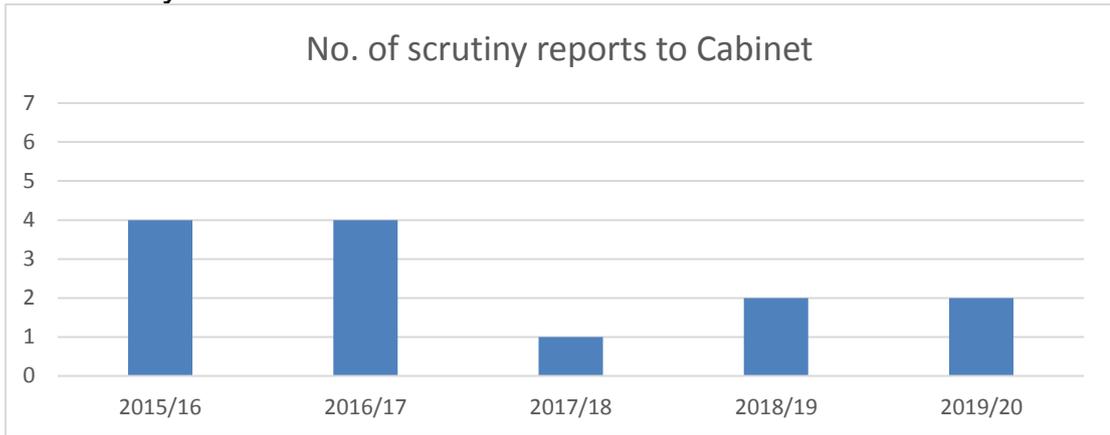
Comparison with previous years:



3.13 Number of Scrutiny reports to Cabinet = 0

In-depth inquiries are reported to Cabinet for a response to the recommendations agreed by scrutiny and its action plan on how the recommendations will be implemented. Scrutiny Working Groups also have the option of either writing a letter to relevant Cabinet Member(s) or report to Cabinet, depending on outcomes from discussion. There were no reports presented to Cabinet during 2020/21.

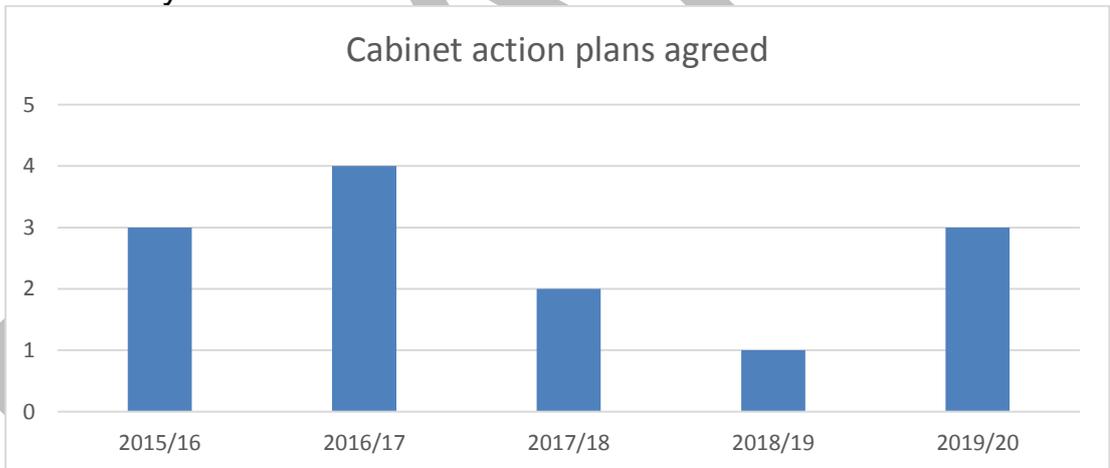
Previous years:



3.14 Cabinet action plans agreed = 0

Once recommendations and an action plan have been agreed by Cabinet, scrutiny will follow up on progress with implementation and impact. 2020/21 did not feature any action plans being published and agreed by Cabinet, as there were no reports from scrutiny requiring response.

Previous years:



3.15 Follow ups undertaken = 1

Inquiry Panels reconvene to follow up on the implementation of agreed recommendations and Cabinet action plans, and assess the impact of their work. A meeting will usually be held 6-12 months following Cabinet decision, with a further follow up arranged if required.

In order to check whether the agreed action plans have been carried out, scrutiny will ask for follow up reports from Cabinet Members. If councillors are satisfied they can then conclude the work for that inquiry. Previous scrutiny inquiries that required a follow up were followed up:

Inquiry	Convener	Cabinet Action Plan agreed	Monitoring Status
Equalities	Cllr. Lyndon Jones	November 2019	In progress - follow up meeting held 28 Jan 2021; further follow up tba Nov 2021

The Scrutiny Programme Committee will follow up any Working Group reports to Cabinet.

Comparison with previous years:

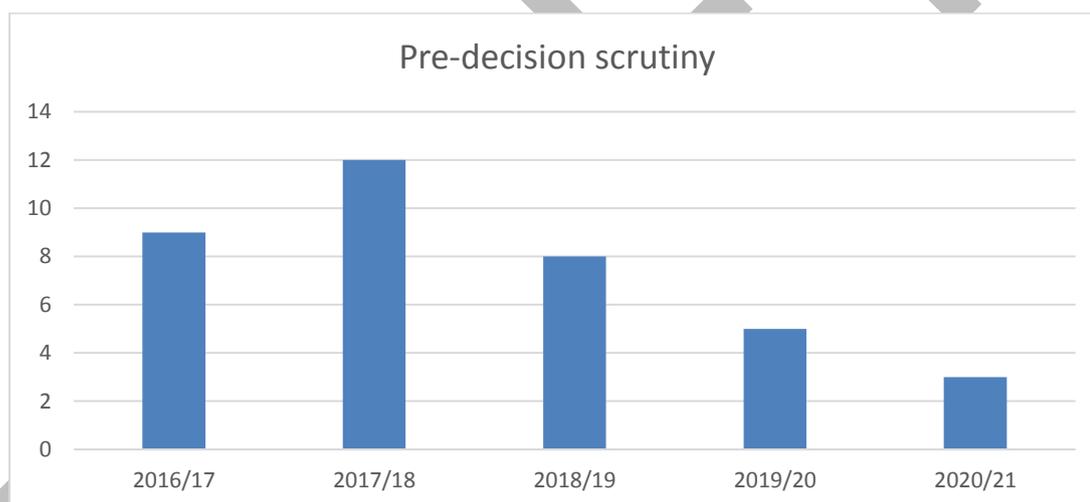


3.16 Number of Cabinet reports subject to pre-decision scrutiny = 3

Pre-decision scrutiny involves scrutiny councillors considering Cabinet reports before Cabinet makes a final decision. Taking into account strategic impact, public interest, and financial implications, the following three Cabinet reports were subject to pre-decision scrutiny (carried out by the Committee or relevant Performance Panels), with views reported to Cabinet before decisions were taken:

Report	Cabinet Member	Cabinet Meeting	Undertaken by
Proposed Lease to Mumbles Community Council under the Community Asset Transfer Policy	Delivery & Operations Investment, Regeneration & Tourism	21 Jan 2021	Committee
Annual Budget	Economy & Strategy (Leader)	18 Feb 2021	Service Improvement & Finance Panel (with contribution from other Panels)
Development of 71/72 The Kingsway & 69/70 The Kingsway – Business Case (FPR7)	Economy & Strategy (Leader)	20 May 2021	Service Improvement & Finance Panel

Comparison with previous years:



3.17 Number of Cabinet reports subject to Call-in = 0

During 2018-19, the Council agreed new call-in arrangements with scrutiny at the centre of the process. Any valid call-in of Cabinet decisions leads to the calling of a special meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Committee. A call-in can be made by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee or by any four councillors by giving notice in writing to the Head of Democratic Services within a specific call-in period. With the increase in pre-decision scrutiny seen over the last few years a large number of call-ins are not anticipated. There were no Cabinet decisions 'called in' over the past year.

3.18 Cabinet Members who attended at least one Scrutiny meeting – 100%

Cabinet Members attend scrutiny meetings to answer questions and provide information to assist scrutiny and account for their work. Cabinet attendance at scrutiny meetings is a good indicator that the 'holding to account' role of scrutiny is functioning well. It ensures that scrutiny provides regular challenge to decision-makers.

