

Scrutiny in Swansea

Witness Guide



1. What is scrutiny?

The main aim of scrutiny is to act as a 'critical friend' to the Cabinet and other decision makers in order to promote better services, policies and decisions. Scrutiny involves councillors who are not in the cabinet.

The broad aims of the scrutiny function have been to carry out a significant and constructive programme of activities that will:

- help improve services
- provide an effective challenge to the executive
- engage members in the development of policies, strategies and plans
- engage the public

The scrutiny function is delivered through the Scrutiny Programme Committee together with a number of Scrutiny Inquiry and Performance Panels.

2. Why have I been asked to be a witness?

The reason that you may have been asked to be a witness at the Scrutiny Programme Committee or at a Scrutiny Panel is because you are knowledgeable on a particular topic that is being looked at. Alternatively it could be because the councillors are interested in hearing your opinions, views and experiences on a topic that they are looking at.

3. Who will be present?

If you are attending the Scrutiny Programme Committee then the following will be present:

- Councillors (including a Chair and Vice Chair)
- A Scrutiny Officer
- A Democratic Services Officer (who will minute the meeting)
- A Legal Officer

Members of the public are welcome to attend however they must sit in the public gallery.

Scrutiny Panel meetings are informal meetings therefore only the councillors and a scrutiny officer will be present.

4. Providing Evidence

There are a number of different ways that witnesses may be asked to provide information. These include:

- Written evidence – this can be in the form of a report or a written statement or letter. Internal witnesses can obtain report templates by contacting the scrutiny team.
- Oral evidence – this can be in the form of a presentation, interview or discussion.

The Scrutiny Officer will have contacted you before the meeting to explain the type of information that is required from you and the format that they would like the information to take.

5. Further Information

Before the meeting:

If you have any special requirements or if you require any equipment to provide your information then please let the Scrutiny Officer know so arrangements can be made.

At the meeting:

You can arrange to be met by a Scrutiny Officer who will take you to the meeting. This will also give you the opportunity to ask any questions or address any issues that you may have.

After the meeting:

If any further information is needed from you then the Scrutiny Officer will contact you to arrange this.

6. Contact Details

If you require any further information then please contact the scrutiny team on either 01792 637732 or scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk.

Alternatively you can find out further information about the work of scrutiny at our blog: <http://www.swanseascrutiny.co.uk/>

Or our web pages: www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny