

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>Monday, 29 June 2026</b>
<b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee:</b>	<b>No Relevant Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Urgent Decision Procedure Used (If yes, why)</b>	Not applicable
<b>Item Type</b>	Part I
<b>Report Title:</b>	Members Annual Survey Results 2025/26
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
<b>Strategic Leadership Team:</b>	Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Head of Democratic Services

## 1.0 What is this report about?

- 1.1 This report summarises key findings from the Annual Members Survey of Elected and Co-Opted Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Council undertaken during Spring 2026. This Survey replaces the previous Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey, which would also be undertaken on an annual basis.
- 1.2 The Survey sought feedback from all Elected and Co-opted Members on support, engagement and scrutiny arrangements over the 2024-25 Municipal year. The short Survey aimed to help us understand how effective changes made during the year have been, identify what is working well, and highlight any areas where further improvement or training may be needed.
- 1.3 Due to the nature of the Survey, the results were anonymised to allow for responders to be as honest as possible in their reflections. A full breakdown of the results is available in Appendix A.
- 1.4 The responses have been analysed based upon several key themes, aligned to the structure of the Survey, including:
- MemberNet
  - Member Briefing and Development Sessions
  - Member Expos
  - ICT Support and Drop-Ins
  - Engagement
  - Scrutiny

- Overall Experience.

1.6 Findings from this Survey will be used to inform improvement actions for Democratic Services, as included within Appendix B, alongside learning used as intelligence to inform the development of the Member Induction and Development Programme for the 2027 cohort of Members.

## 2.0 What are the Recommendations?

	<b>Recommendations – What and How?</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation – Why?</b>
2.1	T H A T the Committee notes the analysis of the findings as identified within the report, including the detailed findings within Appendix A.	To understand the feedback of Members.
2.2	T H A T the Committee endorses the proposed action plan identifying areas for improvement (Appendix B) to be undertaken by Democratic Services.	To agree improvement actions because of the survey responses provided.

## 3.0 What is the background to this report?

3.1 This report summarises key findings from the Annual Members Survey of Elected and Co-Opted Members of the Vale of Glamorgan Council undertaken during Spring 2026. This Survey replaces the previous Annual Scrutiny Impact Survey, which would also be undertaken on an annual basis and presented to Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group.

3.2 The Survey sought feedback from all Elected and Co-opted Members on support, engagement and scrutiny arrangements over the 2024-25 Municipal year. The short Survey aimed to help us understand how effective changes made during the year have been, identify what is working well, and highlight any areas where further improvement or training may be needed.

3.3 Members were contacted to advised around the Survey as below:

- 3.3.1 Initial E-mail – 13/03/2026
- 3.3.2 MemberNet post – 13/03/2026
- 3.3.3 Democratic Services Newsletter reminder – 25/03/2026
- 3.3.4 Chaser E-mail – 25/03/2026
- 3.3.5 SMS Reminder – 30/03/2026.

3.4 All Councillors and Co-Opted Members were contacted to advise around the Survey, alongside multiple reminder messages, with 26 Councillors and 3 Co-Opted Members completing the Survey by the end of March 2025.

3.5 The Survey sought to understand Members' views on a range of areas which had been further developed during the year including:

- 3.5.1 MemberNet – the Council's MemberNet resource had been developed to a standalone Sharepoint site for Members to support them in their role, including being a central repository for tools and resources. Areas developed during the year include the Scrutiny Hub, regular news articles and transition of the Committee Hub to a cloud-based solution.
- 3.5.2 Member Expos – the Council reintroduced expo events, allowing a space for Officers and Members to discuss upcoming priorities and challenges in a roadshow format with a range of service areas from across the Council.
- 3.5.3 ICT Support and Drop-Ins – alongside the normal Digital Service offering, Democratic Services in conjunction with Digital Services, held drop-in events to allow for Members to have health checks undertaken on their devices, alongside troubleshooting any queries and providing advice and support.
- 3.5.4 Scrutiny – the Council commenced its first year of revised Scrutiny arrangements, including changes to Committee size, structure, remits and ways of working.
- 3.5.5 Member Briefing and Development Sessions – to complement changes to Scrutiny arrangements, a series of thematic monthly briefings aligned to strategic or partnership priorities (linked to the Council's new Corporate Plan, Vale 2030) were delivered alongside a "State of the Nation" briefing.

3.6 Alongside these areas, the Survey also sought to understand views surrounding engagement and Members' overall experience, which would be cross cutting to all of themes identified above.

#### **4.0 What issues are there to be considered?**

##### **MemberNet**

- 4.1 Of the 26 responses, 46% (12) used MemberNet weekly, with 30% (8) using it daily or weekly, with the remaining 23% (6) reporting it was used rarely or never.
- 4.2 When asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being low to 5 being high) around how useful Members found MemberNet for accessing information, the average rating was 3.54 out of 5.
- 4.3 Respondents were asked to consider the news articles which were shared on MemberNet on a semi regular basis. Half of respondents (13) indicated that they read these news articles. A monthly summary newsletter is also shared with Members, alongside key dates and wider updates, and respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being low to 5 being high) on how useful they found this newsletter to be, with the average rating being 3.19 out of 5.

4.4 Members were then provided with a free text space to identify any further functionality they feel would support them in their role. Areas most identified included:

4.4.1 An updated directory of officer contact details including areas of responsibility

4.4.2 Further guides for ICT support.

### **Member Development Sessions**

4.5 Of the 26 respondents, 62% (16) indicated that they attend briefings remotely, with 19% (5) attending in person, 15% (4) watching recordings of the session stored on MemberNet and 1 respondent indicating that they did not engage with the sessions. It is important to note that Member Development Sessions were previously considered by Democratic Services Committee on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 as an area within the report, "Member Development Programme – Phase 4 Progress Update".

4.6 When asked to consider how useful they have found sessions on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being low to 5 being high), the average rating was 3.8 out of 5. Members were then asked to consider how useful they found the sessions, with 48% (12) finding them useful and 44% (11) believing them to be partly useful.

4.7 Members were asked to consider if there were other topics that they would like considered as part of this programme and the most common answers provided included:

4.7.1 Planning

4.7.2 NHS

4.7.3 Support to Carers

4.7.4 Corporate Parenting

4.7.5 ICT Skills.

### **Member Expos**

4.8 Members were then asked if they had attended Member Expo events, which allow a space for Officers and Members to discuss upcoming priorities and challenges in a roadshow format with a range of service areas from across the Council. 73% (19) of respondents identified that they had attended an expo event. Of those unable to attend, 57% (4) were unable to due to commitments outside of their role.

4.9 Of those who attended, when asked to consider how valuable they found the event on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being low to 5 being high), the average rating was 3.84 out of 5. Members were then asked to identify potential improvements, and these can be summarised as:

4.9.1 Frequency of event

4.9.2 Format of session to maximise time with officers to discuss Ward issues.

### **ICT Support**

4.10 31% (8) responded identified that they had attended the ICT drop-in sessions arranged in collaboration with Digital Services.

4.11 Of those who attended, when asked to consider how satisfied they were on support provided on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being low to 5 being high), the average rating was 4.75 out of 5.

4.12 When seeking to understand why Members had not engaged with ICT drop-ins, this was due to:

- 4.12.1 39% (7) not requiring ICT support
- 4.12.2 33% (6) indicating the timings were inconvenient
- 4.12.3 6% (1) not aware they were available
- 4.12.4 22% (4) indicating there were other reasons not disclosed.

4.13 Members were asked to identify if there were any areas which would further benefit from ICT support to which they identified:

- 4.13.1 Navigating MemberNet
- 4.13.2 How to access applications using personal devices.

## **Engagement**

4.14 Members were asked to share if they felt they had any barriers in engaging with support channels, with 42% (11) indicating that they had barriers. Examples of barriers shared included around equipment and the timing and location of meetings alongside individual personal circumstances.

4.15 They were further asked to consider how satisfied they were with the level of well-being support provided in their role and responded as below:

- 4.15.1 Very satisfied – 38% (10)
- 4.15.2 Satisfied – 27% (7)
- 4.15.3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied – 12% (3)
- 4.15.4 Dissatisfied – 15% (4)
- 4.15.5 Very dissatisfied – 8% (2).

## **Scrutiny**

4.16 Members were asked to reflect upon to what extent they agreed with the statement “Scrutiny arrangements in the Council have a positive impact on decision-making and service improvement”, with the results as below:

- 4.16.1 Strongly agree – 8% (2)
- 4.16.2 Agree – 31% (8)
- 4.16.3 Neither agree nor disagree – 27% (7)
- 4.16.4 Disagree – 23% (6)
- 4.16.5 Strong disagree – 12% (3).

4.17 They were further asked to reflect upon to what extent they agreed with the statement “I have sufficient access to the information I need to undertake my role as a Scrutiny Member”, with the results as below:

- 4.16.1 Strongly agree – 31% (8)
- 4.16.2 Agree – 35% (9)
- 4.16.3 Neither agree nor disagree – 27% (7)
- 4.16.4 Disagree – 4% (1)
- 4.16.5 Strong disagree – 4% (1).

4.18 Members were then invited to provide comments as to how they feel Scrutiny could be more effective in the future, and shared comments such as:

4.18.1 In-person meetings

4.18.2 Consideration of the role of presentations and how information is presented.

4.19 These comments have been noted in the context of the Audit Wales review of Scrutiny arrangements undertaken in March 2026, of which Members were able to provide their views and feedback, with learning from this Survey incorporated into any subsequent action plan.

## **General Feedback**

4.20 Members were asked on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being low to 5 being high) about how supported they felt in their role, with the average score being 3.92 out of 5. The ability to comment was provided and key themes included:

4.20.1 Improving communication channels and officer availability to support Members more effectively

4.20.2 Increasing training

4.20.3 Enhanced ICT support.

## **Co-opted Member Survey**

4.21 A similar survey was also sent to Co-opted Members to understand their experiences as a Member. Unfortunately, due to the low volume of respondents (3), the information is not statistically valid to inform any immediate improvement planning.

4.22 In order to better understand the experiences of these Members, the Head of Democratic Services is arranging one on one conversations inviting these Members to provide views surrounding their support and experiences, which will then be analysed thematically.

## **5.0 How has evidence been used to inform the report, including the views of others?**

5.1 The Survey findings included within the report representative a range of qualitative and quantitative findings from Elected Members. Due to this being a local choice function, no comparative benchmarking data is available.

## **6.0 What are the next steps if the recommendations are approved?**

6.1 If the recommendations are agreed, then Democratic Services will seek to implement the improvement activities identified in Appendix B over the forthcoming Municipal year, with the next iteration of the Survey run in Spring 2027 and shared with the Committee at their July 2027 meeting (and also informing the Member Induction Programme which will be happening concurrently).

## **7.0 How does this report support Vale 2030 and Reshaping?**

7.1 The core ethos of this Survey is around improving our support for Members to undertake their role effectively, a key strand of ensuring that we are "Being the Best Council We Can Be."

## **8.0 How does this demonstrate the Five Ways of Working?**

8.1 The analysis presented has involved a collaboration of Members to provide their views surrounding their current experiences and seeks to prevent future challenges in ways of working and improving the Democratic function in the longer term. The report also considers how it integrates with other areas of works.

## **Resources**

### **9.0 Finance**

9.1 There are no finance implications because of this report.

### **10.0 Workforce**

10.1 There are no workforce implications because of this report.

### **11.0 Legal and Equalities**

11.1 **Does an Equalities Impact Assessment need to be completed? If not, why?** An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed as this is analysis of internal findings. As areas for improvement are further identified, individual workstreams will be assessed to consider if an impact assessment is required.

11.2 Member Training and development is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011.

11.3 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places new duties on Local Government in relation to Member knowledge and development.

11.4 A determination within the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru's 2026-2027 Annual Report states that " Each authority, through its Democratic Services Committee or other appropriate committee, must ensure that all its elected members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively".

### **12.0 Key Contacts**

**12.1 Who are the primary officers to contact with any comments and/or queries on the report?**

Lead Officer: James Langridge-Thomas, Operational Manager (and Statutory Head of) Democratic Services <a href="mailto:jangridge-thomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk">jangridge-thomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk</a> 01446709457	Democratic Services Officer James Langridge-Thomas, Operational Manager (and Statutory Head of) Democratic Services <a href="mailto:jangridge-thomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk">jangridge-thomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk</a> 01446709457
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## **Appendix**

Appendix A – Result findings from Annual Member Survey

Appendix B – Improvement actions identified from Annual Member Survey

## **Background Documents**

[Reshaping Scrutiny](#), Cabinet, Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025

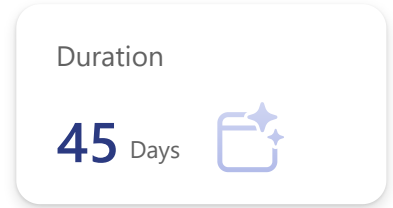
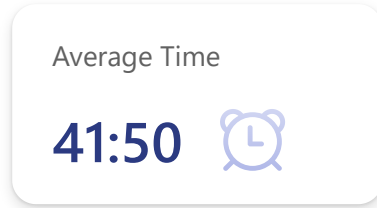
[Health, Safety and Well-being for Councillors](#), Democratic Services Committee, Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025

[21<sup>st</sup> Century Democratic Services](#), Democratic Services Committee, Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025

[Member Development Programme – Phase 4 Progress Report](#), Democratic Services Committee, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026

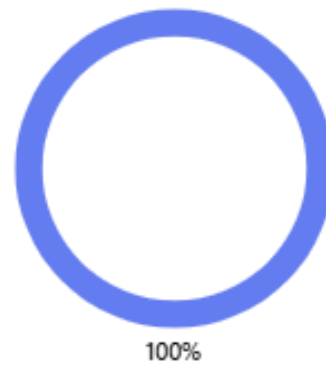
## Responses Overview

Closed



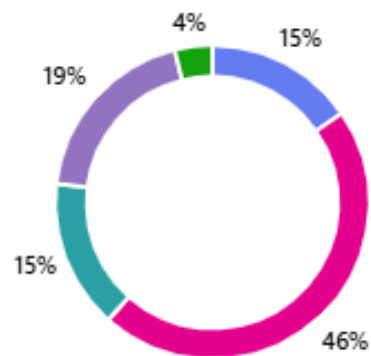
1. What is your role?

- Elected Member 26
- Co-opted Member 0



2. How frequently do you use MemberNet?

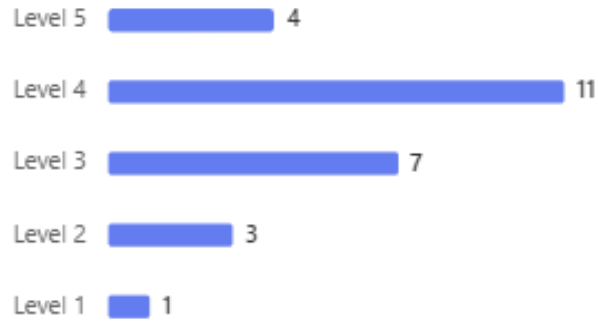
- Daily 4
- Weekly 12
- Monthly 4
- Rarely 5
- Never 1



3. How useful do you find MemberNet for accessing information?

# 3.54

Average Rating



4. Do you read MemberNet news articles?

- Yes 13
- No 13



5. How useful do you find the monthly Democratic Services Newsletter?

# 3.19

Average Rating



6. Is there any information or functionality you feel is missing from MemberNet?

## 16

Responses

Latest Responses

"no"



3 respondents (19%) answered officers for this question.



### 7. How do you engage with Member Briefings and Development Sessions?



### 8. How useful have you found Member Briefings and Development Sessions?



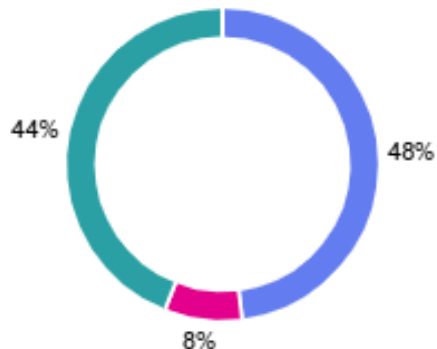
### 9. Why don't you engage with these sessions?

**1**  
Responses

Latest Responses  
...

10. Are the topics relevant to your needs?

● Yes	12
● No	2
● Partly	11



11. What topics would you like included in future sessions?

13 Responses

Latest Responses

"None"

...

2 respondents (17%) answered planning for this question.

Update

Corporate Parenting    Cllr - weekly    good to put names

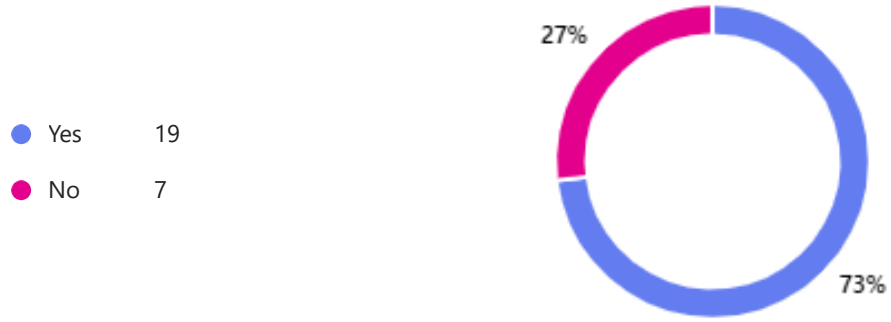
use the use    planning would also be helpful    engage both online

example support    social worker    **planning**    worker involvement    T&F findings

