



## **PUBLIC SPEAKING AT A SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council recognises that its residents can make an important contribution to its scrutiny function and be a valuable source of information. The Council therefore encourages the active participation of all residents within the Scrutiny process in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

This Guide provides information on what members of the public can expect when attending a Scrutiny Committee meeting.





## **CONTENTS**

	<b>Pages</b>
1. What is Scrutiny?	3-4
2. Where and when do the Committees meet?	4
3. How do I get my "Voice" heard?	4-5
4. Who can speak?	5
5. How long do I have to speak?	5
6. What can I speak on at the meeting?	5-6
7. Preparing your comments for the Committee	6
8. Attendance at the meeting	6
9. When will I speak?	7
10. Supporting documents or visual aids	7
11. Following My Address to Committee	7
12. How do I register to speak?	7-8
13. How do I register to speak in Welsh?	8
14. How do I register to speak if I have additional needs?	8
15. Written representations	8
16. Additional information	9



## **1. What is Scrutiny?**

The Council's Scrutiny process provides an opportunity for elected Members (Councillors) to examine the services that the Council provides and to ask questions on how decisions have been made. Scrutiny Committees must also make arrangements to listen to the views of local residents and the community. One of the roles of the Scrutiny Committee is to take account of those views when considering the relevant issue and, if considered appropriate, to pass those views on to the Council's Cabinet for their consideration.

It is important to be aware that the Scrutiny Committees do not deal with individual queries, concerns or complaints. You should also bear in mind that a Scrutiny Committee meeting is a meeting held in public but it is **not** a Public Meeting.

The Council has four Scrutiny Committees:-

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

This Committee co-ordinates the work of the following three Scrutiny Committees to ensure the work of each of these is effective. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for approving the Work Programmes developed by all the Scrutiny Committees to ensure they are deliverable, co-ordinated and outcome focused programmes of work. To fulfil the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to `all Council` cross cutting themes which cut across the terms of reference of the other Scrutiny Committees. The Committee is also responsible for dealing with all `Call-Ins` (under the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising quarterly performance reports / exception reports (financial and operational performance); the annual revenue budget consultation process; statutory performance reporting requirements and) monitoring the implementation of medium-term financial planning decisions. You can view the Committee's terms of reference [here](#):

### **Education & Inclusion**

This Committee is responsible for focussing upon all Education and Schools within the County Borough by scrutinising all Education provision from 3-19 as well as the services, provided by the Council, which young people engage with within our communities. The Committee undertakes scrutiny of the Central South Consortium which delivers aspects of school improvement services, commissioned by five local



authorities (Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Vale of Glamorgan and Rhondda Cynon Taf) to provide a school improvement service that challenges, monitors and supports schools to raise standards. You can view the terms of reference [here](#)

### **Community Services**

This Committee is responsible for focussing on the services provided by the Council which support the Health and Well-being of our communities. It considers adult social services as well as all other factors which contribute to the Health and Well-being of the County Borough, such as Leisure services and Public Health and Protection related Services. In addition, this committee is the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee (pursuant to Section 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act, 2006). You can view the terms of reference [here](#).

### **Climate Change, Prosperity & Frontline Services**

This Committee is responsible for scrutinising Public Service Delivery across a range of Council and public sector services. This includes frontline services delivered by the Council including Waste and Highways. The Committee is responsible for scrutinising how the Council is responding to the climate emergency and reducing its carbon footprint. It also considers areas which contribute to prosperity such as Economic Development, Regeneration and Tourism. You can view the terms of reference [here](#).

## **2. Where and when do the Committees meet?**

Each of the Council's four Scrutiny Committees meet approximately 8 times a year. Meetings commence at 5 p.m. (with the exception of meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when dealing with `Call-Ins` as these are `special` meetings and are convened at a time as requested by the Chair). The scrutiny committees are undertaken on a hybrid basis (subject to the Chair's discretion). This means that participants can attend the Council chamber in person or join the meeting online (via Zoom). All meetings are live streamed to allow the public to watch them simultaneously.

A schedule of all the Scrutiny Committee meetings for the current municipal year is available on the Council website on the following link :-

[Browse Meetings, 2023 - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

## **3. How do I get my "voice" heard?**

Your "voice" at a Scrutiny Committee can be heard in two ways, by attending in person at the Council chamber or by joining the meeting virtually via the Council's supported



online platform 'Zoom'. You will be provided with clear instructions on how to join the meeting in either capacity following your request to speak (See section 13 'How do I register to speak?')

Alternatively, should you prefer, a written representation can be submitted. (See section 15 'Written Representations').

#### **4. Who can speak?**

Anyone who lives or works in Rhondda Cynon Taf and who has registered in advance is entitled to speak at a scheduled meeting of one of the Council's Scrutiny Committees (to include "Call-In" meetings as dealt with by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee).

The number of speakers will be limited to two per agenda item with the discretion for the Chair to increase this limit if he/she feels it appropriate to do so.

Should a person aged under 16 years of age wish to address a Scrutiny Committee meeting, arrangements will be made for them to be accompanied by an adult.

#### **5. How long do I have to speak?**

A maximum of 10 minutes 'speaking time' will be allocated to each agenda item therefore, individual speakers will be limited to 5 minutes per agenda item.

The Chair has the discretion to stop the speaker before their allotted time has concluded, if, in the Chair's view, the speaker is making any comments that are, or appear to be, defamatory, offensive or unrelated to the agenda item under discussion.

