

CfPS Recommendation	CfPS Comment	Officer Comment/Action
Create a common understanding and purpose for scrutiny	Getting a shared view of scrutiny's role and purpose is vital. The lack of understanding was cited as a key issue getting in the way of good scrutiny in a recent CfPS/ APSE Report. Undertaking this as a joint exercise would provide a route for Cabinet to demonstrate its commitment to being challenged. It could also form part of the work programming process.	A Memorandum of Understanding could be developed between the executive and scrutiny to establish roles, responsibilities and expectations. This is an approach adopted by some other local authorities. Such a document will help ensure a thorough understanding for all members and officers and better define the purpose of the scrutiny function.
Leader and Cabinet members all directly accountable and visible	Scrutiny's job is to hold the executive to account, this means Cabinet members should be front and centre. Reports should therefore be in their name and they attend meetings as required. Whilst the current committee structure does not lend itself well to this (Cabinet members could be at all of them, all of the time) this is not an acceptable excuse. Officers can be present but for technical support only. Cabinet should view scrutiny as a critical friend who offer additional insight and sometimes challenge that may strengthen decisions and improve performance.	Cabinet and Scrutiny have previously agreed all recommendations in the CfPS report. Therefore the council will move to a model whereby reports relating to executive functions will be in the Cabinet Member's name and the Cabinet Member will be expected to attend and present the report. Officers' role will be limited to technical support.
Relationship with cabinet - Structured meetings to discuss scrutiny	No further comment is provided in the CfPS report in respect of this recommendation.	<p>It is important that the Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee have an effective relationship. Officers are flagging this recommendation as an issue that needs discussion at the committee meeting. Discussions will also need to take place with the Cabinet.</p> <p>With regard to current arrangements, practice is that the Chairman of Scrutiny reports regularly on the committee's</p>

		activities to Cabinet. Consideration should be given to the Chairman instead reporting to Full Council. This would help with visibility of the committee's work and allow all councillors the opportunity to comment.
Corporate team to have greater oversight to ensure scrutiny plays its full role	To ensure that scrutiny is baked-in to all council decisions relevant directors could strengthen the advisor/guardian role, to ensure that scrutiny has the tools, access and support it needs to be effective.	<p>Restructure of Democratic Services, through which strong officer support will be provided to the Scrutiny function, will ensure that Scrutiny has a central role in the council.</p> <p>CMT will undertake formal monitoring of the Scrutiny work programme at its meetings.</p>
Scrutiny planning forum to set strategic objectives for the plan	<p>Refresh the work planning programme process that allows scrutiny councillors to focus in the most important issues for the council and residents. A high-quality work programme is critical to success. It may help in this process if a forum was established between scrutiny and cabinet to decide on priority areas for scrutiny and to also shape a task and finish schedule.</p> <p>A good work programme is about impact and outcomes. Work programming is about highlighting and proceeding with those matters where scrutiny can make most difference to the lives of local people. This relies on two things – firstly, having the information at hand to be able to make informed choices. Secondly, it is important that scrutiny understands what “impact” looks like, so it can plan for it.</p>	<p>This recommendation is related to recommendation 3 above.</p> <p>The committee's approach to work programming needs further review and consideration to ensure scrutiny objectives are clearly defined in order to ensure effective outcomes. The Memorandum of Understanding will set out criteria for developing the work programme and will help develop an understanding of the respective roles of the executive and scrutiny functions.</p> <p>Previously, the committee through its chairman has asked all councillors for their views on key matters they would like the committee to consider. This proved to be an effective way to collate ideas and it is proposed that this becomes a regular, perhaps, annual, activity.</p> <p>It is important to set a realistic annual work programme, focusing on a few key topics, in order to ensure manageable meeting agendas and sufficient time to explore topics in enough depth to make an impact.</p>
Consideration of public input and access	Scrutiny could consider co-option both of expert professionals (who may also be local people) and local people who while not professionals, may still have	Officers' view is that there are several important considerations relating to this recommendation.

	<p>expertise in specific issues. This could be done along with thinking more generally about scrutiny's ability to draw in and involve local people more.</p>	<p>Firstly, such people would have no democratic mandate but could be in a position to directly influence future council policy.</p> <p>Secondly, consideration would need to be given as to how they could add value.</p> <p>There may be an option to co-opt an Independent Person on to the Scrutiny Committee in the future should the council consider it advantageous to do so.</p> <p>It is officers' view that the council needs to ensure its scrutiny function is working in a consistently effective manner before considering this move and should be a topic that is returned to in the future.</p>
Scrutiny built-in as integral part of decision-making and policy forming process	No further comment is provided in the CfPS report in respect of this recommendation.	The Memorandum of Understanding can set out responsibilities of Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team to consider how scrutiny can add value to major work streams, with an expectation that scrutiny involvement, where appropriate, will be at the earliest possible stage
Annual report and performance review on scrutiny effectiveness and impact	No further comment is provided in the CfPS report in respect of this recommendation.	An annual report already exists and is considered by the committee before being presented at Full Council. The format could be reviewed so it also includes consideration of effectiveness and impact. Officers propose investigating self-assessment models. The Governance, Audit and Performance Committee already self-assesses annually through a CIPFA tool. The Centre for Public Scrutiny does have a self-assessment document but it is not as easy to use as the CIPFA audit committee one. It may be that another council has developed a self-assessment tool that could be adapted.
Further skills development – members, chair (key skills/advanced chairing skills)	No further comment is provided in the CfPS report in respect of this recommendation.	This will be addressed as part of the development of the member training programme through Democratic Services.

Structure of meetings – set objectives, create lines of enquiry etc	No further comment is provided in the CfPS report in respect of this recommendation.	Clarification of roles and responsibilities through the Memorandum of Understanding will assist in meeting this recommendation. The committee should consider to what extent “off-line” activity can enhance discussion at formal meetings – for example the recent meetings on affordable housing.
Briefings for scrutiny – Ensure that scrutiny members have necessary information and facts to prevent scrutiny meetings becoming information exchanges	Scrutiny members need a clearer sense of what is required of them as committee members and the work involved which allows good scrutiny to happen. Practically the chair and vice-chair must aim to build a team approach to evidence gathering and questioning. Support from officers will help. There needs to be more detailed pre-briefing of the members on major and important items.	<p>The role of scrutiny members can be addressed as part of the member development programme.</p> <p>In terms of pre-briefing, officers can provide technical briefings in advance of committee meetings where the committee considers it would be useful.</p> <p>There are regular briefings for all members on key topics such as the Local Plan and the council’s finances and Scrutiny Committee members should prioritise attendance at these to ensure they are abreast of the key issues and challenges facing the council.</p>