

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 10 April 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources
Report Title:	Reshaping Scrutiny
Purpose of Report:	To provide Cabinet and Full Council with an Overview of Proposals to revise the Council's Scrutiny functions for approval.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Chief Executive
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs</p> <p>Group Leaders</p> <p>All Elected Members</p> <p>Director of Corporate Resources</p> <p>Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)</p> <p>Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer)</p> <p>Head of Democratic Services</p> <p>Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>All Chief Officers</p>
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Decision by Full Council.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This report sets out the current Scrutiny framework within Vale of Glamorgan, which forms the basis of the Reshaping Scrutiny transformation programme, considering what Scrutiny is, what arrangements the Council has in place to discharge these functions, what feedback has been provided to date, and how this could be improved for the future, whilst also strengthening support to the Council in delivery of its new Corporate Plan, Vale 2030. Since the proposal was previously shared with Cabinet (6th March, 2025), there has been extensive Member engagement, through a series of all Member briefing sessions, alongside the comments and recommendations being shared from Democratic Services Committee, Governance and Audit Committee and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee. This report seeks approval to transform Scrutiny arrangements within the Council as outlined within the report; considering both how this function is structured and its ways of working. Changes to scrutiny arrangements provide an opportunity to narrow the perceived democratic deficit with residents, signal change to increased cross party working; and provides a platform to 	

enhance transparency and accountability for the Vale of Glamorgan's citizens through increased participation in decision making.

- These changes are intended to come into effect from the 2025-2026 municipal year, with a view to appointing to these Committees at the Council's next Annual Meeting on 7th May, 2025.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet and Full Council notes the feedback received from the Member briefing sessions, Democratic Services Committee, Governance and Audit Committee, and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee surrounding proposed changes to Scrutiny arrangements.
2. That the proposed changes are endorsed by Cabinet and recommends those changes for approval by Full Council at its meeting on 28th April, 2025.
3. That Cabinet recommends that Full Council approves the policies identified (Appendix D) to be updated to reflect any changes in Scrutiny arrangements which complies with legislation and statutory guidance.
4. That Cabinet recommends that Full Council approves the calendar of meetings (Appendix E) to be updated to give effect to changes in Scrutiny arrangements.
5. That Full Council endorse the commitment to review the implementation of any proposed arrangements after approximately 12 months of implementation to ensure the desired outcomes of Reshaping Scrutiny are being achieved and to consider any amendments which may be required.
6. That use of the urgency procedure set out at Section 15.14 of the Council's Constitution be granted to allow the proposed changes to be considered by Full Council at its meeting on 28th April, 2025.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. Having regard to the contents of the references and discussions at the meetings.
2. To enable Full Council to consider if Scrutiny Committees are effectively fulfilling their functions, enhancing the Council's ability to achieve its strategic goals and objectives, delivering high-quality services to residents, and to allow for the dedication of resources to continue the design of future scrutiny arrangements in collaboration with officers and Members, and for the Council to adopt alternative models in delivering the Scrutiny function.
3. To ensure that policies and procedures and the Council calendar are updated to reflect the relevant information surrounding the Council's delivery of its Scrutiny function.
4. To ensure the Council's Calendar of Meeting reflects the proposed Scrutiny arrangements.
5. To allow for the Council to understand if any proposed improvement activities are achieving the identified benefits and improving the Scrutiny function within the Council.
6. To allow the matter to be considered by Full Council at its meeting of 28th April, 2025.

1. Background

- 1.1 Scrutiny committees in Councils in Wales were legislated for under the Local Government Act 2000. This Act introduced the requirement for councils to establish overview and scrutiny committees to hold the executive to account and improve transparency and accountability in local government¹.
- 1.2 In a Local context, Welsh Government guidance states that the purpose of Scrutiny is "... an essential element of the political and general governance of the council. The council and executive culture should be open to and supportive of scrutiny and scrutiny should be provided with staff and resources to enable it to effectively undertake its functions, including holding the council executive to account"².
- 1.3 When undertaking a comparative exercise across Wales surrounding Scrutiny functions, it is clear that there are a large range of models being used by Councils in discharging these duties. A summary of this comparison is available in Appendix A.
- 1.4 This viewpoint has been strengthened by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, a national charity with an expertise in governance and scrutiny, which states that, ""Scrutiny often ties in with decision making and to the development of major policies by the council. This makes sense, because it is only by influencing those policies that scrutiny will have an impact on the business of the council"³.
- 1.5 Within the Council's constitution, the legislative guidance has formed the basis of the Council's purpose of Scrutiny, which is defined as ""Overview and Scrutiny Committees (in this Council, "Scrutiny Committees") should be powerful Committees that can contribute to the development of Council policies and hold the Cabinet to account for its decisions. Another key part of the overview and scrutiny role is to review existing policies, consider proposals for new policies and suggest new policies. ... Scrutiny Committees should not shy away from the need to challenge and question decisions and make constructive criticism"⁴.
- 1.6 In exercising these functions, the Council currently has a structure based upon 5 Scrutiny Committees, which were last reformed in May 2016. This previous re-structuring of Committees has successfully moved the Council towards providing

¹ Local Democracy in Wales, Welsh Government, Source: <https://www.gov.wales/local-democracy-wales-legislation-html>

² Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales – supporting provisions within the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (WG23-23), Welsh Government, Source: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-07/statutory-and-non-statutory-guidance-for-principal-councils-in-wales.pdf>

³ The Good Scrutiny Guide, Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, Source: <https://cfs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CfPS-Good-Scrutiny-Guide-v5-WEB-SINGLE-PAGES.pdf>

⁴ Section 7 – Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Vale of Glamorgan Council Constitution, Source: https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/December-2023/23-12-05-Section-7.pdf

Scrutiny based upon the previous Corporate Plan outcomes instead of focusing upon Directorates, as was previous practice.

- 1.7** The current Committees are:
- Corporate Performance and Resources
 - Environment and Regeneration
 - Healthy Living and Social Care
 - Homes and Safe Communities
 - Learning and Culture
- 1.8** These Committees have a defined Terms of Reference⁵, which identifies the areas of interest for each Committee and considers their ways of working.
- 1.9** All Committees currently meet monthly (excluding during periods of recess), with some also utilising additional special meetings throughout the year as required.
- 1.10** Currently, these Committees consider a range of items as part of their agendas and forward work programmes. Analysis of the 2024-25 municipal year between May 2024 and January 2025 has highlighted that across 40 meetings held by the Committees during this period that, of the 163 items on the agenda:
- 15/163 (9%) of items related to Democratic related items, such as the Committee's Forward Work Programming and Recommendation Tracking.
 - 61/163 (37%) of items related to "Corporate" items such as performance and finance, which are shared with each Committee on a cyclical basis (often quarterly).
 - 54/163 (33%) of items were identified as either being references from other Committees or Cabinet and being noted, or information updates and briefings surrounding topics from presenters, where no meaningful recommendations are made.
 - 33/163 (20%) of items led to robust Scrutiny and considered proposals, and formed individual Committee recommendation which were shared with Cabinet for consideration.
- 1.11** Whilst these figures are combined for all Committees, there is generally a +/- 8% variance with the general figures for each of the Scrutiny Committees, with the exceptions of Corporate Performance and Resources and Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committees who have larger variances. A breakdown by each individual Scrutiny Committee is available in Appendix B.
- 1.12** Alongside this, there has also been a range of feedback from various areas, both internal and external, surrounding the effectiveness of the Scrutiny functions within the Council (and more widely across Wales).
- 1.13** Feedback on the Council's Scrutiny Function has been invited from the Council's Members on an annual basis via the Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey. The results are shared with Democratic Services Committee and a subsequent improvement

⁵ Overview and Scrutiny Committees – Terms of Reference, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Source: June 2021 Scrutiny Appointment, Membership, TOR and Chairs Source: https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny%20information/Terms-of-Reference/June-2021-Scrutiny-Appointment-Membership-TOR-and-Chairs.pdf

plan identified, led by the Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chair Group. The Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey 2024 Report⁶ raised several areas for potential improvement surrounding the Scrutiny function from Members, and improvement actions which have been reflected in the ethos of the Reshaping Scrutiny proposal. The Group also referred a report on the latest 2024 edition of the Survey to the Democratic Services Committee, on 1st July, 2024, to ensure that Members of the Committee were kept informed of progress against actions that have been agreed by the Group to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's Scrutiny Function.

1.14 In August 2023 to December 2023, the Council undertook a significant survey, commissioning Data Cymru to speak to residents to understand what matters to them. The survey received over 4,000 responses during this period. Notable results from the Let's Talk Life in the Vale survey⁷ related to this area including:

- 60.8% of respondents strongly or slightly disagreed that the Council takes residents views into account when making a decision
- 60.5% of respondents had attempted to influence a decision or decisions made by the Council, with only 15.8% attending a Council meeting to do so.

1.15 This survey is planned to be run biennially moving forward, with National comparative benchmarking available, helping to form the basis of an assessment of impact.

1.16 During November 2024, the Council undertook a Panel Performance Assessment – as described within the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, consisting of a panel of external peers, to consider its performance and governance arrangements. Whilst the report⁸ highlighted a number of positive areas for the Council alongside areas for improvement, there were formal recommendations surrounding Governance and using resources effectively which impact upon the Scrutiny function, including:

- Reviewing and revising the cycle of formal democratic meetings and formal reporting requirements, exploring ways to better engage Members in more proactive and cross chamber collaboration – in both formal and informal ways including reviewing the effectiveness of online meetings.
- Reviewing the balance between the internal corporate demands placed on Members and their role as representatives of their constituents to deliver the Council's vision of place.
- Using the strong local politics as a force for good, whilst ensuring civility in

⁶ Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey 24 Report, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Source: https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Democratic%20Services/2024/24-07-01/Ref-from-SCVCG-Scrutiny-Impact-Survey.pdf

⁷ Let's Talk Life in the Vale Survey Results, Vale of Glamorgan Council and Data Cymru, Source: <https://participate.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/26290/widgets/93869/documents/60145>

⁸ Panel Performance Assessment, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Source: https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-02-06/Panel-Performance-Assessment.pdf

public life is promoted and kept front and centre to encourage respectful and constructive debate including online and in-person meetings.

- Enhancing the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny arrangements, specifically meetings, by assessing current practices to identify opportunities for improvement to make them more effective.

- 1.17** Whilst undertaking national audit fieldwork, Audit Wales have also identified areas where Scrutiny functions could be improved and have made recommendations on both a local and national basis. This includes the historic report, Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future?⁹, which highlighted “the need to explore different and more innovative forms of scrutiny”.
- 1.18** More recent reports such as the Financial Sustainability Review¹⁰ also considers the Scrutiny function during the budget and financial management process, which recommended that “the Council should develop reporting arrangements to provide Members with the impact of its financial position and Medium-Term Financial Plan on local communities and delivery of its well-being objectives”.
- 1.19** This is further supported by an Audit Wales report based upon Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspectives and Outcomes¹¹, which formally recommended that “The Council should strengthen the information provided to senior leaders to help them evaluate whether the Council is delivering its objectives and intended outcomes”.
- 1.20** At Cabinet on 6th March, 2025, Cabinet considered an item to review Scrutiny arrangements, with consultation then undertaken with Members through a briefing session, Democratic Service's Committee, Governance and Audit Committee and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** Reflecting upon feedback from Members, the Public and wider stakeholders, there is clearly a desire to enhance Scrutiny to become increasingly more effective and a critical friend to policy making in the Council. To achieve this, this would require a fundamental change in how the current arrangements operate, including ways of working from Members and Officers. Now is the right time to do this and the formation of these proposals demonstrates the Council is working at pace whilst also ensuring appropriate engagement is undertaken.
- 2.2** These proposals have been in development with Members since October 2024. The approach taken is one that Council would seek to undertake in developing

⁹ Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future? – Vale of Glamorgan Council, Audit Wales, Source: https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/2020-12/scrutinty_vog.pdf

¹⁰ Financial Sustainability Review – Vale of Glamorgan Council, Audit Wales, Source: https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/vale_fs_%20report_final.pdf

¹¹ Use of performance information – Service User Perspective and Outcomes, Source: <https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/vale%20use%20of%20performance%20information%20report.pdf>

policy in the future, identifying proposals and supporting research and engaging Members to make decisions in a timely manner.

- 2.3** This also represents an opportune moment to revise arrangements, with the Council due to respond to the Performance Panel Assessment, launch its new Corporate Plan, Vale 2030¹² in the next municipal year, alongside a refresh of its existing Reshaping Programme, both of which are setting the Council's strategic direction for the future. It is critical that any new arrangements are in place for the upcoming municipal year to support the effective embedding of the Council's new Corporate Plan, and signal change to wider strategic developments within the Council.
- 2.4** There have also been wider developments in approaches to Scrutiny function since the last review of Scrutiny Committees in 2016, including improvements in digital capabilities and changes in ways of working, which has allowed for there to be increasingly innovative ways to undertake scrutiny. This includes being largely outside of traditional, formal committee settings through mediums such as remote scrutiny, where less critical items (as agreed by the Chair) may be shared using a digital platform for Members to comment on and fed back as appropriate. Alongside this, following legislative changes because of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, there has been an increased emphasis upon Democratic Services offering research support to Scrutiny Committees.
- 2.5** It is important to note that this review of the Scrutiny function does not incorporate the Multi-Location Meeting policy, with its existing approach still being applicable to any new arrangements.
- 2.6** There is also a need to create capacity for Democratic Services Officers to further support investigative scrutiny delivered by Task and Finish Groups. Whilst this is currently undertaken periodically by the Council, due to capacity constraints, it has not been possible to embed this into an effective, systematic way of working for both Members and officers.
- 2.7** The proposed approach to Scrutiny being outlined would also allow for increased integration between Committees and officers by working together and developing a further understanding of the interdependencies of each other's work and the Corporate Plan. This would seek to further embed the Five Ways of Working (as defined within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015¹³, a key lens of how the Council functions and operates.
- 2.8** Initial proposals for revisions to Scrutiny commenced being explored in October 2024, with Officers and Members of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs group meeting to shape ideas for the future. A series of sessions were held following this with the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group and Group Leaders to further shape these proposals. These proposals were then further refined following

¹² Draft Vale of Glamorgan Corporate Plan 2025-2030, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Source: https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/minutes,_agendas_and_reports/agendas/Scrutiny-CPR/2025/25-02-19.aspx

¹³ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Source: <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

wider conversations with all Members of Council ahead of being presented to Cabinet. These sessions were as follows:

- Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group – Tuesday, 15th October, 2024
- Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group – Wednesday, 18th December, 2024
- Group Leaders Meeting – Thursday, 6th February, 2025
- Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group and Group Leaders – Tuesday, 18th February, 2025
- Cabinet – Thursday, 6th March, 2025
- All Council Members session – Wednesday, 12th March, 2025

2.9 Following Cabinet approval of the proposals for consultation, further engagement activity has been undertaken via Members sessions, one to ones, drop-in sessions and more formal committees.

2.10 The proposals were presented to Committees as below:

- Democratic Services Committee – Friday, 21st March, 2025
- Governance and Audit Committee – Monday, 24th March, 2025
- Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee – Wednesday, 26th March, 2025

2.11 Before exploring the details of any proposals, it is important to reflect how Member feedback from the engagement described above has shaped these proposals, and what has changed because of this feedback.

Members said	Impact and Response
<p>(a) The Start Well Committee seems very large and could be responsible for scrutinising the activity of services representing a disproportionate amount of the Council's overall budget.</p> <p>Whilst appreciating the rationale for Start Well and Live Well, the separation for adult's social care and children's and young people's services risks potentially duplicating information or missing interdependent items e.g. transitional arrangements.</p>	<p>The Start Well Committee's remit has been reviewed, and Children's and Young People's services have been moved to Live Well based upon the Committee's focus of supporting the most vulnerable.</p>
<p>(b) Play would be better placed within Start Well as the measure relates to Children and Young People</p>	<p>This has been moved to within the Start Well Committee.</p>

Members said	Impact and Response
(c) Whilst housing does have a role in supporting vulnerable people and quality of life, would this be better placed linked to the role of housing in building communities?	Housing has been reflected upon and different aspects of this work are proposed to now sit as follows with the Live Well Scrutiny Committee being responsible for homelessness (due to its emphasis upon supporting the most vulnerable), and public sector housing has been moved to Place Scrutiny Committee to allow for this to be considered from a community building perspective.
(d) The Place Scrutiny Committee seems very large with a significant number of responsibilities.	The remit areas for the Place Scrutiny Committee have been refined based upon the Council's priorities and represent a broad but manageable number of service areas which is similar in size to other proposed committees.
(e) Areas such as the climate and nature emergency and libraries could be placed in multiple committees due to the nature of their work	The committees' remits are purely indicative; with the emphasis placed upon the outcome being desired. The nature and direction of any report will dictate the Committee it is being presented too. This messaging has been further embedded within proposals and these are useful examples of how this approach would work in practice.
(f) Is there a risk of agendas being elongated and meetings continuing late into the evening in a compressed manner?	The intention is not to compress the existing Committee's work programmes, but to focus upon outcomes of reports. Whilst it is not possible to provide an example forward work programme, an analysis of the municipal year to date has been provided to Members in Appendix F to share how items would be considered by Committees moving forward.
(g) Task and Finish within 8 weeks seems ambitious based upon officer and Member availability	Task and Finish investigative scrutiny has been proposed to be undertaken within a 12 week timeline, with agreement from Head of Democratic

Members said	Impact and Response
	Services if likely to extend beyond this.
(h) How would Task and Finish membership agree their priorities and be structured, particularly considering political balance?	<p>The proposal has been amended to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Task and Finish groups will be agreed by Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programme, and not by the Scrutiny Chair and Vice-Chair group. Committee Members will be increasingly empowered to drive the Committees' Forward Work Programmes moving forward, with a key emphasis upon forming their own recommendations to be shared with the relevant decision-making structure. •Definition surrounding Task and Finish being 4-8 Members, with a view to be as politically balanced as possible •A Member skills and experience exercise undertaken to understand where there may be opportunities to draw upon Members talents beyond the membership of the Committee •Clarity surrounding the role of the Portfolio Holder during the scoping stage, who will be provided with an overview of the proposed scope of any investigative scrutiny
(i) Will we be considering co-opting Members to Committees, and how Will we encourage the public to participate in investigative scrutiny?	<p>Co-opting will be at the individual Committee's discretion (NB Start Well has statutory co-optees due to other legislation including Governor representatives).</p> <p>Conversations have commenced with Youth Services as to how we can work alongside them to encourage interaction with all Scrutiny Committees, including task and finish work.</p> <p>Members of the public will be able to</p>

Members said	Impact and Response
	get involved within investigative scrutiny as “expert witnesses” and share their lived experiences. Topics will be advertised as appropriate through a range of mediums to encourage participation.
(j) Will all Committee meetings including task and finish be held virtually?	Committee meetings will follow the existing Multi-Location Meeting policy. During the agreement stage of task and finish, Members will agree ways of working including frequency, time and location. The Council has also committed to review the Multi-Location Meeting policy in the mid-term to ensure this way of working is supporting any changes to scrutiny arrangements.
(k) How can we ensure task and finish is taken seriously by all, including Cabinet?	The proposal has been strengthened to include the need for a clear feedback loop, where the Committee will be informed if Cabinet accepts, partially accepts or rejects any recommendations because of this work, including the rationale for this. Members will be encouraged to contribute to task and finish as distinct pieces of concise work. Those with skills and experiences which may be of benefit to the topic area will be further encouraged to consider their involvement as appropriate.
(l) How can we ensure any changes do not slow down decision making, with consideration of the call-in period?	It is anticipated that the changes to twice monthly Scrutiny committees will not slow down decisions as there are few decisions that have the urgency that require this timescale. However, if agreed with a Chair, subjects can be called in with special meetings considered as appropriate.

2.12 During the consultation process, all Members acknowledged a need for good scrutiny, and a broad range of Members were supportive of the proposals to remove information only/noting items from agendas, and the role of

presentations with Committee meetings.

- 2.13** Feedback from Members surrounding changes has been largely positive and helped to shape the proposals described later in this report.
- 2.14** Some Members have expressed concern surrounding changing from the existing five Committees to four Committees. Whilst the number of Committees proposed remains as was during the proposal stage (4), the remits have been reviewed based upon feedback provided by Members.
- 2.15** A structure of 5 Committees was explored based on separating the Place Scrutiny Committee between the community element such economic development, regeneration and transport, and the built environment element such as the climate and nature emergency and highways and engineering. After careful consideration, it was felt that there were no material benefits to the outcomes being sought when compared to the proposal of a 4 Committee system, and that the introduction of another Committee to service would reduce the capacity to support the investigative scrutiny via Task and Finish, a fundamental component of this proposal. On balance, therefore, four committees are proposed.
- 2.16** Members also felt that there could potentially be a reduction in democratic accountability by reducing the number of Committees and the frequency of meetings at the same time, and that this could be perceived by the wider public as removing information or opportunities for scrutiny from the public.
- 2.17** To counter this viewpoint, it is felt that this proposal will improve democratic accountability to the public for many reasons; including:
- The proposals seek to enhance the value being derived from Scrutiny meetings, with the removal of information only items result in Committee meeting time being spent on debating and subsequently forming meaningful recommendations. This changes the emphasis of Scrutiny to quality not quantity of items, which will improve public perception of its effectiveness.
 - There will be increased opportunities for participate in scrutiny in a collaborative manner. Public attendance at formal Scrutiny meetings is currently low, with limited speaking time and ability to have a meaningful conversation with Members. Residents will be invited and encouraged to participate within investigative scrutiny and share their lived experiences as expert witnesses and will be more active in shaping the Council's policy direction.
- 2.18** Building on the previous point, the reduction in the number of meetings in the Council calendar has not been undertaken based on reducing a Member's workload, and it is anticipated that their workload will largely be akin to the existing arrangements. Whilst there will be an overall slight reduction of formal Committee meetings to attend, Members will receive additional information only items via e-mail to read at their discretion or have information briefing sessions arranged depending upon the nature of the topic area. Additionally, it is hoped that a broad range of Members will utilise their skills and experiences to participate in investigative scrutiny, which are designed to be shorter distinct pieces of work (as outlined later within the report).

2.19 Considering these comments and viewpoints, the below structure and ways of working are being proposed to form Scrutiny arrangements, to be implemented in the upcoming municipal year.

2.20 Structure

The below structure has been developed based following consultation with Members. The Executive alignment is available in Appendix G.

Committee Name	Corporate Plan Objective	Potential Remits
Start Well	Giving Everyone a Good Start in Life	Schools, Schools Improvement, Post 16 Education and Training, Skills, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Youth Services, Flying Start/Families First, Play and Welsh (external policy).
Live Well	Supporting and Protecting Those Who Need Us Creating Great Places to Live, Work and Visit	Adult Services, Children and Young People's Services, Libraries, Arts, Culture, Leisure, Sports, Community Learning, Homelessness, Public Protection and Equalities (external policy).
Place	Creating Great Places to Live, Work and Visit Respecting and Celebrating the Environment	Economic Development and Regeneration, Tourism, Countryside and Parks, Waste management and cleansing, Highways and Engineering, Planning, Transportation, Climate and Nature Emergency, Placemaking and Public and Private Sector Housing.
Resources	Being the Best Council We Can Be	Corporate Policies and Performance, Communication and Participation, Customer Relations, Finance, Procurement, Digital, Property, Human Resources, Equalities (internal policy) and Welsh (internal policy).

2.21 These Committees are proposed to consist of 12 seats (including a Chair), with each party allocated the following seats based upon the political balance formulas as defined by the Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance;

- Labour Party – 22 seats
- Welsh Conservatives – 12 seats
- Plaid Cymru – 7 seats
- Llantwit First – 4 seats

2.22 This leaves an allocation of 3 seats for independent Members who do not form part of a political party.

2.23 Chairing of this Committees, based upon the formula provided by the Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance is as below;

- Labour Party – 2 Chairs
- Welsh Conservatives – 1 Chair
- Plaid Cymru – 1 Chair
- Llantwit First – No Chair

Full political balance calculations are available in Appendix C.

2.24 Alongside these Members, there are opportunities to co-opt Members (with non-voting rights), including Youth Council representatives to the Start Well Committee and Housing tenant representatives to the Place Committee. However, co-option will be considered with individual Committees when they are appointed.

2.25 Whilst the proposed Committees' remits may appear large, it is important to note that Committees would not be required to cover all areas within a municipal year, and there will likely be areas that form part of the Committee's Forward Work Programme on a longer-term basis aligning with Directorate Plans in the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives. Additionally, Councillors are invited to focus upon the outcomes being achieved by these Committees rather than considering services currently provided as to what their areas of focus should be.

