

# **Democratic Arrangements Progress Report**

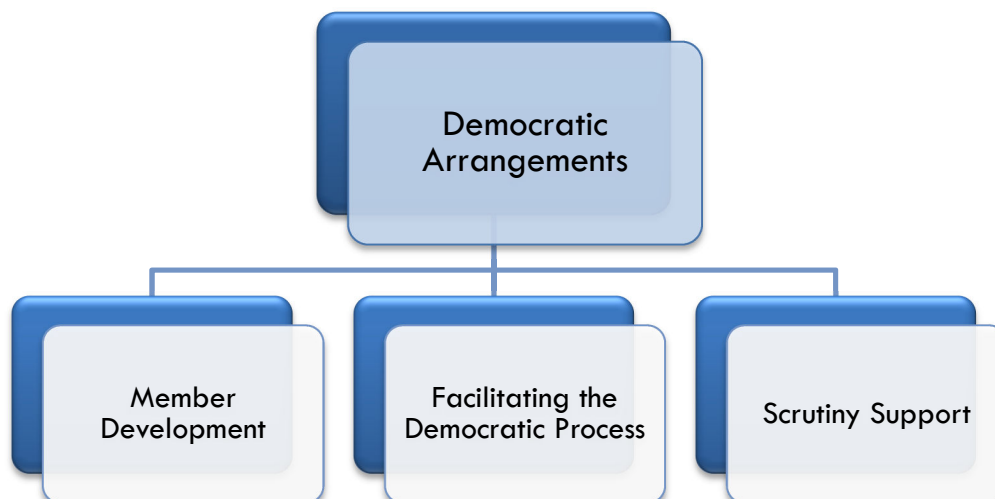
**Period: October 2017 – March 2018**

# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Scope of the Report

This report provides detail on the work carried out to embed Democratic Arrangements and Support for Members, focusing on the development of establishing more effective ways of working. The role of an Elected Member is increasingly complex and therefore appropriate support and guidance is vital.

For this report format support has been categorised into 3 broad areas, as shown below:



### Member Development including:

- Developing and implementing a members training and development framework
- Personal Development Review (PDR) procedures
- Proposals for mentoring framework for members

### Facilitating the Democratic Process including:

- Supporting Executive Committee and Council Meetings including agenda management and forward work programme planning
- Support handbooks developed
- Providing constituency support to elected members

### Scrutiny Support including:

- Provide advice and guidance to Members and Officers on Scrutiny protocols, procedures, and the effective operation of Scrutiny in meetings and outside of meetings
- Assist Chairs, Committees and Officers to identify suitable work for the Forward Work Programmes (FWP)
- Advisor to support each Scrutiny committee.

# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to present an overview of progress made to support the Democratic Arrangements including Democratic Support and Scrutiny Support. The reporting period covers October 2017 – March 2018. The report sets out the key activities and measures used to monitor performance against each priority actions and key actions set as part of the business planning arrangements.

## BRAG Rating System

The Council uses a BRAG rating system to assess progress against actions and measures, the definitions are provided in the table below:

Status	Definition
Blue	The project has been completed; all performance factors set by the project board have been achieved (time, quality, financial aspects).
Green	The project is performing to plan; all performance factors are within the acceptable variance levels set by the project board.
Amber	Issues have been identified with the project that will/may negatively impact on performance; the project manager and delivery team are able to resolve the problem or make corrective decisions without assistance; project is at risk of failing on one or more of the performance factors set by the project board.
Red	Significant issues identified with the project that requires corrective action in order to meet business objectives; the project manager requires additional assistance to handle the issues; project is failing on one or more of the performance factors set by the project board.

## Member Development

### Key Activity

**Support for Members sitting on Outside Bodies:** A full review of the outside bodies has been undertaken and it has been agreed which outside bodies members need to support. A new framework has been established to support members in their role as well as developing a system for members to report their learning from these bodies into the work of the Council.

**Review of the Mentoring Framework:** The Mentoring Framework has been reviewed and approved by Council. Following a request for mentors, 3 Elected Members have come forward. These have now completed pen portraits and training is being sought.

**Member Support and Development Programme:** The Member Support and Development Programme has been ongoing throughout the year with over 58 sessions undertaken (up to February 2018). Sessions have been scheduled until the end of the cycle in April. Sessions have even been planned for the 2018/19 cycle. The Member Development Programme will be developed in line with the forward work programmes of the committees.

- Excellent presentation – very useful and thought provoking
- Very informative sessions
- Again another clear presentation briefing by the department.
- Very challenging Good opportunity to improve the safety of our streets.

### Future Area of Focus

The future focus for this area of work is:

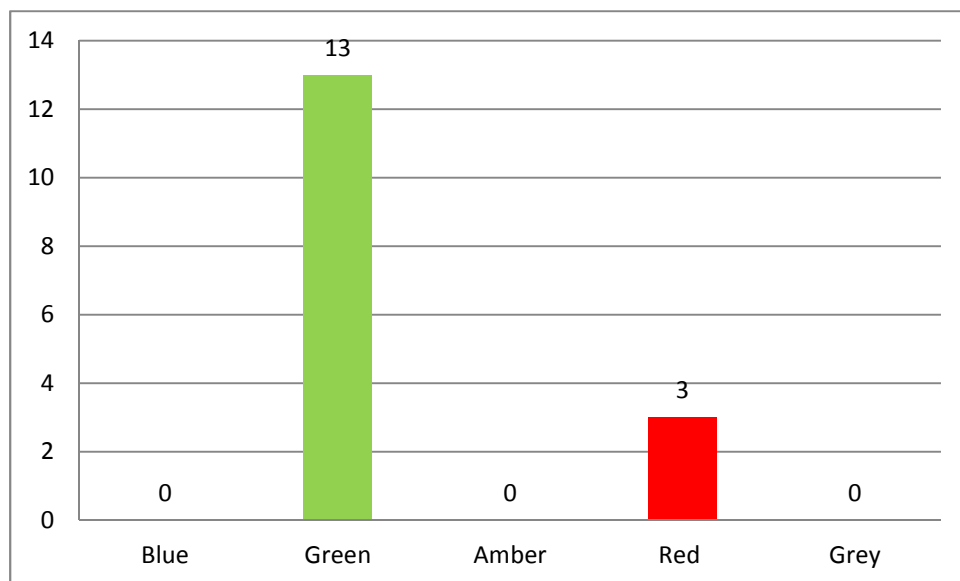
- Continue to review, develop and embed processes for Democratic Arrangements;
- Resubmission of the Level 1 Members Charter Award;
- Development of a central database of information for Members; and
- Continuing to support members to meet future challenges.

# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Progress against Priorities

<b>DA.1</b>	<b>Undertake a review of the current Member Development arrangements to ensure they are showing impact and achieving outcomes within the Strategy and supporting action plan</b>	<b>Green</b>
<b>DA.3</b>	<b>Resubmit Information to Receive the Members Charter</b>	<b>Green</b>

## Progress Against Actions



## Progress Against Actions – Exceptions

The three actions identified as 'red' or 'not started' are in relation to:

- Review the member development evaluation process to ensure we can capture impact, learning and outcomes;
  - Revise the Member Development Strategy to ensure that it is fit for purpose; and
  - Develop a central collection of information.
- The evaluation of the member development sessions will be reviewed in line with the development of the Member Development Programme as part of the new cycle from June 2018.
  - The Member Development Strategy will need to be reviewed as part of the Council's resubmission of the Level 1 Charter. The section has only had confirmation that we will be resubmitting for level 1 in March, therefore progress has not yet begun.
  - The development of a central database of information has not yet begun and is likely to be progressed once all members have been allocated a laptop. The intention is to develop a central library on the Council's Intranet that will be dedicated to providing information to Members.

# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Key Performance Measures

Member Briefing Sessions (October 2017 to February 2018)				
Name Of Event	Date of event	Number of Members Attending	% of Members Attending	BRAG
Community Safety	02/10/2017	23	55%	Amber
Resettlement Programme Update	03/10/2017	13	31%	Red
WLGA Regional Event New Members	06/10/2017	7	16%	Red
Appeal Committee Training	11/10/2017	10	24%	Red
Social Services & Wellbeing Act	18/10/2017	21	50%	Amber
Corporate Update	24/10/2017	16	38%	Amber
Elective Home Education	24/10/2017	20	47%	Amber
Equality & Diversity	25/10/2017	11	26%	Red
Highway Maintenance	31/10/2017	29	69%	Green
Council Budget Engagement	06/11/2017	17	40%	Amber
Health & Safety at Work	08/11/2017	9	21%	Red
Ian Botrill Making The System Work For You	15/11/2017	15	37%	Amber
Social Media Training	22/11/2017	13	31%	Red
Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone	28/11/2017	18	42%	Amber
Waste Services	29/11/2017	22	52%	Amber
The Consultation of the Draft well being Plan for BG (PSB)	05/12/2017	17	40%	Amber
Civil Parking Enforcement	06/12/2017	15	35%	Amber
Council's Constitution	07/12/2017	28	66%	Amber
Executive Session	12/01/2018	5	100%	Green
Cardiff Capital Region City Deal	18/01/2018	20	47%	Amber
Aneurin Leisure Trust	26/01/2018	8	19%	Red
Additional Learning Needs Bill	02/02/2018	10	23%	Red
Asbestos Management in Schools	06/02/2018	14	33%	Amber
Schools Causing Concern	27/02/2018	14	33%	Amber

## Facilitating the Democratic Process

### Key Activity

**Review of Head of Democratic Services:** The Head of Democratic Services is required to develop an annual report which is presented to the Democratic Services Committee. This year, the Head of Democratic Services met with the Group Leaders to identify any additional support that members require. Through this engagement ICT was identified as the most pressing issue and this is currently being progressed so that all members have access to a Council laptop. The Member's pigeon holes have also been relocated to the member's room.

**Review of the Forward Work Programme Criteria:** A review of the criteria for the Scrutiny forward work programmes has been undertaken in order to build on current arrangements and also to further embed the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act including evidencing the Well-being goals and Sustainable Development Principles. A desk top research exercise has been undertaken and learning from other has been used where it was felt to add value to our criteria.

**Review and Approval of the Constitution (including Role Descriptions for Members):** A review of the Constitution has recently been undertaken by officers and Members and approved at Council. Key activity with regards to Scrutiny and Executive were included within the Constitution and a review of the role descriptions was also included.

### Future Area of Focus:

The future focus of the Democratic Services team will be to:

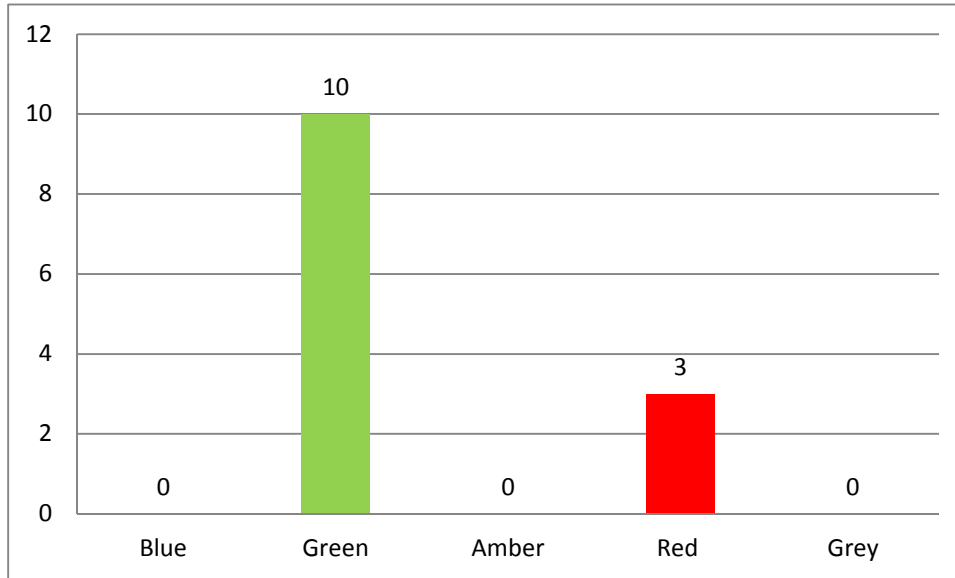
- Consideration of the provision of Webcasting (subject to a future report); and
- Support to implement the Council decision on ICT for Members

# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Progress against Priorities

<b>DA.2</b>	<b>Implement the findings of the Head of Democratic Services Review as agreed by Council</b>	<b>Green</b>
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### Progress Against Actions



- Completed
- In progress
- On-going
- Not Started
- Cancelled

### Progress Against Actions - Exceptions

The three actions identified as 'red' or 'not started' are in relation to activity that will be considered as part of the new 2018 Cycle. As these potential actions are still to be agreed it may be that they are not progressed.



# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Scrutiny Support

### Key Activity

**Member Support Evaluation:** A key action from the previous Wales Audit Office Scrutiny report 2016 recommended local authorities evaluate the impact of member support and training has on the quality of chairing and questioning in Scrutiny Committees. Previous evaluation processes and documentation have been revised and includes a question in relation to Chairing. A Member evaluation session is held following each formal meeting to support the on-going development of scrutiny. This is important to ensure effective scrutiny arrangements continually improve and build on learning opportunities identified as part of the process.

**Chair and Vice Chair Meetings:** A schedule of Chairs and Vice Chairs meeting has been put in place following the positive results of these meetings being held in the past. The meetings provide an opportunity for Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs to share good practice and consider where additional improvements could be made to the Scrutiny function. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny are also invited to attend the Democratic Services Committee.

**Development of Processes to Engage the Public in Scrutiny:** There is a strong commitment from the Council to engage with the public more effectively. In 2016 the Wales Audit Office (WAO) report on 'Governance Review with a Focus on Scrutiny' included a proposal for improvement to 'Evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny function in engaging with the public'. Progress against this proposal has resulted in scrutiny meetings being promoted on social media where public impact/awareness has been identified in order to increase public interest. During the period to September 2017 a total of 28 reports of 63 presented were identified as having public impact.

### Future Area of Focus

**Annual Scrutiny Evaluation:** The annual evaluation of Scrutiny will not be undertaken until the full cycle has been completed in April 2018. The evaluation will be provided to both Officers and Members and will include a focus on impact and outcomes. The learning from the annual evaluation will be subsumed into the Scrutiny Action Plan and reported to Democratic Services Committee within this monitoring report.

**Peer Learning:** Members have identified as good practice that Peer Learning from neighbouring authorities will benefit the learning process and we are in the process of arranging some peer learning with Merthyr Tydfil initially as they have requested to work with us.

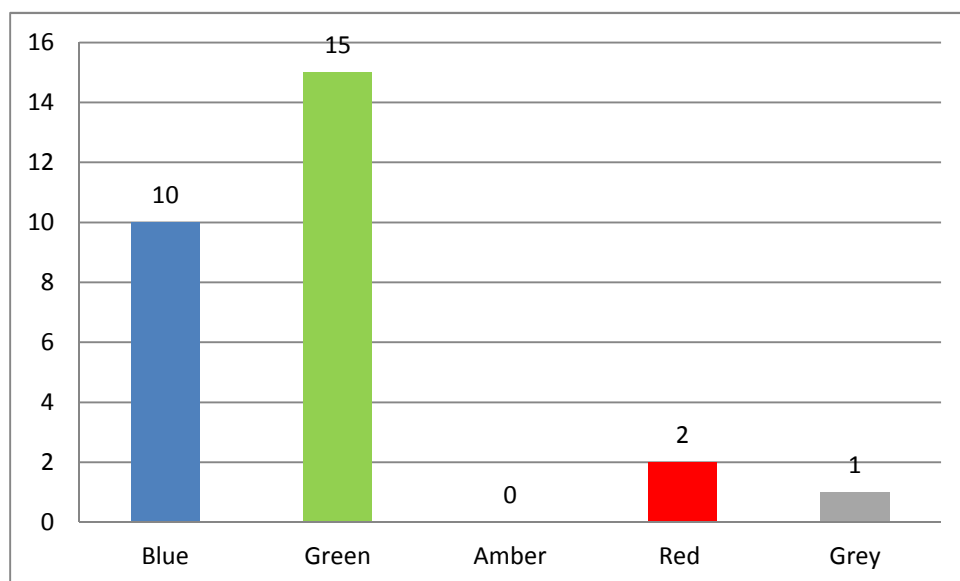
# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Progress against Priorities

There has been one change since the previous report with SAP 3 moving from a 'green' to 'blue' which means that the priority has been completed.