We have previously reported on the structured Cabinet Member Q & A Sessions organised by the Scrutiny Programme Committee, which enabled the Committee to explore the work of Cabinet Members, looking at priorities, actions, achievements and impact. There is now a more targeted approach calling in Cabinet Members as and when required to report on specific portfolio responsibilities and issues, with emphasis on Performance Panels to hold relevant Cabinet Members to account with clear opportunities for questioning. So we are now reporting on whether all Cabinet Members have been engaged with scrutiny, whether with the Committee, Panel or Working Group, over the last year. The range of issues discussed within the Committee alone involved six Cabinet Members.

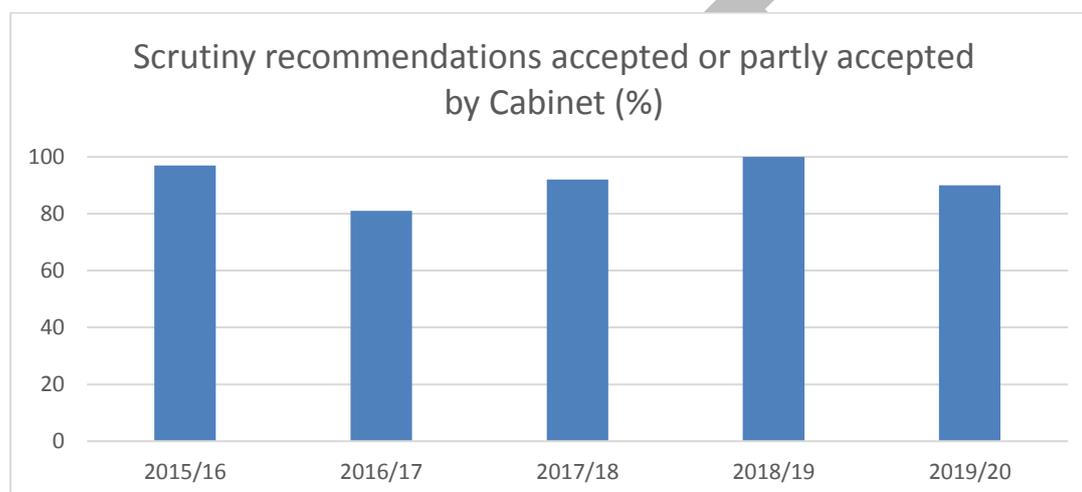
Although there are 10 Cabinet Portfolios, during 2020/21 there were 11 councillors in cabinet positions. The Supporting Communities portfolio operating under a job share system between two councillors sharing the responsibilities. Our target is always 100%.

D. What were the outcomes of scrutiny?

3.19 Scrutiny recommendations accepted or partly accepted by Cabinet = n/a

The rate that Cabinet accept scrutiny recommendations is a good indicator of whether scrutiny is making strong recommendations based on robust evidence. We cannot report on this for 2020/21 as there were no outstanding scrutiny reports to Cabinet requiring a formal response.

Previous years:



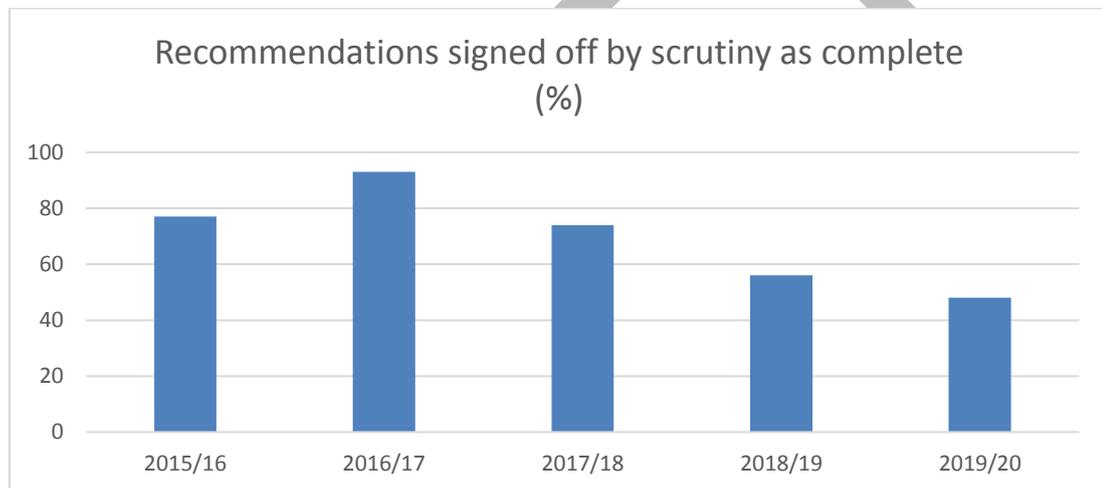
3.20 Recommendations signed off by scrutiny as completed = n/a

When follow up reports are presented to scrutiny (usually within 12 months following original Cabinet decision) they detail which of the recommendations from the in-depth inquiry (or other scrutiny report) have been completed in line with the agreed cabinet member's action plan and which have not. In the case of in-depth inquiries scrutiny councillors consider whether they agree with the assessment about implementation of recommendations, taking into account the evidence they are presented with about the changes that have happened following scrutiny and its impact. This indicator would represent the percentage of recommendations accepted by scrutiny as being completed for the year.

The Equalities Inquiry, which made 18 recommendations, was formally responded to by Cabinet in November 2019 and was followed up by the Panel in January 2021. Although some notable progress was reported, such as the creation of the new Strategic Equality and Future Generations Board, which will take forward actions and recommendations within the Council's Strategic

Equality Plan and the Scrutiny Inquiry, and associated support to drive improvement, the pandemic had impacted on the Council's ability to focus on this work. The Panel agreed that there has been positive progress with the recommendations and work done so far should provide a good foundation for moving forward in the medium and longer term. The Panel agreed to meet again in November 2021 to look in more detail at the progress made and impact of the inquiry, when a full assessment of the implementation of scrutiny recommendations and agreed Cabinet action plan will be made, before formal monitoring is concluded. It should be noted that in many cases implementation of scrutiny recommendations continues beyond the process of formal monitoring.

Previous years:



4. Impact

4.1 How Scrutiny Councillors have made a difference

4.1.1 Scrutiny Councillors make a difference by:

- Ensuring that Cabinet Members (and other decision-makers) are held to account through public question and answer sessions
- Making evidence based proposals on topics of concern through task and finish Scrutiny Inquiry Panels, and other scrutiny activities, that report to Cabinet
- Monitoring and challenging service performance and improvement through standing Scrutiny Performance Panels
- Addressing issues of concern through one off working groups
- Acting as a 'check' on the key decisions through pre-decision scrutiny and call-in
- Communicating concerns and proposals for improvement through regular publication of scrutiny letters and reports

4.1.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee produces a summary of the headlines from the work of scrutiny for Council and the public, which focuses on impact and how scrutiny is making a difference. The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee reports the summary, known as Scrutiny Dispatches, to Council.

4.1.3 It is important to know that the work and the efforts of scrutiny councillors are having a positive impact and are delivering effective scrutiny. We make sure that the recommendations we make, in whatever scrutiny forum, are followed up to check on implementation and assess the impact of this work.

4.1.4 The difference made and impact of the overall work of scrutiny is also communicated via:

- press releases to the local media;
- regular posts to our Swansea Scrutiny blog;
- an email monthly subscription newsletter, and
- use of social media, including Twitter.

4.1.5 A selection of stories from the past year of scrutiny from Scrutiny Dispatches, which demonstrate the impact made, are **appended**.

This includes reference to:

- **Continuing to play a role in Regional Scrutiny** (*reference to Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee and Education Through Regional Working Scrutiny Councillor Group*)
- **Continuing to monitor issues of public concern** (*reference to Child & Family Services Performance Panel*)
- **Picking up on public concerns about the Council's Active Travel plans and consultation processes** (*reference to Scrutiny Programme Committee*)
- **Investigating the impact of the pandemic on health & wellbeing of staff** (*reference to Workforce Working Group*)
- **Ensuring the Council's budget and corporate arrangements are effective and efficient** (*reference to Service Improvement & Finance Performance Panel*)
- **Considering work done to increase digital inclusion in Swansea** (*reference to Digital Inclusion Working Group*)
- **Adapting the work of scrutiny** (*Committee and Performance Panels*)
- **Questioning Cabinet Members** (*through the Committee, Panels, and Working Groups*)
- **Following up on scrutiny of Equalities** (*Equalities Inquiry Panel*)

5. Feedback and Improvement

5.1 Improving Scrutiny

5.1.1 It is good practice for those involved in the scrutiny function to undertake regular self-evaluation of this work. Taking into account characteristics of effective scrutiny and experiences, it is important for the continuous improvement of the function that any issues identified about current scrutiny practice are discussed and addressed. Annual review discussions are usually held within the Scrutiny Programme Committee and Scrutiny Performance Panels towards the end of each municipal year.

