

26 September 2024

Scrutiny Survey

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: All

1. Aim

To give Members the opportunity to comment on a draft scrutiny survey of all elected members.

2. Recommendations

That:

- 1. subject to any comments Members may wish to make, the scrutiny survey, attached at Appendix 1 to this report, be approved.**
- 2. the results of the survey be report back to a future meeting to enable areas for improvement to be identified.**

3. Report detail – know

The Council has continually reviewed its scrutiny process and sought to make improvements over recent years.

In 2021, to gain deeper insights into enhancing scrutiny in Walsall, the Committee conducted a survey. This piece of work focused on ascertaining the voice of Councillors to determine how to strengthen and improve the role of scrutiny.

Following, this consultation, four recommendations were made based on the feedback gathered from the survey:

- The Member Learning and Development Programme is enhanced to include training for Members on financial scrutiny, scrutiny legislation, chairing meetings and asking questions.
- Due to mixed comments in relation to the scrutiny of the council's budget setting process, the Scrutiny Overview Committee review the existing approach and consider how it could be improved.
- A recommendation tracker be developed to assist systematic follow up of recommendations made by overview and scrutiny committees to monitor progress on specific actions and information requested at meetings.

- Further development of the scrutiny report template takes place to include model recommendations which encourage outcomes and avoid requesting that reports are noted.

All four recommendations garnered positive feedback and were successfully put into action. For instance, one initiative involved finance training for Members, which was conducted in July 2024 by the LGA alongside a Peer Member.

The Committee should review and update the Scrutiny survey, and reach out to stakeholders for their concerns, comments, and feedback.

The survey enclosed is representative of how the finished article would look. Further work is required before placing it online. For example, routing will be applied to give members different pathways dependent on the answers that they provide when undertaking the survey.

4. *Financial information*

There are no financial implications directly related to this report.

5. *Reducing Inequalities*

None directly related to this report.

6. *Decide*

Members are asked to consider the draft survey and offer any comments that they may have. If the survey does not meet the expectations of Members then other methods of gaining information and/or reviewing scrutiny can be explored.

7. *Respond*

If Members are in agreement with the survey, then it is planned for this to take place in late 2024.

8. *Review*

If Members are in agreement with the survey, then the findings can be reported to the Committee's next available meeting.

Background papers

None

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