

Overview & Scrutiny

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Guidance for Elected Members 2021 - 2022



RHONDDA CYNON TAF



Contents

Section 1	3	Section 3	10
Introduction and Background to Overview & Scrutiny	3	How do we Scrutinise?	10
What is the purpose of Scrutiny?	3	• Pre-Scrutiny	10
What is Overview and Scrutiny?	4	• Policy Review	10
What is the role of a Scrutiny Member?	4	• Performance monitoring	11
Section 2	5	• Scrutiny Working Groups	11
Scrutiny Structure in Rhondda Cynon Taf	5	• Call In	12
Overview & Scrutiny Committees:	5	• What Decisions Can Be Called In?.....	12
• Overview & Scrutiny Committee	5	• How can a Member Call –In a decision?	12
• Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.....	6	Invitees to Scrutiny Committees:	13
• Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.....	6	• Questioning Techniques	13
• Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee	7	Conclusions and Recommendations of Scrutiny	14
• Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee	7	Outcomes and Impact of Overview and Scrutiny	14
Scrutiny Chairs & Vice Chairs	8	Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021	14
Joint Scrutiny Arrangements:	8	Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015	15
• Cwm Taf PSB Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JOSC)	8	Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report	15
• Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Committee (CCRCD)	8	Section 4	16
Membership of Committees:	9	The Work Programme	16
• Registered Representatives and Co-opted Members	9	• Cabinet / Scrutiny Engagement Sessions	17
• Quorum.....	9	Section 5	18
		Role of Scrutiny Officers	18
		Scrutiny Research Facility	19
		Public Engagement and Participation	19
		Calendar of Meetings	19
		Welsh Translation	19
		Appendices:	20
		Appendix 1 Call-In Form	20
		Appendix 2 Scrutiny Work Programme Item Request Form	21
		Appendix 3 Scrutiny Member Research Request Form	22
		Appendix 4 Glossary of Terms for Scrutiny Committees	23-27



Section 1

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Introduction and Background to Overview & Scrutiny

This document is intended for use by Elected Members and Officers of the Council. It describes a framework for Overview & Scrutiny in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

This toolkit aims to provide information, practical guidance and clarity to everyone involved in the overview and scrutiny process at Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

The toolkit has been drawn from a variety of sources and includes many good practice points selected from leading authorities in the field.

The toolkit will enable members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that they concentrate on topics that matter to the residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf, and this in turn will help us play a significant role in shaping the future direction of the Council for the benefit of its residents.

Under the terms of the Local Government Act 2000, every Authority in England and Wales adopted new political management arrangements. Within these political arrangements the Overview & Scrutiny Process has a number of purposes, these include:

- Strengthen accountability for decisions and performance;
- Ensure that the needs of constituents and community groups are reflected in Council policies through greater Member and public involvement in policy-making;
- Support the Council's Community Leadership role through analysing the approaches of a variety of Partners and external agencies to issues affecting the wider community.

What is the purpose of Scrutiny?

The purpose of scrutiny is to improve the lives of local people through improved public services. It is important that the work of Scrutiny adds value and makes a difference to the Communities it serves.

Whilst a number of potential roles exist for Overview & Scrutiny Committees, it is possible to group these into two key functions:

1. Holding the Executive to Account

This includes the review of Executive decisions, the monitoring of performance in respect of the implementation of Council policies and service delivery, and monitoring the strategic direction of the Authority to ensure that it meets the needs of the local community.

2. Policy Review

Through acting as a consultee on policy proposals or conducting detailed investigations into policy areas, the Committees may arrive at policy recommendations to Cabinet or Council.

The purpose of this document is to provide Members with guidance on the operation of the Overview & Scrutiny process in Rhondda Cynon Taf which will enable Overview & Scrutiny Committees to fulfil the roles and purposes outlined above.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny Committee is not a decision making body, their role relates to scrutiny and review of policy, and raising awareness of important issues and decisions that the Authority will make. The overview and scrutiny process provides an opportunity for Councillors and, in some cases, external representatives, to examine various functions of the Council, to ask questions about how decisions have been made and to consider whether service improvements can be put in place. It provides an opportunity for Councillors to champion issues of public concern and to participate in the development of new policies. It facilitates debate about priorities, budget, the strategy of the Council and its vision for the Borough.

Overview and Scrutiny contributes to the delivery of efficient and effective services that meet the needs and aspirations of the local community. The Committee should not shy away from the need to challenge and question decisions and make recommendations based on the evidence they have heard that will ultimately lead to service improvement in that area.

The role of overview and scrutiny also provides new opportunities for public involvement and debate, supporting the Council in taking a community-orientated approach and bringing new ideas and wider experience into the Council processes.

Overview and Scrutiny requires new ways of working and different skills for all concerned. In particular, to work effectively, overview and scrutiny needs to be Member led and to be seen as a critical friend. It is important to identify where decisions could be improved and positive changes made.

What is the role of a Scrutiny Member?

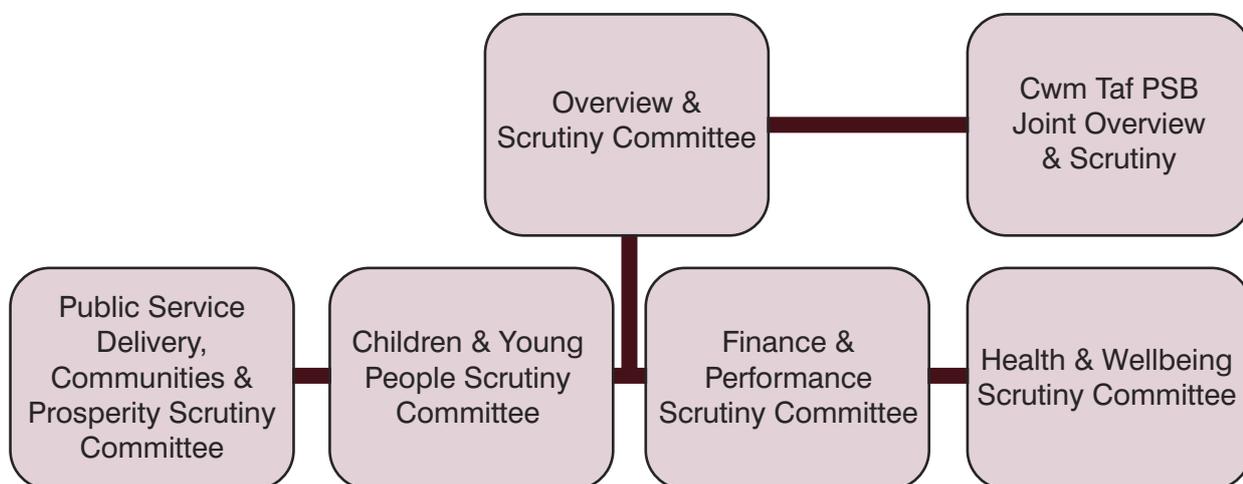
- Helping to formulate executive and council policies and decisions -providing information, options and views;
- Monitoring executive and council decisions;
- Monitoring and challenging the quality of service delivery;
- Questioning members, staff, officials outside the organisation and the public on a range of issues relating to council services and the services delivered by other providers of public services ;
- Undertaking in-depth reviews of policies and services and recommending improvements;
- Scrutiny provides a key role for those Members not involved in Cabinet;
- Provides a critical friend challenge;
- Must be independent – the Party whip should not be used in Scrutiny;
- Should reflect the voice and concerns of the public;
- May exercise the right to call-in for reconsideration decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive or Key officer delegated decisions.

Section 2

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Scrutiny Structure in Rhondda Cynon Taf

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee structure consists of an overarching **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** and 4 thematic Scrutiny Committees. These Committees oversee the decision making of the Cabinet (Executive) and support the work of the Cabinet and the Council as a whole. They allow citizens to have a greater say in Council matters by holding public meetings into matters of local concern. These lead to reports and recommendations which advise the Cabinet and the Council on its policies, budget and service delivery.