#### **6. What can I speak on at the meeting?**

A member of the public must address the item to which they have registered to speak and will not be permitted to address other agenda items or unrelated business.

We ask you ensure that:

- Your comments are clear and concise and are directly related to the report on which you have requested to speak;
- You avoid repeating points made previously by other public speakers;
- Your views are limited to the report, and you highlight how the report could affect the delivery of services to specific user groups of citizens in Rhondda Cynon Taf; and
- Your comments are not defamatory, discriminating or contain offensive language.



Speakers may be asked to clarify any of the comments they make and asked questions by Members. It is important that public speakers do not enter into debate with the Committee Members.

## **7. Preparing your comments for Committee**

The right of the public to speak applies to all items on the agenda with the exception of the following:

- Apologies; Declarations of Interest and Minutes;
- An agenda item which has been withdrawn;
- Any agenda item that is not accompanied by a written report;
- An agenda item where the Chair has exercised his or her discretion to withdraw the right of public speaking; and
- When confidential/exempt items are under consideration by Scrutiny, the Chair will ask all members of the press and public to vacate the meeting room/leave the online meeting.

The right to speak does not include the right to ask any questions of any Elected or Co-opted Member, Officer of the Council, invited attendees or any other speaker.

## **8. Attendance at the Meeting**

Members of the public who have registered to speak are asked to present themselves in person/online at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start time of the meeting and should make themselves known to the Democratic Services Officer.

For attendance at the Council chamber, the Democratic Services Officer will meet you and seat you accordingly. When it is time to speak you will be asked by the Chair to make your address.

For attendance online, an officer from the Council will contact you via email or telephone to provide you with the necessary meeting log in details. The meeting ID and password must not be shared with anyone else. Only one person will be able to participate with these details and sharing these details may result in you being unable to join the meeting.

Please note that should you choose either option, you are consenting to being included in the recording of the meeting for publication on the Council website. The meeting recording will capture your sound and image of you and other participants in the meeting (Please see below the link to the Council's Corporate Privacy Notice:-

Council's Corporate Privacy Notice – [How we use your personal information - An Overview | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(rctcbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/How-we-use-your-personal-information-An-Overview)



## **9. When will I speak during the Meeting?**

Normally, agenda items with public speakers will be considered first and will take the following format:

- Responsible Officer from the Council to present the report;
- If applicable, the Cabinet Member portfolio holder to address the Scrutiny Committee;
- Members of the public who have registered to speak;
- Other elected Members (i.e., not Members of the Scrutiny Committee); and
- Scrutiny Committee Members

Public speakers will be introduced by the Chair at the relevant time and encouraged to make their address.

## **10. Supporting documents or visual aids**

In order for Members to consider any points made by public speakers, they must provide any supporting information/documentation in advance and upon registering to speak. No additional information/documentation may be produced at the meeting itself.

Should speakers wish to produce visual aids by way of a PowerPoint presentation, then these slides must also be provided in advance of the meeting.

## **11. Following My Address to Committee**

After you have finished speaking, please be aware that you may be asked questions by the Chair of the Committee and/or Members of the Committee.

The Committee will then consider the comments made and thereafter determine whether to make any recommendations arising from those comments/issues raised to the Cabinet or Senior Officer with delegated responsibility as deemed appropriate.

The Chair will then advise that there are no further queries and if you so wish, you are free to leave the meeting.

## **12. How do I register to speak?**

The agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings are published on the Council's website, 5 clear days before the date of the meeting.



Members of the public wishing to speak must notify Democratic Services by no later than 5.00 p.m. on the penultimate working day preceding the relevant Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Requests must include details of the agenda item of the relevant Scrutiny Committee at which you wish to speak. Applications will be dealt with in the order that they have been received.

All those registered to speak will be advised prior to the meeting, either by email or through the contact telephone number that has been provided, if your request to speak has been accepted.

### **13. How do I register to speak in Welsh?**

We welcome any correspondence in Welsh and in accordance with the guidance (as shown in section 13 above), should you wish to address Members of the Committee in Welsh the same process applies, including stipulating whether the address is to be conducted in Welsh or English. Simultaneous translation facilities are available at the meeting should you wish to make your address through the medium of Welsh.

### **14. How do I register to speak if I have a disability or additional needs?**

If you have a disability or any additional needs and require assistance to participate in our Scrutiny process please contact us on the email address below by no later than 5.00 p.m. on the penultimate working day preceding the relevant Scrutiny Committee meeting. A member of our team will be pleased to contact you to discuss your specific needs and facilitate your request to speak.

### **15. Written representations**

You may prefer to submit a written representation to be read at the meeting by the Committee Chair. If this is the case, we welcome written submissions by no later than 5.00 p.m. on the penultimate working day preceding the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

Please submit written representations to:

Email: [scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk)

or to the following postal address:

Council Business Unit  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council,  
2 Llys Cadwyn,  
Taf Street,  
Pontypridd. CF37 4TH



## **16. Additional Information**

Filming and recording of meetings is not permitted by members of the public and we also politely request that the joining details for the meetings are not shared.

Speakers should advise Democratic Services in advance if they have any special needs or requirements.

If you have any questions concerning public speaking at a meeting then please do not hesitate to contact one of our team on the email address as shown below:

[scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk)