

Havant Borough Council

Councillor Scrutiny Survey Results

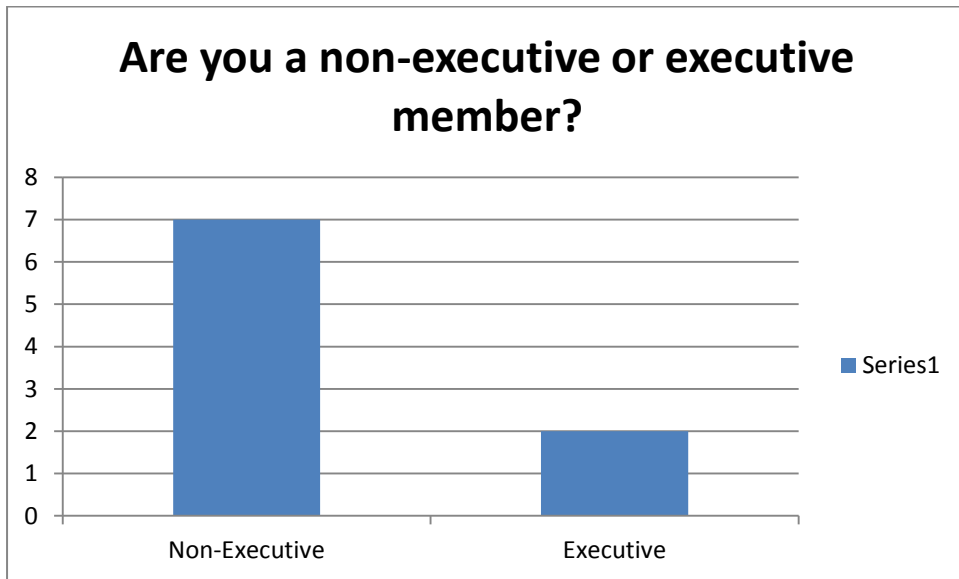
HBC – COUNCILLOR SCRUTINY SURVEY RESULTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES*	9
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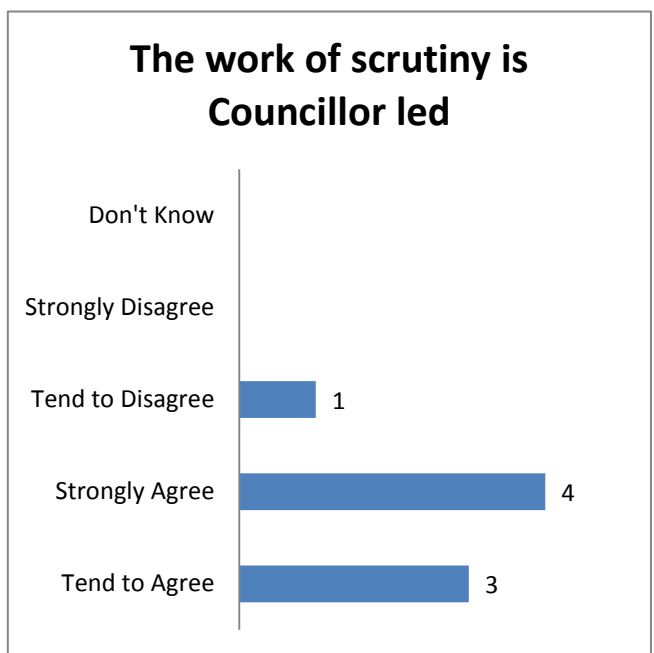
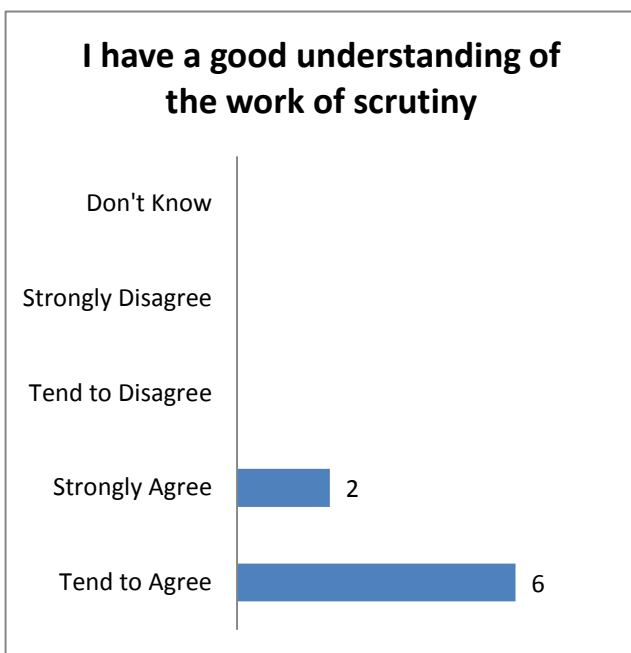
The total response rate was disappointing, as only 24% of Councillors responded to the survey.