The **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** has responsibility for:

- Policy Review and Policy development for all Council areas
- Consider the implementation of projects that impact upon the Council as a whole; i.e City Deal, Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, Safeguarding
- Undertake Scrutiny of Corporate Plans and Strategies
- Crime and Disorder*
- To challenge the work of the other scrutiny Committees

Crime and Disorder*

Since 2009 the Council has legally been required to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made or action taken by the responsible authorities in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions and; make reports or recommendations to Council or Cabinet as determined by responsibility for function, in connection with the discharge of those functions. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the Council's designated Crime & Disorder Committee (sitting under the Police & Justice Act 2006).

Children and Young People and Young People Scrutiny Committee

The Children and Young People and Young People Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for:

- Schools
- Early Years
- Special Educational Needs
- Children Looked After
- Youth Offending Service
- Safeguarding
- Early Intervention and Prevention Services – including Nurseries, Flying Start and Resilient Family Service
- Catering
- Assessment and Care Planning

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for:

- Adult Health and Social Care
- Adult Learning
- Leisure Services
- Arts and Culture
- Private Housing
- Community Hubs
- Public Health and Protection

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Finance and Performance Committee

The Finance and Performance Committee has responsibility for:

- Quarterly Performance Reports / Exception Reports
- Treasury Management
- Revenue Budget consultation process
- Statutory performance reporting requirements
- Target Setting of Performance Measures
- Monitoring the implementation of medium term service planning decisions approved by the Executive
- Strategic Regeneration
- Economic Development
- Town Centres
- Events and Tourism
- Job Growth and Skills

Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

The Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for the following:

- Environment and Sustainable Development
- Waste Services
- Streetcare
- Highways Improvements
- Cultural Services
- Heritage
- Libraries
- Parks and Countryside
- Play areas

Terms of Reference for all of the Councils Scrutiny Committees can be found [here](#)

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Scrutiny Chairs & Vice Chairs

The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs meetings consist of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Council's Scrutiny Committees and the Chair of the Cwm Taf PSB Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The purpose of the group is to support and strengthen the Council's Scrutiny functions through identification of best practice, ensure all scrutiny committees are working together to achieve added value and implement any changes to scrutiny. They will discuss items of business which are of relevance to all Overview and Scrutiny Committees and where a matter for scrutiny consideration falls within the remit of more than one Scrutiny Committee, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs can determine which Committee will be responsible to lead on the matter.

Joint Scrutiny Arrangements

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees have representatives from two or more Local Authorities where cross border issues are considered. The Authority is part of two Joint Scrutiny Committees. [The Cwm Taf Public Service Board Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#) (JOSC) and the [Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#) (CCRCD).

JOSC

In order to ensure the Cwm Taf Public Service Board is democratically accountable, the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a requirement on councils to designate an overview and scrutiny committee to scrutinise the work of the Public Service Boards (PSB), review the PSB's governance arrangements as well as any decisions made or actions taken by the PSB. The membership of the JOSC consists of 5 members from RCT (drawn from the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and 5 members from Merthyr Tydfil Council who meet quarterly to undertake their role.

CCRCD

The Cardiff Capital Region is comprised of ten local authorities: Blaenau Gwent; Bridgend; Caerphilly; Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taff; Torfaen; and Vale of Glamorgan. Scrutiny of the CCRCD is undertaken on a quarterly basis with a focus on whether the CCRCD is operating in accordance with the Joint Working Agreement, its Annual Business Plan, timetable and to monitor progress against its Programme Plan.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Membership of Committees

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as with the four thematic scrutiny committees, each consist of 14 members including the Chair and Vice Chair. Politically balanced Members from across the local authority excluding Executive Members. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Committees are appointed on an annual basis at the Council AGM and again reflect the political balance of the Council. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity, Children and Young People and Health and Well-Being Scrutiny Committees are appointed to the membership of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

Registered Representatives and Co-opted Members

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee which has Education within its Terms of Reference includes in its membership the following voting representatives:

- One representative from Church Schools (Either Roman Catholic or Church in Wales);
- Three parent governor representatives will be elected to serve as voting co-opted members on the Scrutiny Committee whose function relates partly or wholly to education functions;
- Two representatives from the English medium sector and one from the Welsh medium sector.
- Parent Governors are entitled to vote on any questions which relates to any education functions which are the responsibility of the Local Authority;
- The term of office for a parent governor should be for four years or until such time as any representatives are no longer eligible to serve in such a capacity, where a parent governor representative does not complete the term of office, the term of office of his/her successor shall be the remainder of the original term.

These representatives sit on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee which has been allocated the theme of Education as a priority. These co-opted Members are legally required. They will also be able to attend as a voting member to participate fully within the Scrutiny work as a member of the Committee and vote on issues within their educational remit; Provide advice and information to the Committee based on their specific skill, knowledge or expertise; not expected to attend meetings which have no educational aspect.

Quorum

The quorum necessary for a Scrutiny meeting is one quarter of the whole number of Members. If during the meeting there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chair or in the absence of a fixed date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

Section 3

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

How do we Scrutinise?

Scrutiny can take place in many different formats. Formal reports are usually requested and reported in a formal Committee setting. Reports should be clear, concise and easy to read and accessible. A glossary of terms frequently used is attached at **Appendix 4**

Pre-Scrutiny

Pre-scrutiny is usually planned during the work programming activity and could take place immediately before a decision is made by the Cabinet. The opportunity is afforded to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to identify any matters within the Cabinet forward work programme for pre-scrutiny of forthcoming decisions and/or the development of policy. Looking at decisions before they are made provides an opportunity to influence and improve them. Consideration can be given to how the decision has been developed, the associated risks, and what plans are in place to mitigate against them.

Pre-scrutiny also allows Scrutiny Committees to consider and evaluate consultation activity that has been carried out, and to what extent it has been considered in making the final decision.

Policy Review

This is how the main work of scrutiny in RCT is carried out. Members will have an opportunity to determine key issues and objectives when developing their work programme. It is through this process they will identify key stakeholders and decide what evidence needs to be gathered in advance of the meeting.

At the meetings of scrutiny, members will evaluate the evidence presented to them through questioning of invitees. Members will then, with support of the Chair and Scrutiny Officer, consider the evidence presented to them and make recommendations on this basis. Scrutiny Officers will then track the progress of the recommendations and evaluate and assess their impact for the Annual report.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Performance Monitoring

Overview and Scrutiny Committees monitor the performance of Cabinet, Committees and council officers in relation to individual decisions, policy objectives, performance targets and particular service areas.

This can range from monitoring strategies and their associated action plans to the evaluation of the authority's performance against its Corporate Plan, its improvement objectives and local and national performance indicators. Central to this are the outcomes for service users and ensuring that there is evidence to support this.

Scrutiny Working Groups

Working Groups are informal, small and time limited groups that comprise of Councillors and Co-opted Members nominated from the relevant Scrutiny Committee for the portfolio of the topic being considered.

The membership of a Working Group is agreed upon in the relevant Scrutiny Committee. The first meeting of the Working Group determines their terms of reference and nominate the Chairperson for the Working Group.

The Working Group will hold several meetings, with the initial meeting to undertake a scoping exercise to determine how the topic will be addressed. Members will determine:

- What research needs to be undertaken
- How the information should be presented to Members (report, presentations, site visits, data)
- What witnesses should be invited to give evidence
- What outcomes the Working Group anticipate to achieve
- How the outcomes could benefit the Community affected

The Working Group will continue to meet until such time they have reached their conclusions. This usually takes between 2-4 meetings. To present their findings a report will be drafted by the Scrutiny Officer and presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for endorsement before submission to Cabinet for a formal response back to the Committee.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Call In

A Call-in takes place in response to decisions that have already been made but not implemented. Scrutiny has the power to call-in the Executive's decision and delay its implementation. The purpose of the Call-in is to allow scrutiny to debate the topic and determine if the matter should be referred back to the Executive for reconsideration.

The Call-in should be used in exceptional circumstances to avoid delays in the decision-making process. Effective pre-scrutiny would support the avoidance for the need of a call –in.

What Decisions Can Be Called In?

Where a decision is made by the Cabinet, an individual Member of the Cabinet, a Committee of the Cabinet, an Area Committee, under joint arrangements or a Key Decision is made by an Officer (under the General Scheme of Delegation), it must be published on the Council's website by the responsible proper officer within 2 clear working days of it being made.

Call In will not apply where the decision being taken by Cabinet is classed as an urgent decision. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council or other public interest.

How can a Member Call – In a decision?

