

Appendix 2: Scrutiny principles consultation

1) How Scrutiny can best inform the future direction of the Council

Such as issues relating to RPPR, policy setting, resource allocation and operating principles.

How can scrutiny be better positioned and supported to carry out in-depth, forward facing reviews (arguably one of the most valuable types of scrutiny where scrutiny committees report their findings and recommendations to Cabinet and then for debate at Council) to influence the policies of the Council, against the background of reducing public sector funding and increased partnership working?

Do the current arrangements facilitate or hinder this work?

2) Scope and alignments of scrutiny committees

Historically the terms of reference for scrutiny committees have been aligned with departments. The challenge is to ensure that scrutiny effectively uses the specialist department-aligned expertise that has built up over the past years and keeps pace with the evolving operating model of the Council.

Issues now increasingly cut across a number of departments, different scrutiny committees and even local authority boundaries. Whilst joint boards are sometimes established, this can feel clumsy and there can be confusion about where they report into.

Are the current arrangements the best fit to the way the Council now works and do they make the most of available resources?

Should Scrutiny be organised to facilitate the examination of issues from the point of view of service users and residents, and not limited by Council organisational structures?

3) Achieving a one-council approach

As the Council works hard to ensure a One-Council approach and to avoid departmental silos, the model of scrutiny whereby committees are aligned to departments, rather than the issues faced by the Council, feels out of line with the way the organisation aspires to operate.

This risks committees becoming entrenched in silo thinking, considering issues without an understanding of wider implications. For example back-office functions are scrutinised in isolation from the services that they support and which rely on them.

Are there improvements which would mean Scrutiny arrangements better reflect the Council's operating principles of:

- * *One Council*
- * *Partnership*
- * *Commissioning.*