<u>SAP.1</u>	Evaluate the impact of member support and training to improve the quality of chairing and questions at scrutiny meeting. WAO Proposal for Improvement No. 85 to 89	Green
<u>SAP.2</u>	Consider holding meetings between the Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and the Chair of the Audit Committee meeting to strengthen the planning of, and links between the forward work programmes of scrutiny Committee and the audit committee	Blue
<u>SAP.3</u>	Review the Council's scrutiny arrangements action plan to ensure that the actions are SMART and include the BRAG criteria in the plan to help members monitor progress	Blue
<u>SAP.4</u>	Evaluate the impact that the Council's scrutiny function has on improving outcomes for local people. WAO Proposal for Improvement 85-89	Green
<u>SAP.5</u>	Evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny function in engaging with the public. WAO Proposal for Improvement 85-89	Green
<u>SAP.6</u>	Further develop scrutiny support processes	Green

## Progress Against Actions



## Progress Against Actions – Exceptions

The two actions identified as 'red' or 'not started' are in relation to:

- Undertake annual evaluation of scrutiny with members and officers; and
- Include in annual evaluation for members and officer impact and outcomes for members of the public.
- The annual evaluation of the scrutiny process will not be undertaken until the full cycle has finished in April 2018.
- Once the annual evaluation of the scrutiny process has been developed it will include a question on impact and outcomes for members.

# Democratic Arrangements Progress Report

## Key Performance Measures

Indicator Description	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Performance Trend
Number of Formal Scrutiny Committees held	4	9	12	↑
% of Member Attendance at Formal Scrutiny Committees	91.7%	77.0%	74.4%	↓
% of reports submitted to Scrutiny Committees identified as having public impact	41.0%	45.0%	31%	↓
Number of members of the public attending scrutiny meetings	0	0	0	-
Number of recommendations amended by scrutiny	0	5	3	↓
Number of recommendations amended by scrutiny accepted by Executive committee	-	100%	100%	*
Number of reports requesting amendments following Quality Assurance by Scrutiny Officer	1	9	16	↓

\* Maintained top performance

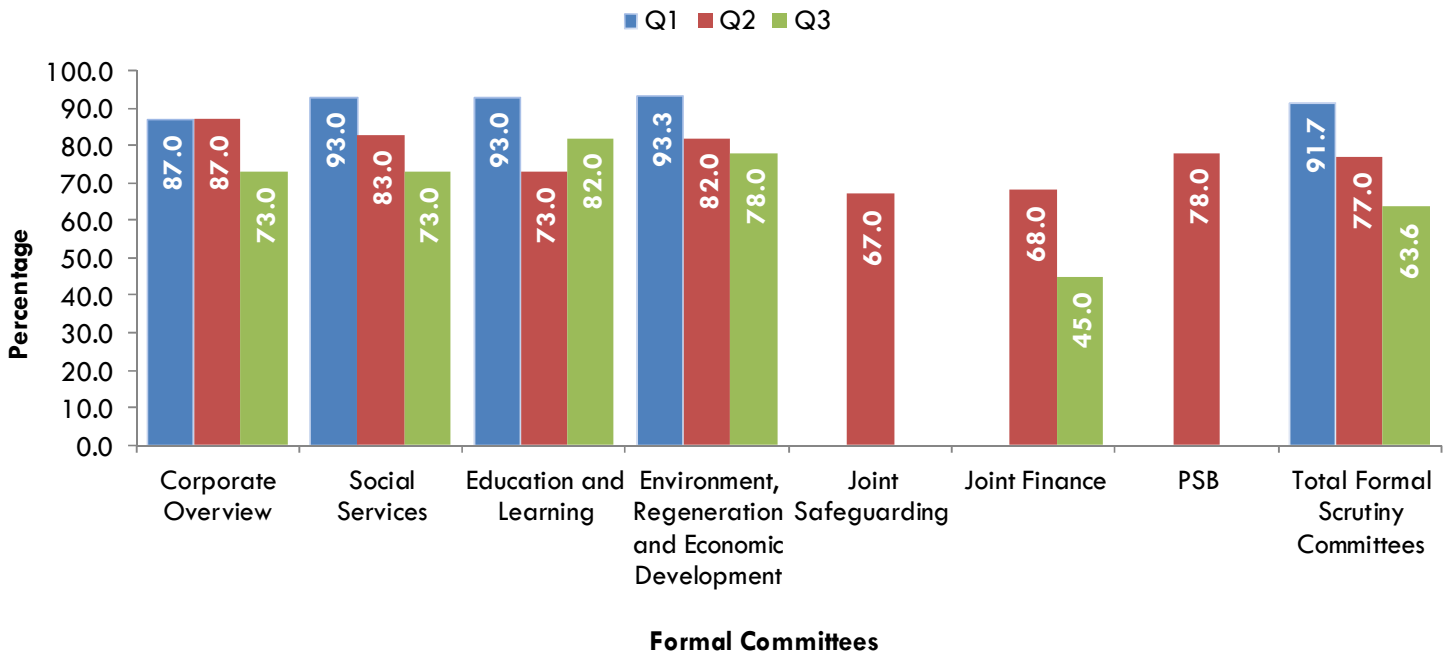
### Member Attendance at Scrutiny Committees Period from October 2017 to December 2017

	Agreed Committee Membership	Number of Meetings Held	Total Members Due to Attend	Actual Members in Attendance	% of Members in attendance at Scrutiny Committees	% of Members in attendance at Scrutiny Committees during same period 2017/18 Cycle
Corporate Overview	15	2	30	22	73.3%	63% ↑
Social Services	15	2	30	22	73.3%	63% ↑
Education and Learning	15	3	45	37	82.2%	60% ↓
Environment, Regeneration and Economic Development	15	3	45	35	77.7%	53% ↑
<b>Scrutiny Committees</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>77.3%</b>	-
Joint Safeguarding	27	0	0	0	-	-
Joint Finance and Special Joint ERED	37	3	111	50	45.0%	42% ↓
PSB	18	0	0	0	-	-
<b>Joint Committees</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45.0%</b>	-
<b>Overall</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>56.2% ↑</b>

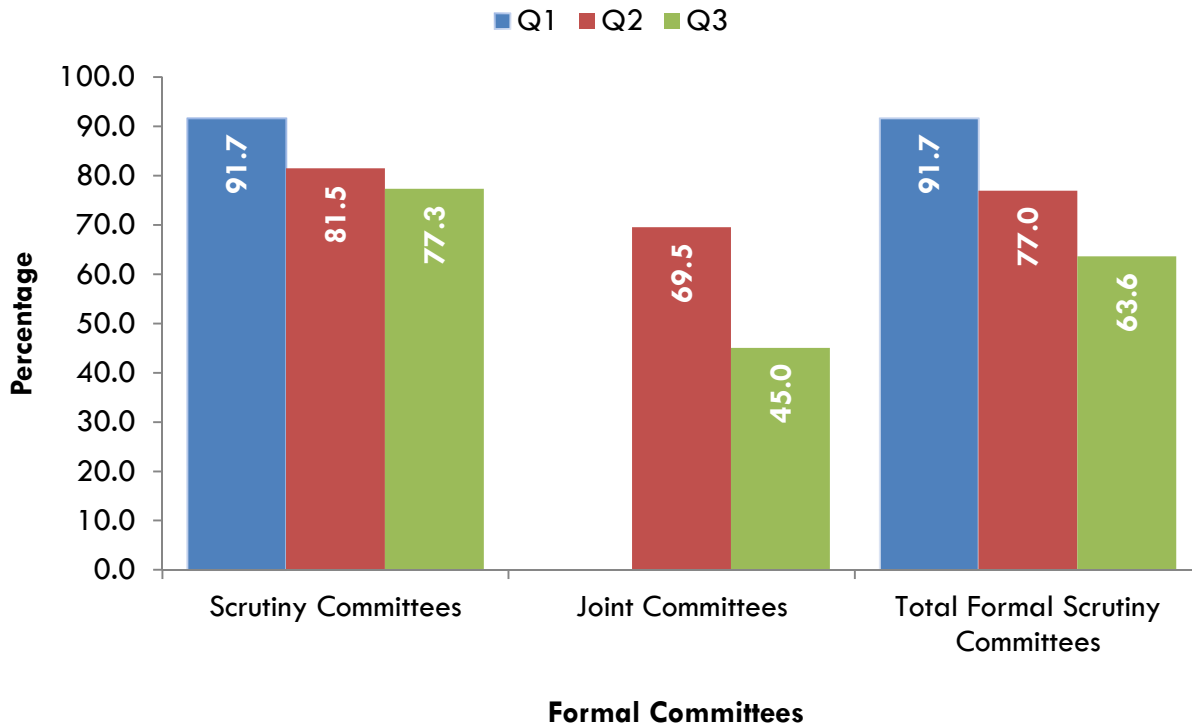
↑ Denotes performance trend of attendance when compared to the same period in the previous year.

## Member Attendance at Formal Scrutiny Committees

Member Attendance by individual Scrutiny Meeting



Members Attendance by Meeting Type



- **Scrutiny Committees** include Corporate Overview, Social Services, Education and Learning, and Environment, Regeneration and Economic Development
- **Joint Committees** include Joint Safeguarding, Joint Finance and Public Services Board Scrutiny