Timescales for requesting a Call In are small to ensure the intended decisions are not delayed excessively. Requests for a decision to be called in must be received by the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication or the Monitoring Officer in his absence within 3 clear working days of the Cabinet decision being published, via completion of the required Call In form (appendix 1)

- Call In form must be received before the expiry of the 3 clear working days after publication of a decision;
- Call In form is signed by 3 Non-Executive members – (from either (i) at least 2 political groups or (ii) in the case of an unallocated Member(s) – that unallocated Member(s) and a Member(s) from a political group) are needed for a decision to be called in;
- A scrutiny committee may only call in a total of 3 decisions per 2-month period (once a member had signed a request for Call In, they may not do so until the period of 3 months has expired);
- Once a Member has acted as a signatory to a call-in under paragraph 17 (call-in) above, he/she may not do so again until the period of 2 months has expired;
- No Education Co-opted member may report a decision be called in.

If the Call In form satisfies the requirements outlined within the Council's Constitution, the Proper Officer shall convene a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, where possible after consultation with the Chairman / Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee and in any case, within 5 clear working days of the decision to call In. Once a decision has been Called In, it is effectively put on hold and is not actioned until discussed by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Invitees to Scrutiny Committees

Directorate Officers

Committees may require the Leader and any other member of the Cabinet, the Head of Paid Service and/or any Senior Officer of the Council to attend a Committee meeting to assist with issues under consideration.

Officer(s) will then be invited by the Chair to present their report/give evidence and will respond to verbal questions or by providing evidence previously requested, or a combination of both.

External Invitees

The Committee may invite any external representative to attend but currently has no powers to require them to attend except where the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee are considering an item under the subject of Crime and Disorder. When exercising its functions in relation to crime and disorder, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may require attendance of an officer or employee of a responsible authority or co-operating person or body to answer questions, on reasonable notice being given. The attendance of external invitees at Committee Meetings will follow the same procedure as that set out above for departmental Officers.

Questioning Techniques

Good questioning is a crucial component of the critical friend challenge and an important trait of good scrutiny. The key to successful questioning is achieved with preparation, research on the topic in question and knowing what questions to ask to get a clear and comprehensive answer to your query.

Open questions allow the witness to open up and share as much information as they have. Encouraging them to elaborate and allowing them the time to answer their question will provide more in-depth answers. Useful phrases to consider such as 'How, Why, Who, What and When' are often used and also reflecting questions such as "you said that" "you sound as if" offer the respondent an opportunity to provide a more in depth answer to the subject

Other Skills

Listening Skills – genuinely listening to others whose views and opinions may differ from your own.

Analytical Skills – the ability to review and interpret data and reach conclusions.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Conclusions and Recommendations of Scrutiny

At the end of each Committee meeting Members will determine their conclusions and recommendations on the subject areas they have considered. Recommendations are the way that scrutiny can have an impact. A good recommendation is:

- specific about the change recommended
- evidence-based and realistic
- focused on measurable outcomes
- addressed to a specific person or group
- realistic about financing requirements
- developed in partnership with the executive, council officers and council partners

Outcomes and Impact of Overview and Scrutiny

It is acknowledged that demonstrating the impact of Scrutiny is not a simple process. At RCT the impact of scrutiny is measured by its recommendations and outcomes from meetings of Scrutiny. These are then compiled into the Scrutiny Annual Report. Recommendations should be made on the basis that they enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented.

It is scrutiny's responsibility to monitor and evaluate all recommendations made to ensure they are followed up on and the "loop is closed"

Tracking the progress of recommendations is undertaken at regular intervals. The loop is only closed when scrutiny is satisfied that the implementations have been made.

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

[The Local Government and Election \(Wales\) Act \(The Act\)](#) received Royal Assent on the 20th January 2021.

While the general focus of discussions in respect of the Act, has been based around the creation of Corporate Joint Committees (CJC) this substantive piece of legislation will change the way we operate across a range of areas from electoral reform, public participation, governance and performance management, democratic processes and stronger working arrangements with Town and Community Councils. The Act also includes provision for Strengthening Scrutiny arrangements and arrangements for member conduct.

The Act amends section 22(10) of LGA 2000, so that regulations may require that scrutiny committees and their sub-committees are given sufficient notice of important key decisions before they are made, so they may scrutinise the executive more effectively, thus strengthening the Authority's scrutiny arrangements.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is aimed at improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act became law on 29th April 2015 and became a requirement for public bodies in Wales from 1st April 2016. It puts long-term sustainability at the forefront of how public services are designed and delivered, and places emphasis on public bodies to work in partnership with each other and the public to prevent and tackle problems.

The Act sets seven national well-being goals which are to be achieved by public bodies acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle, comprising five ways of working which the Local Authority has a duty to take into consideration. The Well-being goals are:

- A globally responsible Wales
- A Prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language

To ensure the Authority complies with the legislation when making key decisions, the Act is considered in each report to Scrutiny to ensure it clearly demonstrates how it has been taken into consideration when making a decision to change or implement a policy.

Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report

The Scrutiny Officers produce an annual report to be submitted to Council detailing the work that the Scrutiny Committees have undertaken throughout the year. This report focuses on the subject areas the Committees have looked at, their methodology in examining issues and detail of the outcomes and impact they have achieved including any recommendations for improved ways of working.

The Annual report also details areas of priority for the following municipal year to ensure scrutiny has clear purpose and direction for the year ahead.

The Annual report will be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee requesting Members to endorse the final report to the Council's Annual General meeting (AGM).

Section 4

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Developing the Forward Work Programme

The Work Programme is the planning stage of scrutiny where subjects for further investigation are identified by Members. An effective Scrutiny **work programme** is central to successful scrutiny and ensures that it is considering the biggest issues of concern, has the most impact and will make the biggest differences.

The Work programme should consider the following:

- Ability to change: priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence
 - What is the issue/ activity/ project being considered? What is Scrutiny being asked to do?
- Public interest: are there any concerns locally?
- Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well
- Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the County Borough
- Replication: work programmes must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication or wasted effort.
- What are the expectations of benefits for involving Scrutiny?

Topics are not suitable for Scrutiny when:

- The issue is already being addressed through other channels
- Involvement of scrutiny would not demonstrate any clear outcomes
- The topic may be prejudicial to the Councils interests

The Work Programme should evolve through discussions between the Chairs, Vice Chairs and members of the committee, relevant Cabinet Members and Lead Officers (via the Cabinet Members Engagement sessions)

The Work Programme may include outstanding items from the previous municipal year and may have items referred to it throughout the year from Council (Notices of Motion), the Audit Committee or other Scrutiny Committees.

Although the Work Programme is set in advance, it will have an element of flexibility to accommodate any other emerging issues and will be reviewed on a regular basis so that it remains relevant.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee have early access to the Cabinet forward plan to identify any Pre-Scrutiny opportunities which can be referred to the four thematic scrutiny committees.

The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs support the development of the individual work programmes and the approach to focus on key priorities.

Members are able to request items to be added to their work programmes by completing the scrutiny request form attached at **Appendix 2**.

Cabinet / Scrutiny Engagement Sessions

Early and regular discussions between the Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Chairs/Vice-Chairs assist in the development of the scrutiny work programmes. These engagement sessions provide an opportunity for Members to discuss their respective work programmes and assist in identifying any key topics for inclusion.

Scrutiny and the Executive have very clear and different roles but these discussions which involve the relevant Cabinet Member, Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chair in conjunction with the lead Officer can develop a productive scrutiny work programme which avoids duplication.

Usually the engagement sessions are held at the beginning of the municipal year so that they can inform the forward work programme.

Cabinet members also attend Scrutiny Committees throughout the year to provide an update to members on their portfolio.

Section 5

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Scrutiny Meetings

Meetings that are held virtually are done so using ZOOM software. Members are sent a link with a meeting ID and Password to access each meeting. This option reflects the recent legislation in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. All the council's virtual Scrutiny Committees can be accessed [here](#).