2.26 Due to the integrated nature of the work of the Council, there are likely impacts of the identified remits upon most other Committees' areas of focus. However, the most appropriate "home" Committee has been found for areas of focus for the Committee based on its Corporate Plan alignment. These would be reviewed and assessed on an ongoing basis by Chairs and Officers to ensure that topics receive the appropriate level of Scrutiny coverage, and that opportunities to consider the integration with other areas are not missed. There are examples of interdependencies between services within separate areas such as children's social care and adults social care, and the climate emergency, and these are proposed to be navigated based upon the desired outcomes being sought.

2.27 It is proposed that the Council clearly defines types of scrutiny and how these would take place within the Council. Types of Scrutiny could include:

Scrutiny Type	Summary Description
Briefings	Information only or update items which are for noting and where scrutiny can add limited value N.B. Members can utilise the call-in procedure if required
Monitoring	Scrutiny Members consider performance against the Corporate Plan, considering objectives, measures and outcomes at a strategic level

Scrutiny Type	Summary Description
Proposal	Policies are in development and are seeking Scrutiny feedback and recommendations to help shape the Council's future direction
Investigative (Task and Finish)	Committees can take deeper dives into topics using a range of methods based upon the Committee's forward work programme and identified priorities

2.28 Briefings

Information only type items would be cascaded through an alternative medium, likely to be a shared folder, with a notification indicating when new material is available. This will include elements such as reports and presentations from the Council and Partner organisations which would likely not benefit from Scrutiny time but be useful information to support Members in improving their awareness of local, regional and national policy direction. This information could be accessed by all Members on a remote basis whenever they need to access the information. Additionally, sessions would be arranged, often before relevant Scrutiny sessions, to invite officers or wider partners to provide whole Member briefing sessions and presentations as appropriate. This would be facilitated by the Democratic Services team.

2.29 Monitoring

Monitoring of performance information (including objectives, measures and outcomes) would take place in Q2 and Q4 (including end of year self-assessment) only. This would be held in a single joint forum bringing together all existing Scrutiny committees. Whilst a large meeting, this would encourage cross-committee working and learning, and Members would be encouraged to focus questioning upon their "home" Committee's remits. Areas of interest within this forum could be used to shape individual Committee's forward work programmes moving forward, including the potential commissioning of investigative scrutiny.

2.30 This would complement navigating the integrated nature of the Corporate Plan and release significant capacity from officers and Members, as this is currently taken to each committee on a quarterly basis. To provide assurance, there would still be internal activity undertaken in Q1 and Q3 to support these arrangements, but these would not be reported to a formal Committee meeting. There may be a need to convene this forum for other pieces of integrated scrutiny, but this will be considered and agreed by Scrutiny Members as identified.

2.31 Proposals

When a policy is still in its development stage, and where decisions have yet to be taken, there will be opportunities for Committees to make individual recommendations on these areas which would in turn be fed back to Cabinet to consider as a policy develops. In turn, it is the expectation that Cabinet would provide a response to these recommendations including any rationale for

accepting, partially accepting or rejecting.

2.32 Investigative

A Committee may identify an area of work which would benefit from a deeper dive to explore the issue further. These would be in addition to formal committee meetings and facilitated by Democratic Services, with topics initially identified at the start of the year when a committee is identifying and agreeing its forward work programme. This cross-party work would have a clearly defined scope (defined using systems thinking methodology) with the Cabinet Member sighted upon and proposed to occur over a 12-week period (with the knowledge that there may need to be flexibility based upon scope).

2.33 Task and Finish will leverage the expertise of officers, partners, wider stakeholders alongside evidence and insight from the people of the Vale of Glamorgan. Investigate scrutiny is to hold the Cabinet and officers accountable on specific topics while proactively shaping the Council's policy direction. This approach will provide a platform for more active participation in the Council's decision-making processes for all members of the public, who will be invited and encouraged to participate as expert witnesses and share their lived experiences.

2.34 Reports and recommendations from these smaller groups will be fed back to the Cabinet Member, Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet for consideration. This feedback loop will help the Council in shaping its future policy direction, ensuring that decisions are informed by a broad range of perspectives and expertise.

2.35 Groups would be brought together on a voluntary basis by Members, and anticipated to consist of 4 to 8 Members, and be as politically balanced as practicable, with the Chair decided by the "home" Scrutiny committee. This also presents the opportunity for cross-Committee working (dependent upon the nature of a topic). It is at the group's discretion as to how they operate in terms of ways of working, and to agree a meeting frequency and time. An exercise to map the skills, knowledge and experience of elected Members will be undertaken to create an index to support this work and draw upon the talents of all Members in shaping policy.

2.36 The proposed timeline guidance, which may be subject to change dependent upon the scope of the work, is outlined below:

Week	Stage	Stage Description
Pre	Initiation	Identification of topic based; sourced from areas such as performance, Reshaping, Corporate Plan, audit reports and Members interests
1	Start up	Appoint Members, agree meeting dates, Members ways of working and Terms of Reference

Week	Stage	Stage Description
2-3	Planning and Scoping	Agree key outcomes, action points, evidence collation, including wider stakeholders
4-9	Delivery	Delivery of content of T&F receiving, challenging and sharing information to support direction of travel
10-12	Concluding Report	Production of final report by T&F Chair, including recommendations, to be considered by the commissioning Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

- 2.37** Members will note that recommendations may not be immediately accepted or acted upon, investigative scrutiny work is often used as an evidence base for future policy making within an organisation and provides an opportunity for Scrutiny Members to shape and influence the Council's policy direction. Following Member feedback, there will be enhanced recommendation monitoring to include whether they were accepted/partially accepted or rejected including any rationale.

This type of Scrutiny is happening currently on an infrequent basis, it is anticipated that this is undertaken with increased regularity, as there are examples within Welsh Councils where Member-led Task and Finish has added value and influenced policy direction, including Flood Risk Management (Denbighshire County Council)¹⁴ and Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocations (Carmarthenshire County Council)¹⁵.

- 2.38** To enable these changes, there will need to be sufficient resource and capacity for both Members and Officers. The below outlines a proposed schedule of meetings for each Committee, which would also include Task and Finish work throughout the year alongside:

Month	Current Calendar (General)	Proposed Calendar - Proposal/Performance (General)	Proposed Calendar (Breakdown)		
			Committee Meeting – Proposal Scrutiny	Performance Forum – Performance Scrutiny	Task and Finish – Investigative Scrutiny
May	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
June	Yes	No			Yes
July	Yes	Yes (x2)	Yes	Yes	Yes
August					
September	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
October	Yes	No			Yes
November	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
December	No	No		Yes	Yes

¹⁴ Report of the Flood Risk Management and Riparian Land Ownership Task and Finish Group, Denbighshire County Council, Source: <https://moderngov.denbighshire.gov.uk/documents/s45895/Appendix%201%20Flood%20Risk%20Management%20and%20Riparian%20Land%20Ownership%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group.pdf?LLL=0>

¹⁵ Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocations Policy, Carmarthenshire County Council Source: <https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/pzybhet3/emergency-interim-social-housing-allocations-policy-eng.pdf>

Month	Current Calendar (General)	Proposed Calendar - Proposal/ Performance (General)	Proposed Calendar (Breakdown)		
			Committee Meeting – Proposal Scrutiny	Performance Forum – Performance Scrutiny	Task and Finish – Investigative Scrutiny
January	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
February	Yes	Budget (arrangements TBC)	Budget (arrangements TBC)	Budget (arrangements TBC)	Budget (arrangements TBC)
March	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
April	Yes	No			Yes

- 2.39** Not all Members will be required to attend every Task and Finish (investigative scrutiny) meeting, with attendance depending upon the groups' scope and membership, and it being at their discretion.
- 2.40** Based upon the above potential calendar of meetings, there would be a reduction of 2 meetings per year for Committees, changing from 10 meetings per year to 8 meetings (6 Committee meetings plus 2 Performance Forums). This is not a significant change from the current volume of Committee meetings (as visible in table 2.22) on a per Committee basis, when considering elements such as meeting cancellations or single item agendas which can occur. However, in doing so, it would make available capacity to support the other aspects of work, especially considering a potential reduction in one committee overall. An example of a Committee's Forward Work Programme (based upon 2025-26 municipal year to date) is available in Appendix F.
- 2.41** If the new Committee structure and ways of working were to be endorsed, this would lead to a reduction of formal Scrutiny Committee meetings per year for the Council, when considered on a whole Scrutiny basis, based upon the existing arrangements of 50 meetings (10 per year x 5 committees) being reduced to 26 meetings (6 per year x 4 Committees plus 2 Performance meetings) releasing capacity for Members and officers to invest time into investigative scrutiny and use this as a basis for forming recommendations to inform the Council's policy direction.
- 2.42** It is important to consider that any time saving is not quantified only by the number of meetings, but also considers pre-meeting arrangements and Member reading time, alongside officer capacity in preparation of agendas, minutes and decision notices. Recent pan-Wales research from the Democracy and Boundary Commission supports this approach, with its conclusion that "The issue that has the biggest impact on Councillor workload does not seem to relate to the nature of the ward – it relates to the various Cabinet and Committee responsibilities and the frequency and volume of meetings they are required to attend"¹⁶.