Non-Executive / Executive Members

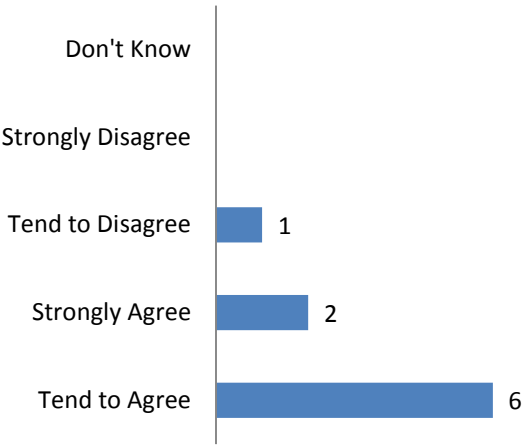
Are you a non-executive or executive member?



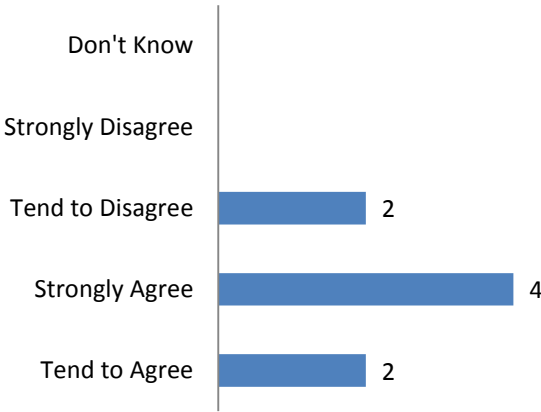
1. Scrutiny Arrangements – How far do you agree with the following statements?



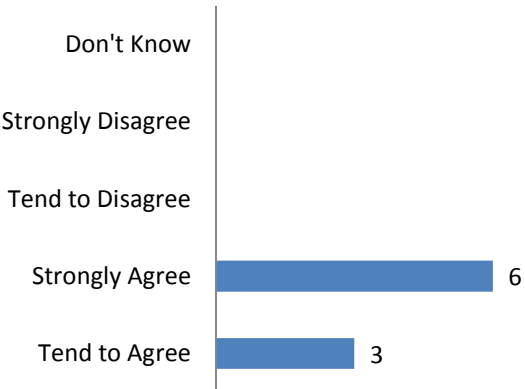
The scrutiny arrangements are working well



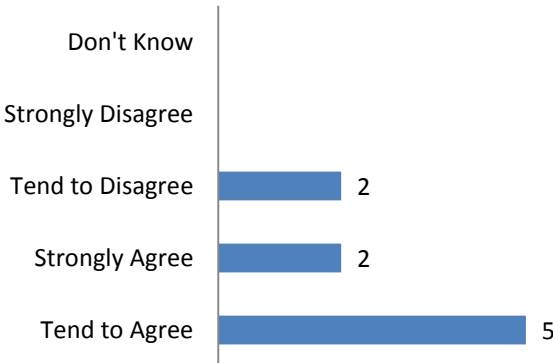
Scrutiny works in a cross cutting fashion and not restricted departmental silos



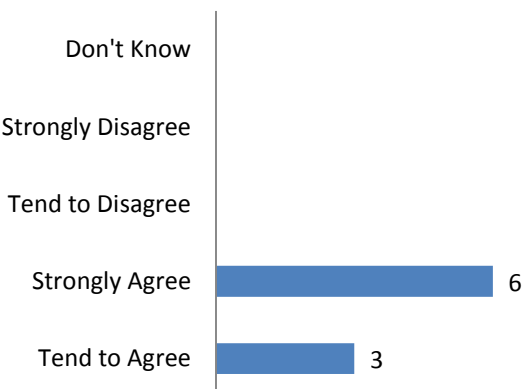
Non executive members have good opportunities to participate in scrutiny



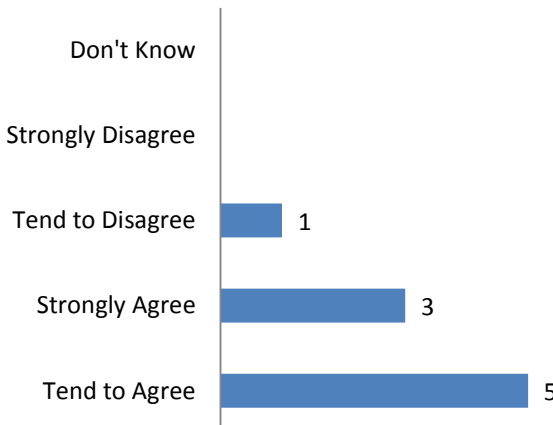
The Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance

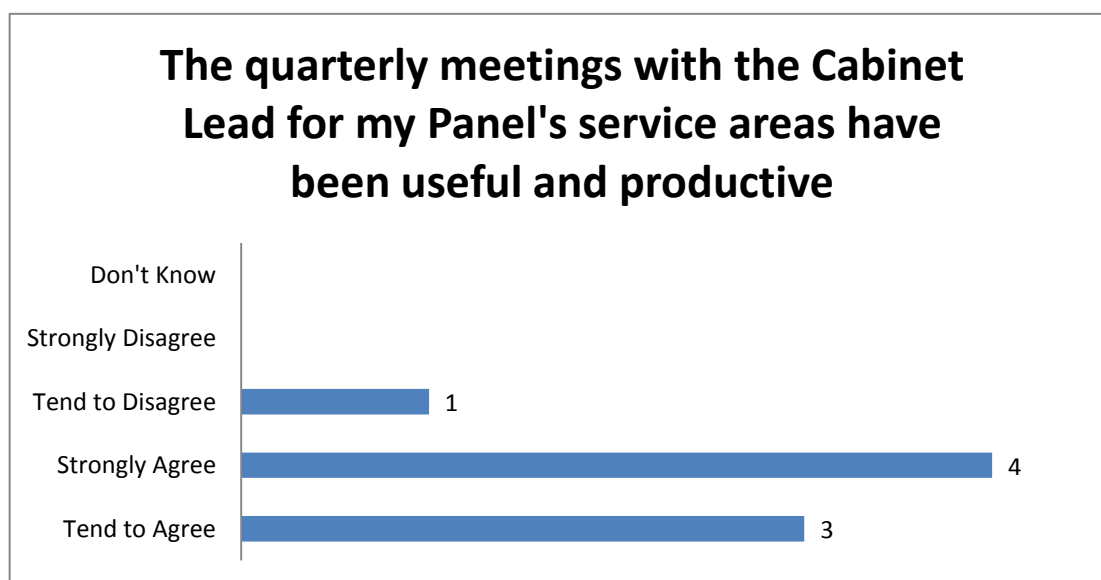
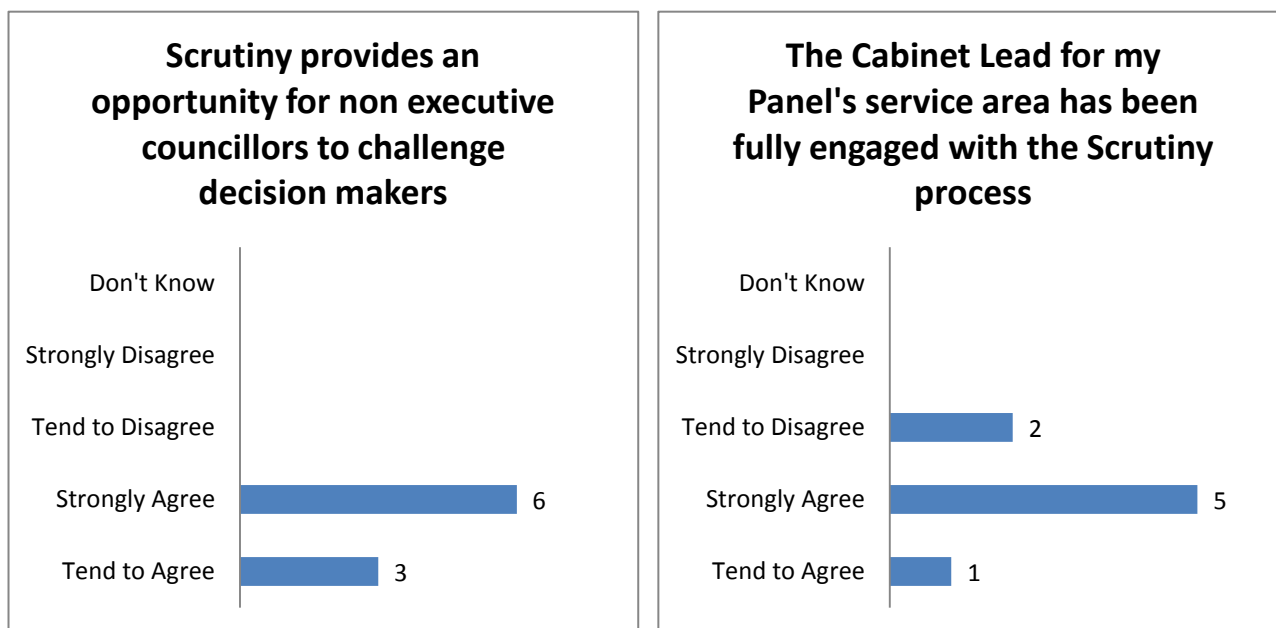


Scrutiny has the officer support it needs to be effective



Scrutiny activities are well planned





It is pleasing to note that the majority of respondents indicate that they either 'strongly agree' or 'tend to agree' with the above statements. 100% of respondents indicated that they 'strongly agree' or 'tend to agree' that they have a good understanding of the work of scrutiny, which is particularly pleasing to note as the Scrutiny Board success criteria for this aspect was 50%. Similar responses were also received for the following statements:

- Non-executive members have good opportunities to participate in scrutiny;
- Scrutiny has the officer support it needs to be effective; and
- Scrutiny provides an opportunity for non-executive councillors to challenge decision makers.

The worst scoring statements were 'scrutiny works in a cross cutting fashion and not restricted departmental silos', 'the Scrutiny Work Programme balances community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance' and 'the Cabinet Lead for

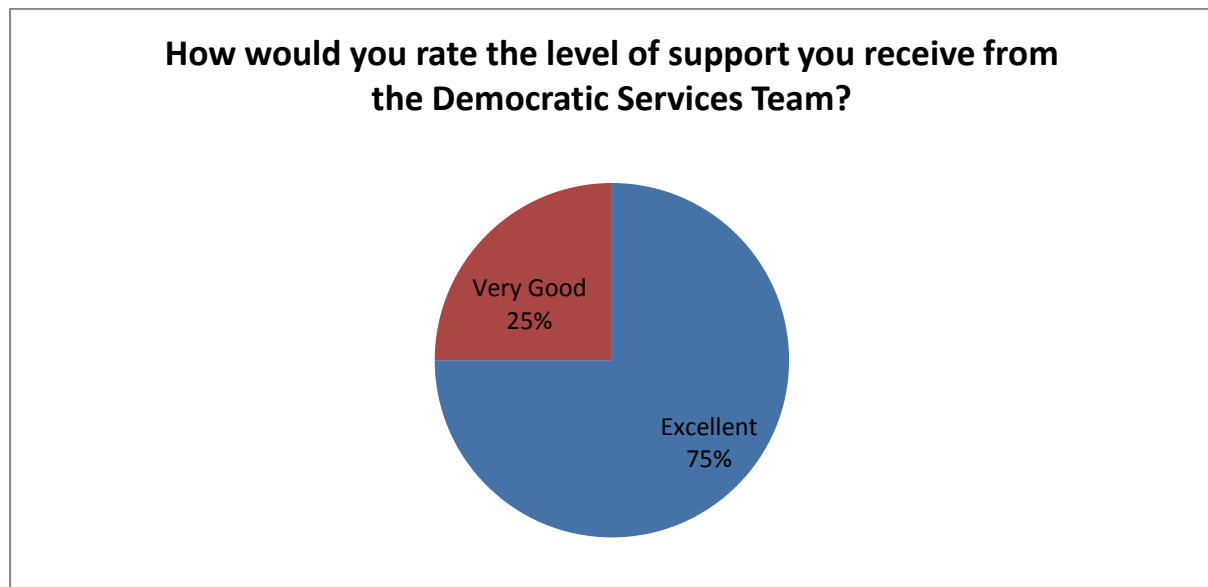
my Panels service area has been fully engaged with the Scrutiny process', with two respondents indicating 'tend to disagree' for each of these statements.

The following comments were received for this question:

<i>I'm still learning</i>
<i>Members do have the opportunity to participate in the process, the Budget Scrutiny and Policy Development panel have had non-panel Members attendance at both scrutinys conducted to date.</i>
<i>I acknowledge that the Scrutiny process is an opportunity to challenge decision makers using evidence based data, but sometimes question if the industry committed to the process results in the appropriate actions/consideration."</i>
<i>Some projects such as the one on Sheltered housing have been useful and productive. Others, such as the Hayling beach huts, have been largely a waste of time because there was already an agreement with Norse which could not be easily changed. Similarly with the panel on Councillor training. There was already an agreement and finance signed off by the Cabinet to go for accreditation which is probably not the best way to go about this. The wisdom of the Panel counted for little. It sometimes feels as if some of the panels have been assembled to keep Councillors busy.</i>

2. Officer Support

How would you rate the level of support you receive from the Democratic Services Team?



It is pleasing to note that all the respondents indicated that the level of support that they received from the Democratic Services Team was either excellent or very good.

The following comments were received under this question:

<i>Democratic Services are always helpful, and provide excellent support, which I appreciate.</i>

All requests for information and clarification are agreed and promptly delivered

I have the utmost respect for all of the team. Quite simply, they make 'us' (collectively) and 'me' (personally) look professional, knowledgeable and organised.

Provided very good support when I was Panel Chairman

Very helpful at all times

Far too much officer time and paper have been spent on some of the reports which must have put severe pressure on Democratic Services

3. Training and Development

How would you assess your training and development needs in relation to scrutiny?



The majority of respondents indicated that they are okay at present, with opinion split on whether training was needed in future and not required at all. One respondents indicated further training was needed.

The following comments were received under this question:

I do think that there might be merit in having specific briefings and insights on topics related to scrutiny subjects as and when they occur. Whether this should be classified as 'training' in the traditional sense or something else, I am unsure. Quite often we engage with Officers, but rarely

DMC - Essential training needs

4. How would you describe scrutiny?

The following comments were received under this question:

"1) Process review by independent persons and data gathering

2) Analysis of process to identify weakness, failures and good practices.

3) Recommendations to improve the process to improve efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of process."

I was extremely disappointed to attend a Panel when the only member of the

<i>Scrutiny Panel present was the lead. Three officers were present, staying after 5pm for a meeting so badly attended.</i>
<i>Keeping an eye on Executive decisions and questioning where it needs to be clarified or re-directed</i>
<i>Works very well</i>
<i>Fact finding opportunities to determine if; strategic decisions are appropriate, current operations (across all spheres of the Council's business) are delivering services in the manner intended/funded and whether processes/procedures are relevant, consistent and facilitate good governance.</i>
<i>Patchy - some good reports but need to focus on key risks and public concerns</i>
<i>Dwell into the subject in quotation and assess if changes are needed ,suggests improvements.</i>
<i>The opportunity for Councillors to examine closely proposed projects, to be well informed about them and to use their influence to make sure that they are the best for the Borough and as well designed as possible. We have considerable expertise and local knowledge between us.</i>

5. In your opinion, what is good about scrutiny?

The following comments were received under this question:

<i>Examination by independent people</i>
<i>Fresh pairs of eyes often sees improvement opportunities not readily apparent to process owners and managers</i>
<i>It keeps things above board and clear</i>
<i>You can ask any questions about any part of the scrutiny you are in</i>
<i>The right of all members to scrutinize 'anything'</i>
<i>Examining issues of the Council work more thoroughly</i>
<i>Officer support</i>
<i>Ensuring that item that is being scrutinised is effective</i>
<i>It SHOULD be to make us well informed and to use our expertise to ensure that projects and policies are the best for the people of Havant</i>

6. In your opinion, what could be better?

The following comments were received under this question:

<i>None</i>
<i>Topic selection e.g. current hot topics, looking across public sector delivery in Havant</i>
<i>A constant review</i>
<i>For policies and projects to be scrutinized at an earlier stage when it is possible to improve them.</i>

7. Do you have any other suggestions for improvement?

The following comments were received under this question:

<i>I have struggled to meet my Panel meetings because of prior personal commitments.</i>
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<i>As members of scrutiny panels are small, can we agree meeting dates by asking all members.</i>
<i>No</i>
<i>I believe it would be beneficial to have a register created that lists all scrutiny topics of the past 5 years, listing the topic, stated aim, findings and recommendations. A follow-up action would be to see how many of the recommendations were actually implemented. It would serve as a reference document. I suspect that the compilation of the document would in some way serve as an audit of the scrutiny process.</i>
<i>Maintain dedicated officer support</i>
<i>React to Quarterly healthcheck</i>
<i>Be open and honest</i>

8. Do you have any suggestions for the Scrutiny Work Programme?

<i>I would like to see a scrutiny of where houses have been built in the borough of Havant for the past 5 years (in which Ward), together with the amount of CIL (where appropriate) received for those properties and where the CIL has been spent/allocated (including the neighbourhood portion).</i>
<i>Officer/Councillor relations. Previously we knew which officers to approach when we needed advice or help, especially with ward problems. Now we are told to go through Customer Services. This does not improve our knowledge and ability to deal with matters in the future and does not give us the opportunity to consult with officers and give them information about the local situation.</i>
<i>What has the role of the Ward Councillor become</i>
<i>Spread more evenly across the members of the Council</i>