5.1.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee carried out an Annual Work Programme Review in May 2021, reflecting on the past year, the work of the Committee and work programme, to identify any improvement and development issues. As well as reviewing previously agreed improvement objectives, councillors were encouraged to identify areas of improvement in relation to the work programme and scrutiny practice, so that it is even more effective. No specific new improvement issues were identified for 2021/22.

5.1.3 Looking back, as a result of discussion and feedback at the beginning of 2020/21, we have seen:

- A more flexible Committee work plan, focussing on the most pressing issues and addressing any gaps in the scrutiny work programme.
- Better co-ordination between the Committee and work of Performance Panels.
- Changes to the work programme, which have strengthened the ability of all Performance Panels to manage their workload and make more impact.
- Scrutiny being flexible during the pandemic, ensuring that activity was proportionate and focused on the major issues, e.g. adjusting meeting schedules and frequency. This included the two 'Social Services' Panels temporarily holding joint meetings instead, focusing purely on the COVID-19 situation and impact, to reduce burden on a department under significant pressure during the second wave.

5.2 Scrutiny Improvement Objectives

5.2.1 A number of scrutiny improvement objectives and action plan were agreed by the Committee in January 2019. This included actions to address the three proposals for improvement made by the Wales Audit Office following its review of the Council's scrutiny arrangements in 2018. This was a co-ordinated and comprehensive single improvement plan for scrutiny, for the issues that matter most.

WAO Proposals for Improvement

- 1) The Council should consider the skills and training that scrutiny members may need to better prepare them for current and future challenges, and develop and deliver an appropriate training and development programme, including providing additional training on the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.
- 2) The Council should strengthen its evaluation of the impact and outcomes of its scrutiny activity.
- 3) The Council should further clarify the distinction between scrutiny and Policy Development Committee activity in relation to policy development.

Councillor Improvement Issues

- 1) We need more of our work to be reported to Cabinet so that there is more formal consideration of scrutiny conclusions and recommendations.
- 2) We need to be involved at an earlier stage in proposed Cabinet decisions so that our input can be more meaningful.
- 3) We need to increase opportunities for participation so that more councillors can get involved in the work of scrutiny.
- 4) We need to strengthen follow up of all scrutiny recommendations so that the response and difference made can be assessed.
- 5) We need more coverage in the media so that people are more aware of our work.

5.2.2 The Committee has regularly reviewed and considered progress against the action plan, last in May 2021. The review of the current improvement plan showed only a small number of outstanding actions:

- Development and delivery of a scrutiny training and development programme (as suggested by Wales Audit Office) – this will be arranged post-May 2022 for the new Council. It is anticipated this would include areas such as: the Scrutiny Process, Chairing Skills; Questioning Skills, Public Participation, as well as improving understanding around the Well-being of Future Generations Act and how scrutiny can support its impact on local services, policies and decision-making. Any planned programme

will be refined subject to further feedback / indications from scrutiny councillors.

- Developing a method of direct post-meeting evaluation from those attending scrutiny meetings (Cabinet Members, officers, external persons etc.) that will help strengthen our evaluation of the impact and outcomes of scrutiny activity – this would be developed during 2021/22.
- Developing a specific Facebook page for scrutiny that should improve visibility of the work of scrutiny and sharing of stories, and active public engagement – this would be progressed during 2021/22.

5.2.3 The Committee was content with progress against scrutiny improvement objectives and thought would be given to other improvement objectives for the future and/or new actions that will help deliver already identified objectives.

DRAFT

For further information:

Making the work of scrutiny more transparent and accessible

All scrutiny agenda packs are now available on the Council's '[agenda and minutes](#)' [webpage](#). There you can also find all scrutiny letters sent to cabinet members following meetings and responses. All scrutiny meetings are open to the public and anyone living or working in Swansea can [suggest a topic for scrutiny](#). There are also opportunities to [suggest questions, and submit views](#). If you would just like to keep an eye on what's going on we have webpages, a [blog](#) and a [newsletter](#), you could even [follow us](#) on Twitter.

Connect with Scrutiny:

Address: Guildhall, Swansea. SA1 4PE (Tel. 01792 637732)

Email: scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

Twitter: @swanseascrutiny

Web: www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny

Blog: www.swanseascrutiny.co.uk