¹⁶ Research on the Workload of County Councillors in Wales, Democracy and Boundary Commission Source: [Research-on-the-workload-of-County-Councillors-in-Wales.pdf](#)

- 2.43** The existing Calendar of Meetings for 2025-2026 recently agreed by Cabinet will need to be changed from a Scrutiny Committee perspective to consider the removal of the dates for the existing Committee structures and replaced with any new arrangements.
- 2.44** As outlined within the report's recommendations, these will need to be further defined with the tools, techniques and infrastructure for both officers and Members to enable these changes to be implemented for the 2025-26 municipal year. This timeline would allow for sufficient time for this to be embedded as a way of working within the Council for officers and Members ahead of the next Local Government election in May 2027.
- 2.45** It is anticipated that changes to the Committee's existing structures, calendars and delivery mediums will release capacity within the Democratic Services function to service them more effectively, including the introduction of research support.
- 2.46** The Member Development Programme has been updated to reflect training for Members in Quarter 1 2025-26 surrounding the Corporate Plan and performance. WLGA have been commissioned to deliver bespoke training to Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs surrounding training in May 2025. Additionally, the University of South Wales are supporting the Democratic Services team surrounding systems thinking and research skills to support them in facilitating investigative scrutiny.
- 2.47** This proposal has undergone a significant amount of consultation, as outlined earlier in this report and again below in ensuring that there is a collaborative and collective understanding of the role and purpose of the Scrutiny function within the Council, seeking to build upon existing practice and feedback to transform to reflect the Council's new strategic direction, as outlined within the Corporate Plan;
- 15th October, 2024 – Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group
 - 18th December, 2024 - Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group
 - 6th February, 2025 – Group Leaders
 - 18th February, 2025 - Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group and Group Leaders
 - 6th March, 2025 – Cabinet
 - 12th March, 2025 – All Members session
 - 21st March, 2025 – Democratic Services Committee
 - 24th March, 2025 – Governance and Audit Committee
 - 26th March, 2025 – Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee
 - 27th March, 2025 – All Members session

- 2.48** Alongside these touchpoints, there has also been a range of opportunities to contribute via one-to-one conversations and through attending lunch time drop in sessions.
- 2.49** Officers will also be supported through any transition and changes in ways of working by support from Democratic Services and Strategic Leadership Team. Chief Officers have been briefed as part of wider corporate development sessions, and a series of lunch time sessions are due to be delivered in May 2025.
- 2.50** To give effect to any changes agreed the Constitution will need to be amended. The proposed amendments to the Council's Constitution will be a decision for Full Council and a separate report will be presented to Full Council for approval.
- 2.51** Existing internal and external policy documents to be updated to reflect the changing in naming conventions have been identified in Appendix D and will need to be updated to include any changes to Scrutiny arrangements.
- 2.52** This proposed approach relates to changes in the structural arrangements of Scrutiny and Committee ways of working. Further improvement work is also being considered beyond this to support the improvement in the Council's Scrutiny function, including improving participation.
- 2.53** A Communications Plan is also being developed to ensure wider officers, stakeholders and the public are aware of the changes being made to the Scrutiny functions, and how they can get involved in this process moving forward.
- 2.54** Following implementation of any changes, there is a commitment to review this on a within approximately 12 monthly basis, with an initial review by the regional internal audit service assessing whether the outcomes are being achieved for Members, residents and officers and seeking to identify areas for improvement accordingly. An overview of the proposed monitoring framework is available in Appendix H, alongside the associated risks and risk management approach outlined in Appendix I.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** This proposal has considered the Sustainable Development Principle in several ways; and will support the Council in meeting the overall Well-being Objectives by proposing involved policy making.
- 3.2** Revisions to Scrutiny are based on a range of feedback and strategic drivers, with the proposal forming a longer-term view for how Scrutiny can operate within the Council in the future, based upon the principles of prevention of issues for both the public through better policy making, and for Committee through improved forward planning and committee functioning. The proposals also integrated with a range of other policy making initiatives within the Council such as the

Corporate Plan and Reshaping programme and considers key interdependencies with areas such as finance and performance. The proposal has involved several stakeholders (both Member and officer) during the design process to help maximise its impact, whilst also encouraging cross departmental collaboration.

- 3.3** The work of the Reshaping Scrutiny will contribute to the (currently being finalised for approval) Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030, notably Wellbeing Objective Five: Being the best Council we can be.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** There are no direct climate and nature implications because of this report. However, Scrutiny Committees play a key role in considering these emergencies as a part of their work.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** This proposal will be delivered within existing base budget, and no additional funding is being sought.

Employment

- 5.2** This proposal will be delivered using the existing workforce, who will be supported with the skills to facilitate the Council to deliver this initiative.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** These proposals engage the Local Government (Wales) Measures 2009 and 2011 legislation with particular regard to Member development, public participation and political balance. These areas have all been considered in shaping the work to date.
- 5.4** The outlined approach considers several elements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 with particular focus on the Peer Panel Assessments required under Part 6. Specifically, it addresses Section 89 of the Act which places a duty on Councils to keep performance under review, including
- exercising its functions effectively;
 - using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
 - ensuring its governance is effective for securing the above.
- 5.5** The approach supports the Council's implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to further support the Council in meeting its Well-being goals and objectives. These proposals aim to increase representation by encouraging a diversity of voices aligning with the principles of equality and inclusion as legislated for under the Equalities Act 2010; the Public Sector

Equality Duty and associated Regulations forming a fundamental aspect of this approach.

6. Background Papers

Local Democracy in Wales, Welsh Government

<https://www.gov.wales/local-democracy-wales-legislation-html>

Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales – supporting provisions within the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (WG23-23), Welsh Government

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-07/statutory-and-non-statutory-guidance-for-principal-councils-in-wales.pdf>

The Good Scrutiny Guide, Centre for Governance and Scrutiny

<https://cfigs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CfPS-Good-Scrutiny-Guide-v5-WEB-SINGLE-PAGES.pdf>

Section 7 – Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Vale of Glamorgan Council Constitution

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20information/Constitution/December-2023/23-12-05-Section-7.pdf>

Overview and Scrutiny Committees – Terms of Reference, Vale of Glamorgan Council,

Source: June 2021 Scrutiny Appointment, Membership, TOR and Chairs

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny%20information/Terms-of-Reference/June-2021-Scrutiny-Appointment-Membership-TOR-and-Chairs.pdf>

Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey 24 Report, Vale of Glamorgan Council

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Democratic%20Services/2024/24-07-01/Ref-from-SCVCG-Scrutiny-Impact-Survey.pdf>

Let's Talk Life in the Vale Survey Results, Vale of Glamorgan Council and Data Cymru

<https://participate.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/26290/widgets/93869/documents/60145>

Panel Performance Assessment, Vale of Glamorgan Council

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2025/25-02-06/Panel-Performance-Assessment.pdf>

Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future? – Vale of Glamorgan Council, Audit Wales

https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/2020-12/scrutiny_vog.pdf

Financial Sustainability Review – Vale of Glamorgan Council, Audit Wales

[https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/vale fs %20report final.pdf](https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/vale_fs_%20report_final.pdf)

Use of performance information – Service User Perspective and Outcomes

<https://www.audit.wales/sites/default/files/publications/vale%20use%20of%20performance%20information%20report.pdf>

Draft Vale of Glamorgan Corporate Plan 2025-2030, Vale of Glamorgan Council

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny-CRP/2025/25-02-19/Draft-Corporate-Plan.pdf>

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

Report of the Flood Risk Management and Riparian Land Ownership Task and Finish Group, Denbighshire County Council

<https://moderngov.denbighshire.gov.uk/documents/s45895/Appendix%201%20Flood%20Risk%20Management%20and%20Riparian%20Land%20Ownership%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group.pdf?LLL=0>

Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocations Policy, Carmarthenshire County Council

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/pzybhet3/emergency-interim-social-housing-allocations-policy-eng.pdf>

Research on the Workload of County Councillors in Wales, Democracy and Boundary

Commission Source: <https://d34hss7hg6i3n.cloudfront.net/reviews/Research-on-the-workload-of-County-Councillors-in-Wales.pdf>

Appendix A – National Scrutiny Comparison Exercise

Local Authority	Meeting Frequency	Start Time	Number of Committees	Number of Councillors
Blaenau Gwent	2 monthly	10am	4	33
Bridgend	Monthly	4pm	4	51
Caerphilly	6 weekly	5.30pm	3	73
Cardiff	Monthly	4.30pm	5	75
Carmarthenshire	Monthly	10am	5	74
Ceredigion	Monthly	10am/2pm	5	38
Conwy	2 monthly	10am	4	59
Denbighshire	2 monthly	10am	3	45
Flintshire	Monthly	1pm	6	70
Gwynedd	2 monthly	1.30pm	3	69
Anglesey	2 monthly	2pm	2	30
Merthyr Tydfil	Monthly	5.30pm	5	30
Monmouthshire	Monthly	2pm	4	46
Neath Port Talbot	Monthly	2pm	4	64
Newport	Monthly	5pm	4	50
Pembrokeshire	2 monthly	10am	5	60
Powys	2 monthly	10.30am	4	68
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Monthly	5pm	4	75
Swansea	Monthly	5pm	6	72
Torfaen	Monthly	10am	5	40
Wrexham	2 monthly	4pm	5	56

Appendix B - Existing Scrutiny Committee Analysis

Corporate Performance and Resources

Item	Item Type		Variation from All Committee Average
Performance/Finance	9	26%	(+6%)
Member Briefing/Noting/References	11	32%	(-1%)
Cyclical – Forward Work Programme	3	9%	(-)
Proposal - Recommendations Made	11	32%	(+12%)
Grand Total	34		

Environment and Regeneration

Item	Item Type		Variation from All Committee Average
Performance/Finance	13	41%	(+4%)
Member Briefing/Noting/References	7	22%	(-11%)
Cyclical – Forward Work Programme	4	13%	(+4%)
Proposal - Recommendations Made	8	25%	(+5%)
Grand Total	32		

Homes and Safe

Item	Item Type		Variation from All Committee Average
Performance/Finance	13	42%	(+5%)
Member Briefing/Noting/References	10	32%	(-1%)
Cyclical – Forward Work Programme	3	10%	(+1%)
Proposal - Recommendations Made	5	16%	(-4%)
Grand Total	31		

Learning and Culture

Item	Item Type		Variation from All Committee Average
Performance/Finance	13	38%	(+1%)
Member Briefing/Noting/References	14	41%	(+8%)
Cyclical – Forward Work Programme	3	9%	(-)
Proposal - Recommendations Made	4	12%	(-8%)
Grand Total	34		

Healthy Living and Social Care

Item	Item Type		Variation from All Committee Average
Performance/Finance	13	41%	(+4%)
Member Briefing/Noting/References	12	38%	(+5%)
Cyclical – Forward Work Programme	2	6%	(-3%)
Proposal - Recommendations Made	5	16%	(-4%)
Grand Total	32		

Appendix C – Political Balance Calculations

Allocation of Scrutiny Committee Seats – in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Step 1. Calculate the percentage size of each political group as a proportion of the membership of the whole Council (54 Members):

Group Name	No in Group	Percentage of Whole Council
Labour	25	$25/54 = 46.3\%$
Llantwit First	4	$4/54 = 7.4\%$
Conservative	13	$13/54 = 24.1\%$
Plaid Cymru	8	$8/54 = 14.8\%$
Independent (1)	1	$1/54 = 1.85\%$
Independent (2)	1	$1/54 = 1.85\%$
Independent (3)	1	$1/54 = 1.85\%$
Independent (4)	1	$1/54 = 1.85\%$

Step 2. Calculate the number of seats allowed per Committee (based on Committee sizes of 12) by dividing the giving a proportion based upon the group's percentage of whole Council:

Group Name	Percentage of Whole Council	Number of seats
Labour	$25/54 = 46.3\%$	$46.3\% \text{ of } 12 = 5.56$
Llantwit First	$4/54 = 7.4\%$	$7.4\% \text{ of } 12 = 0.89$
Conservative	$13/54 = 24.1\%$	$24.1\% \text{ of } 12 = 2.89$
Plaid Cymru	$8/54 = 14.8\%$	$14.8\% \text{ of } 12 = 1.78$
Independent (1)	$1/54 = 1.85\%$	$1.85\% \text{ of } 12 = 0.22$
Independent (2)	$1/54 = 1.85\%$	$1.85\% \text{ of } 12 = 0.22$
Independent (3)	$1/54 = 1.85\%$	$1.85\% \text{ of } 12 = 0.22$
Independent (4)	$1/54 = 1.85\%$	$1.85\% \text{ of } 12 = 0.22$

Step 3. Identify the total number of seats available to the group by multiplying the groups allocation by the number of Committees

Group Name	Number of seats per Committee	Number of seats all committees
Labour	5.56	$5.56 \times 4 = 22.24$
Llantwit First	0.89	$0.89 \times 4 = 3.56$
Conservative	2.89	$2.89 \times 4 = 11.56$
Plaid Cymru	1.78	$1.78 \times 4 = 7.12$
Independent (1)	0.22	$0.22 \times 4 = 0.88$
Independent (2)	0.22	$0.22 \times 4 = 0.88$
Independent (3)	0.22	$0.22 \times 4 = 0.88$
Independent (4)	0.22	$0.22 \times 4 = 0.88$

Step 4. Round the number of seats per Committee to the nearest whole number and identify the total number of seats by multiplying by number of committees (4)

Group Name	Number of seats per Committee	Number of seats per Committee - Rounded	Number of seats all Committees - Rounded
Labour	5.56	6	24
Llantwit First	0.89	1	4
Conservative	2.89	3	12
Plaid Cymru	1.78	2	8
Independent (1)	0.22	0	0
Independent (2)	0.22	0	0
Independent (3)	0.22	0	0
Independent (4)	0.22	0	0

Step 5. Review the total number of seats allocated (step 3) versus the rounded amount (step 4) and identify any variances

Group Name	Number of seats allowed committees	Number of seats all Committees - Rounded	Number of seats allocated
Labour	22.24	24	22
Llantwit First	3.56	4	4
Conservative	11.56	12	12
Plaid Cymru	7.12	8	7
Independent (1)	0.88	0	0
Independent (2)	0.88	0	0
Independent (3)	0.88	0	0
Independent (4)	0.88	0	0

Conclusion:

	Number of seats allocated	Number of seats variance (versus all Committees rounded)
Labour	22	-2
Llantwit First	4	(-)
Conservative	12	(-)
Plaid Cymru	7	-1
Independent (1)	0	(-)
Independent (2)	0	(-)
Independent (3)	0	(-)
Independent (4)	0	(-)

The identified 3 seats which are required to be “given up” by Labour and Plaid Cymru are to be offered to Independent members.

Allocation of Scrutiny Committee Chairs – in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Step 1. Calculate the percentage size of the “Executive” Group(s) (i.e. total number of members of the group(s) that form the Cabinet) as a proportion of the membership of the whole Council (54 Members):

Group Name	No in Group	Percentage of Whole Council
Labour	25	25/54 – 46.3%
Llantwit First	4	4/54 – 7.4%
Total	29	29/54 – 53.7%

Step 2. Calculate the entitlement of the “Executive” Group(s) to a proportion of the scrutiny chairs.

4 (chairs) x 53.7% = 2.15 (chairs)

If less than a whole number then Rounding Down is required in accordance with the 2011 Measure.