There are many other ways of working which are not restricted to formal meetings such as:

- Site visits (Undertaken when Members are seeking first-hand evidence for a particular review e.g. Community Hubs, empty properties, community recycling centres)
- Attending/observing other group's meetings (e.g. Residents Associations)
- Informal fact-finding visits or meetings

Webcasting/ Hybrid meetings

Democratic Services are currently working on a strategy for holding Scrutiny Committees on a hybrid basis. Once safe to return to the chamber members will have the option to attend a meeting in person in the chamber, or join remotely via ZOOM. Plans are also in place for meetings to be webcast live, making it easier for the public to view and stream meetings of Scrutiny live. Members will be treated equally whether attending in person or virtually and will have all available documentation and access requirements such as voting and translation facilities regardless of how they attend the meetings.

Role of the Scrutiny Officers

The Scrutiny officer has a responsibility for promoting the role of Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Scrutiny Officers provide advice and guidance to officers and Members about the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Their role includes the following:

- Supporting the administration of each of the Scrutiny Committees, i.e. producing agendas, reports and minutes of meetings.
- Undertaking research and analysing data on behalf of Members (RCT has a dedicated Scrutiny Officer who will undertake requests from Scrutiny members to assist with their role)
- Providing guidance to members on developing an effective Work Programme
- Producing clear recommendations for officers as agreed by the Scrutiny Committee
- Production of the Scrutiny Annual report on behalf of members

The Scrutiny Officer will always be present at meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Committees. They are available to provide advice and guidance to the Committee on protocols and procedures as well as on the operation of the Overview & Scrutiny process. The Scrutiny Officer will also support the Chair in forming the final recommendations that have arisen during the Committee meeting. The Scrutiny Officer will also follow up on the recommendations and report back to members at a future Committee.

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Research Facility

RCT is unique in that it offers Elected Members a dedicated scrutiny research facility within the Council Business Unit to support Members' scrutiny responsibilities and their roles as Elected Members. Such research strengthens scrutiny Committees work programmes to ensure outcome-based topics are identified. Any Members wishing to take up this resource is able to via the Scrutiny inbox Scrutiny@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk

Public Engagement and Participation

Meetings are usually held in public unless the subject under consideration is required by law to be discussed in private, in which case the press and public will be excluded from the meeting. Any member of the public can attend scrutiny to observe the meeting, should they wish to speak on a particular item there is a protocol to follow. In RCT an [Overview & Scrutiny Public Participation Guide](#) has been developed to enable members of the public to speak at the Scrutiny Committees and to allow members of the public greater accessibility to the scrutiny process. Notification of how to address a scrutiny committee is also published on each individual agenda.

A dedicated [Scrutiny](#) webpage is available on the Council website which evidences Scrutiny's impact. Scrutiny Committee meetings and work programmes are accessible and the Scrutiny Chairs have a social media presence through their individual [Blogs](#).

Calendar of Meetings

In accordance with the Council Constitution, the Calendar of Committee meetings is agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council (AGM). The meeting dates are published on the Council website. All agendas and reports for Scrutiny Committees are published and accessed by Scrutiny members on the Councils Modern.Gov system in advance of the meetings.

This forward plan of committee meetings enables members of the public access to the dates, times and the location of the scrutiny meetings in advance to further promote public participation.

Welsh Translation

A simultaneous Welsh translation facility is available for all scrutiny Committees to enable Welsh speakers (Members, public and expert witnesses) to enjoy the equal opportunity of sharing their knowledge or ideas. It also ensures that as it is executed in real-time, messages are not lost, and that correct and proper communication is achieved with interpretation.

All agendas are provided and published in Welsh and the Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny committee are also provided in Welsh.

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committees contain a summary of discussions and action points arising from them. Written records will always be sent to invitees to ensure accuracy prior to the minutes being circulated to Members. Minutes of all the Scrutiny Committees can be found [here](#).

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES – RULE 17
SCRUTINY CALL IN FORM**

THIS FORM MUST:

- (A) BE SIGNED BY AT LEAST THREE MEMBERS FROM AT LEAST TWO DIFFERENT POLITICAL GROUPS (or in the case of an unallocated member(s) that unallocated member(s) and a member(s) from a political group).
- (B) BE EMAILED TO C. HANAGAN, SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS – Scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk OR HAND DELIVERED TO THE PAVILIONS, CAMBRIAN PARK, CLYDACH VALE, CF40 2XX WITHIN THE TIMESCALE NOTIFIED WITHIN THE CONSTITUTION

DETAILS OF DECISION

Decision of Cabinet/Cabinet Member/Other (Please delete as appropriate)

Date of Publication of decision:.....