Entitlement of “Executive” Group(s) to scrutiny chairs = 2 chair

Step 3. As there is an entitlement to a scrutiny chair by the “Executive” Group(s) the remaining number of chairs (2) are therefore to be allocated to “Opposition” Groups. Calculate the size of individual opposition groups as a percentage of the size of the total number of members on all opposition groups:

Group Name	No in Group	Percentage of Whole Council
Welsh Conservatives	13	13/21 – 61.9%
Plaid Cymru	8	8/21 – 38.1%
Total	21	

Step 4. Calculate the entitlement of “Opposition” Groups to the proportion of remaining scrutiny chairs (2). To do this multiply the number of chairs available (2) by the percentage for each individual group set out in step 3:

Group Name	Entitlement (2 chairs multiplied by the percentage in step 3)	Rounding	Ranking
Welsh Conservatives	2 x 61.9% - 1.238	1	1
Plaid Cymru	2 x 38.1% - 0.762	1	2

Conclusion:

The result of this exercise is as follows:

	Proposed
Labour/Llantwit First	2 chair
Welsh Conservatives	1 chair
Plaid Cymru	1 chair

Appendix D – Policy Changes

Policy Updates

- Public Participation Guide
- Scrutiny Participation Guide
- Multi Location Meeting Policy
- Cabinet Clearance Guidance [Internal]
- Emergency Powers
- Scrutiny and Cabinet Roles and Responsibilities

Other updates

- Cabinet Forward Work Programme
- Scrutiny Committees Forward Work Programmes
- Scrutiny Committees Recommendation Trackers
- Cabinet Report templates (Part I and Part II)

Website updates – Public

- https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/scrutiny/scrutiny.aspx
- https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/scrutiny/scrutiny_committees.aspx
- [https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/minutes, agendas and reports/minutes, agendas and reports.aspx#committees](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/minutes,_agendas_and_reports/minutes,_agendas_and_reports.aspx#committees)
- https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/The-Vale-of-Glamorgan-Council.aspx
- https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/scrutiny/Scrutiny-Committee-Public-Request-for-Consideration.aspx
- https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/scrutiny/Scrutiny-and-Task-and-Finish-Reviews.aspx
- YouTube sub-channels
- Internal intranet websites

Appendix E – Potential Council Calendar of Meetings

	MAY 25	JUN 25	JUL 25	AUG 25	SEP 25	OCT 25	NOV 25	DEC 25	JAN 26	FEB 26	MAR 26	APR 26
Start Well Scrutiny Committee	19 May		07 Jul		08 Sep		10 Nov		12 Jan		16 Mar	
Live Well Scrutiny Committee	22 May		09 Jul		10 Sep		12 Nov		14 Jan		18 Mar	
Place Scrutiny Committee	20 May		15 Jul		16 Sep		18 Nov		20 Jan		24 Mar	
Resources Scrutiny Committee	21 May		16 Jul		17 Sep		19 Nov		21 Jan		25 Mar	
Joint meetings			EOY Self-Assessment					Q2 Performance		Budget		

Appendix F – Example Provisional Forward Work Programme

Potential Start Well Forward Work Programme based upon the existing Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee and Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee agenda items for 2024-25 municipal year. Please note this is hypothetical based upon analysis of current agendas, and intended to give an indication of what agendas could look like in terms of volumes of items in the future.

Date	Current Committee	Title	Scrutiny Type	Future Start Well Agenda?	Potential Meeting Date
Jun24	Learning and Culture	DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025-2030, PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE CALENDAR 2024/25	Performance/Finance	No	
Jun24	Learning and Culture	Summary of Estyn Inspection Outcomes for Summer Term	Member Briefing/Noting	Yes	May 2025 or July 2025
Jun24	Learning and Culture	SUMMARY OF ESTYN INSPECTION OUTCOMES FOR SPRING TERM 2024 AND UPDATE ON SCHOOLS IN STATUTORY FOLLOW-UP (Member Briefing/Noting	Yes	May 2025 or July 2025
Jun24	Learning and Culture	Decision Tracking/Forward Work Programme	Cyclical – FWP	No	
Jul24	Learning and Culture	Update on the progress of the Religion, Values and Ethics Curriculum	Member Briefing/Noting	No	
Jul24	Learning and Culture	Libraries Annual Report	Member Briefing/Noting	No	

Date	Current Committee	Title	Scrutiny Type	Future Start Well Agenda?	Potential Meeting Date
Jul24	Learning and Culture	ADP Monitoring Q4	Performance/Finance	No	
Jul24	Learning and Culture	DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025-2030, PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE CALENDAR 2024/25	Performance/Finance	No	
Sep24	Learning and Culture	Welsh Language Standards Annual Report	Proposal - Recommendations Made	Yes	Sept 2025
Sep 24	Learning and Culture	Draft Annual Self-Assessment Report	Performance/Finance	No	
Sep24	Learning and Culture	Closure of Accounts 2023/24	Performance/Finance	No	
Sep24	Learning and Culture	Capital Closure of Accounts 2023/24	Performance/Finance	No	
Sep24	Learning and Culture	Revenue Monitoring Q1	Performance/Finance	No	
Sep24	Learning and Culture	Capital Monitoring Q1	Performance/Finance	No	
Sep24	Learning and Culture	ADP Monitoring Q1	Performance/Finance	No	

Date	Current Committee	Title	Scrutiny Type	Future Start Well Agenda?	Potential Meeting Date
Oct24	Learning and Culture	Summary of Estyn Inspection Outcomes for Summer Term	Member Briefing/Noting	Yes	Sept 2025
Oct24	Learning and Culture	Primary and Secondary School Attendance Update	Member Briefing/Noting	Yes	Sept 2025
Oct24	Learning and Culture	Youth Services Update	Member Briefing/Noting	No	
Oct24	Learning and Culture	EOTAS and Pupil Engagement Service	Member Briefing/Noting	No	
Oct24	Learning and Culture	Youth Engagement and Progression Update	Member Briefing/Noting	No	
Oct24	Learning and Culture	Governor Training Report	Member Briefing/Noting	Yes	Sept 2025
Oct24	Learning and Culture	Decision Tracking/Forward Work Programme	Cyclical – FWP	No	
Nov24	Learning and Culture	Draft Schools Accessibility Strategy	Proposal - Recommendations Made	Yes	Nov 2025
Nov24	Learning and Culture	Draft Corporate Plan	Performance/Finance	No	

Date	Current Committee	Title	Scrutiny Type	Future Start Well Agenda?	Potential Meeting Date
Dec24	Learning and Culture	Medium Term Financial Plan	Performance/Finance	No	
Dec24	Learning and Culture	EHE Update	Proposal - Recommendations Made	No	Jan 2025
Dec24	Learning and Culture	Ysgol Pen Y Garth	Member Briefing/Noting	No	
Dec24	Learning and Culture	Capital Monitoring Q2	Performance/Finance	No	
Dec24	Learning and Culture	Revenue Monitoring Q2	Performance/Finance	No	
Dec24	Learning and Culture	ADP Monitoring Q2	Performance/Finance	No	
Jan25	Learning and Culture	CFW Update	Member Briefing/Noting	No	
Jan25	Learning and Culture	Corporate Safeguarding Mid-Year Summary Report	Member Briefing/Noting	Yes	Jan 2025
Jan25	Learning and Culture	Decision Tracking/Forward Work Programme	Cyclical – FWP	No	

Appendix G – Executive Alignment

Committee	Cabinet Members	Strategic Leadership Team
Start Well	<p>Cabinet Member - Education, Arts and the Welsh Language</p> <p>Cabinet Member – Social Care and Health</p>	<p>Director of Social Services</p> <p>Director of Learning and Skills</p>
Live Well	<p>Cabinet Member – Social Care and Health</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Education, Arts and the Welsh Language</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Community Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services</p>	<p>Director of Social Services</p> <p>Director of Learning and Skills</p>
Places	<p>Cabinet Member - Sustainable Places</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Neighbourhood and Building Services</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Community Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services</p>	<p>Director of Place</p> <p>Director of Environment and Housing</p>
Resources	<p>Cabinet Member - Performance and Resources</p> <p>Cabinet Member - Community</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Resources</p> <p>Head of Finance</p>

Committee	Cabinet Members	Strategic Leadership Team
	Engagement, Equalities and Regulatory Services	Head of Digital Head of Legal and Democratic Services Head of HR and Organisational Development

Appendix H – Proposed Monitoring Framework

The below proposed areas are to be incorporated into performance arrangements as reasonably practicable as possible; alongside the use of storytelling/case studies and the ongoing development of a lessons learned log.

N.B. These will be reviewed on an annual basis.

How Much? (Quantity)	How Well? (Quality)	What Difference? (Impact)
Number of Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees – Committee meetings	Percentage of Recommendations accepted by Cabinet - Committee meetings	Percentage of respondents strongly or slightly disagreed that the Council takes residents views into account when making a decision (LTLIV survey)
Number of Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees – Task and Finish	Percentage of Recommendations accepted by Cabinet – Task and Finish	Percentage of respondents who have attempted to influence a decision or decisions made by the Council (LTLIV survey)
Number of Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees – Performance	Percentage of Recommendations accepted by Cabinet - Performance	Percentage of Public who contributed to Scrutiny felt they were listened to and their viewpoints considered (Post Scrutiny feedback survey)
Number of Task and Finish (investigative scrutiny) reviews undertaken	Percentage of Task and Finish (investigative scrutiny) areas which involved members of the public	Percentage of Members who recognise the positive impact of Scrutiny arrangements (Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey)
Number of Members participating within Task and Finish (investigative scrutiny)	Average number of days/meetings to undertake Task and Finish (investigative scrutiny)	Percentage of Officers who recognise the positive impact of Scrutiny arrangements (TBD)
Number of agenda items where comments are provided or noted and no recommendations made.		Percentage of Members who feel that they have sufficient access to information to undertake their role (Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey)

Appendix I – Risk Management

1 – Risk Overview

1.1 Risk Definition	<p><u>Reshaping Scrutiny</u></p> <p>Proposals to review and transform the Scrutiny arrangements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for officers and Elected Members surrounding the value of Scrutiny • Removal of information only / noting / presentation items; • Reducing from 5 Committees to 4 Committees; • Reviewing the remits of Committees; • Introduction of investigative scrutiny (via Task and Finish); • Changing of frequency of Scrutiny meetings to bi-monthly; • Amending the Corporate Plan's performance monitoring arrangements; • Enhanced recommendations monitoring.
1.2 Risk Owner	Chief Executive
1.3 Supporting governance	Cabinet Ongoing implementation monitoring

1.5 Risk Categories (inc. consideration of risk appetite)		
Categories	Yes/No	Definition
Political & Legislative	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF the Council does not review and enhance its governance arrangements as identified as part of the Performance Panel Assessment THEN they may not fully meeting the statutory requirements as identified as part of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 • IF the Council does not review and enhance its scrutiny function THEN it risks not meeting a range of statutory legislation • IF Members do not engage with any proposed revisions to the scrutiny process, THEN policy making within the Council will be limited in its effectiveness • IF the Council does not communicate with Partners and the Public surrounding changes THEN they may become disengaged and not motivated to participated
Resources	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF adequate funding is not provided THEN the Council may become limited in it's reach of using external experts

1.5 Risk Categories (inc. consideration of [risk appetite](#))

Categories	Yes/No	Definition
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF the Council does not release the capacity to support investigative scrutiny through amending to meeting 2 monthly and reducing the number of Committees THEN they may not be discharging the Democratic Services research function as defined within the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 • IF Members do not have the skills or capacity to engage THEN policy making within the Council will be compromised • IF Members do not have access to officers to support them in investigative scrutiny THEN their capacity to make informed recommendations in a timely manner may become limited • IF the existing digital infrastructure of providing information is not reviewed THEN Members may not have an appropriate mechanism to receive information only items • IF Committees still continue to receive information only/noting items THEN there will not be capacity for meaningful meetings • IF the proposed performance arrangements are not adopted THEN all Committees forward work programmes will be of similar volumes to currently
<i>Service Delivery and Wellbeing</i>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF proposals to enhance scrutiny are not agreed THEN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Democratic Services officer will not be able to provide support to undertake investigative scrutiny, and support the Council is making more cross-party, collaborative decisions ○ There will not be an improvement in opportunities for residents to participate within the Council's decision-making process ○ Members will not feel motivated to participate within Scrutiny due to its previous challenges • IF Committees still continue to receive information only/noting items THEN there will be limited space for meaningful scrutiny to make recommendations
<i>Reputation</i>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IF proposals to enhance scrutiny are not agreed THEN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council may be perceived to Welsh Government and wider legislative stakeholders as failing to meet identified actions ○ Residents may perceive their role in decision making negatively ○ Officers may not understand the value of Scrutiny

1.5 Risk Categories (inc. consideration of risk appetite)		
Categories	Yes/No	Definition
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members will be disengaged based upon the current reputation of the function amongst the chamber IF Scrutiny changes are agreed THEN there may be the public perception surrounding reducing governance, accountability and opportunities to participate in democratic processes.

2 – Risk Evaluation			
2.1 Inherent Risk Scoring			
Category	Likelihood	Impact	Total Inherent Risk Score
Political & Legislative	Probable (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (6)
Resources	Probable (3)	High (3)	Medium/High (9)
Service Delivery & Well-being	Possible (2)	Low (1)	Low (2)
Reputation	Almost Certain (4)	High (3)	High (12)
Overall Inherent Risk Score	Probable (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (6)

2.2 Controlling Inherent Risk				
Category	Controls	Effectiveness of controls		
		Likelihood Score	Impact score	Total Score
Political & Legislative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the Performance Panel Assessment by exploring how the Council is Reshaping Scrutiny, improvement programme to enhance function Proposed reduction in number of Committees and meeting cycle creates focused meeting spaces with clearly defined purposes 	Possible (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (4)

2.2 Controlling Inherent Risk				
Category	Controls	Effectiveness of controls		
		Likelihood Score	Impact score	Total Score
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of systematic task and finish work including appropriate support and resources Work with Members and officers to agree future performance arrangements in an integrated and collaborative manner Update constitution and supporting policies to enable changes 			
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change number of Committees and meeting cycles to release Democratic Services capacity Review Member Development Programme Incorporate Scrutiny changes into Member PDR process Members skills and experience exercise Commissioning bespoke WLGA Training (Chairs and Vice Chairs) Undertaking training and key messaging with officers surrounding changes and expectations Work with Partners to raise awareness of changes and their potential involvement Work with Digital to extend the existing Committee hub method for sharing information (pre-Sharepoint transition) 	Possible (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (4)
Service Delivery & Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change number of Committees and meeting cycles to release Democratic Services capacity Increased cross party working and collaboration through investigative scrutiny Review Participation Strategy Review opportunities for co-option arrangements Refresh links with Youth Representatives Enhanced recommendations monitoring to establish feedback loop and evidence value 	Possible (2)	Low (1)	Low (2)

2.2 Controlling Inherent Risk				
Category	Controls	Effectiveness of controls		
		Likelihood Score	Impact score	Total Score
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create space for Members to participate by reviewing meeting cycle and voluntary basis of investigative scrutiny • Develop a longer term forward work programme • Increased scrutiny of performance against Vale 2030 • Removal of information only/noting items from formal Committee meetings 			
Reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the impact of changes through monitoring framework • Share update surrounding progress as appropriate through the Council's governance arrangements • Internal audit review post implementation • Share changes with key external stakeholders such as Welsh Government, WLGA, Future Generation Commissioners Office etc • Deliver on-going training to officers as part of development sessions articulating role and value of scrutiny • Refresh internal and external digital footprint • Communication plan (including launch) through various channels to raise public awareness of change • Ongoing work with communications improving quality of news releases to include how decisions are made and how people can get involved 	Probable (3)	Low (2)	Medium (6)
Overall Effectiveness of Controls		Probable (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (6)

2.3 Residual Risk Scoring & Direction of Travel

	Inherent Risk Scores			Effectiveness of controls Score			Residual Risk Score			Direction of Travel	Forecast Direction of Travel
Category	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Likelihood	Impact	Total	Likelihood	Impact	Total		
Political & Legislative	Probable (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (6)	Possible (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (4)	Possible (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (4)		↑
Resources	Probable (3)	High (3)	Medium /High (9)	Possible (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (4)	Possible (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (4)		↑
Service Delivery & Well-being	Possible (2)	Low (1)	Low (2)	Possible (2)	Low (1)	Low (2)	Possible (2)	Low (1)	Low (2)		↔
Reputation	Almost Certain (4)	High (3)	High (12)	Probable (3)	Low (2)	Medium (6)	Probable (3)	Low (3)	Medium/ High (9)		↑
Average risk score/ direction of travel	Probable (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (6)	Probable (3)	Medium (2)	Medium (6)	Possible (2)	Medium (2)	Medium (4)		↑