Subject of Decision.....

Decision Called in (Please quote from the record of decision)

.....

Reason for calling in decision (Please use separate sheet if necessary)		
Names	Signature	Group

Date:.....

For Office use only by the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication.

Date & Time of Receipt.....Officer Receiving.....

Accepted as a valid Call-in:

To be submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Signature:: Date:

SCRUTINY RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

Proposed Research	Is this item within the remit of the XXXXXX Scrutiny Committee?	More information about the scope and focus of the Research	What is the expected outcome from receiving this research?	What information should be reported to the meeting and how (e.g. Report accompanied with Power Point)	Meeting the 5 WOW's? Integration Collaboration Long term Involvement Prevention

Appendix 4

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Glossary Of Terms.

ACRONYM	
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ALN	Additional Learning Needs
ALNCO	Additional Learning Needs Coordinator
ALNET	Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (2018)
ANF	Additional Needs Funding
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
APS	Average Points Score
AWs	Attendance & Wellbeing Service
CANS	Children with Additional Needs Service
CAMHS	Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service
CSC	Central South Consortium
CSI	Core Subject Indicator
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales
CLA	Children Looked After
CTMUHB	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
CWR	Community Wellbeing and Resilience
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DBS	Disclosure & Barring Service (Previously CRB)
DFES	Department for Education & Skills

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Glossary Of Terms. (continued)

ACRONYM	
EYALNLO	Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer
ECPS	Educational & Child Psychology Service
EDT	Emergency Duty Team (Children's Services & Adult Service)
EOTAS	Education Other than at School
DCT	Disabled Children's Team
DECLO	Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer
FSM	Free School Meals
FPI	Foundation Phase Indicator
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notice
GTCW	General Teaching Council for Wales
HI	Hearing Impaired
IEP / ILP	Individual Education Plan / Individual Learning Plan
IFST	Intensive Family Support Team
II	Intensive Intervention
JES	Joint Education Service
ICT	Information & Communities Technology
IDP	Individual Development Plan
KS2	Key stage 2 (years 3,4,5,6 – Ages 7 – 11)
KS3	Key Stage 3 (years 7.8.9 – Ages 11 – 14)

Overview and Scrutiny 2021-22

Glossary Of Terms. (continued)

ACRONYM	
KS4	Key Stage 4 (years 10 & 11 – Ages 14 – 16)
KS5	Key Stage 5 (years 12 & 13 – Ages 16 – 18)
LAP	Language and Play
LCE	Language, Literacy & communication – English
LCW	Language, Literacy & communication – Welsh
LNF	Literacy & Numeracy Framework
LSC	Learning Support Class
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
MAT	More Able & Talented
MDT	Mathematical Development
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headteacher
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NCO	National Curriculum Outcome
PIAP	Post Inspection Action Plan
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
PRU	Pupil referral Unit
PSD	Personal & social Development
PSE	Personal & Social Education
PDG	Pupil Development Grant

Glossary Of Terms. (continued)

ACRONYM	
SIMs	School Information Management System
SLT	Speech and language Therapy
SDP	School Development Plan
SEBD	Social, Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties
SEG	School Effectiveness Grant
SHEP	School Holiday Enrichment Programme
SM	Service Manager
Snr Prac	Senior Practitioner
SPLD	Specific Learning difficulties
SW	Social Worker
SSWB (Wales) Act	Social Services Wellbeing (Wales) Act
TFT	Therapeutic Families Team
TM	Team Manager
UPN	Unique Pupil Number
VI	Visually Impaired
WBQ	Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification
WEG	Welsh in Education Grant
WESP	Welsh In Education Strategic Plan
YEPS	Youth Engagement & Participation Service

Glossary Of Terms. (continued)

ACRONYM	
YOS	Youth Offending Service
MTFP	Medium Term Financial Plan
TM Annual Report	Treasury Management
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
PI	Prudential Indicators
CPR	Corporate Performance Report
CAMP	Corporate Asset Management Plan