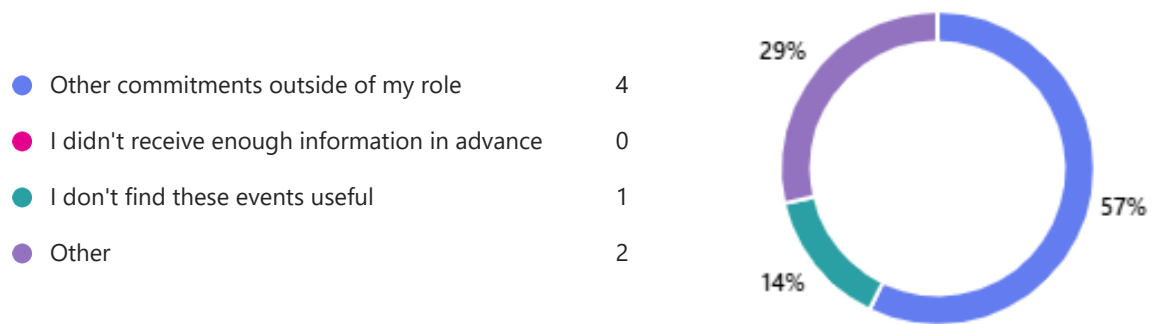
cabinet decisions    Parenting for members    worker referral    team/department    ICT sessions

Bad information    limited number    finish on the subject    support for resident

### 12. Have you attended any Member Expos?



### 13. Why didn't you attend?



14. How valuable did you find the event?

# 3.84

Average Rating



15. How could the Expo be improved?

# 10

Responses

Latest Responses

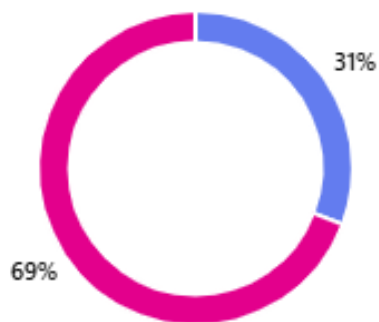


3 respondents (30%) answered officers for this question.



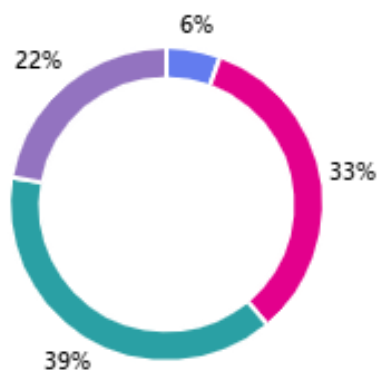
### 16. Did you attend the ICT drop-in session?

- Yes 8
- No 18



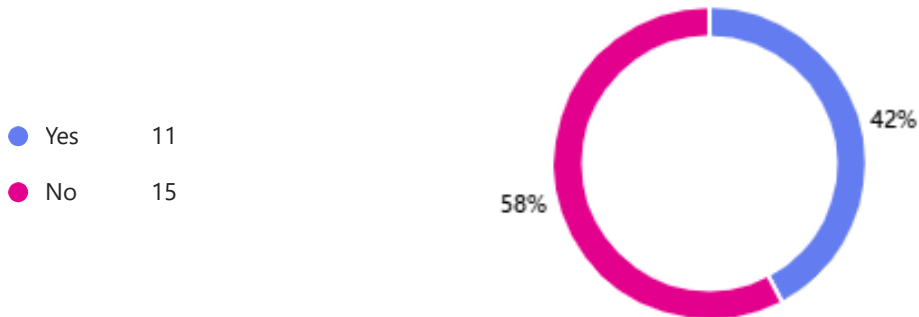
### 17. Why didn't you attend?

- I wasn't aware they were available 1
- The timings weren't convenient 6
- I haven't needed ICT support 7
- Other 4





20. Are there any barriers that make it harder for you to engage in Member activities or support channels?



21. What barriers prevent you from engaging in Member activities and support channels?

11 Responses

Latest Responses

"Very busy life, Very busy Ward, if I need info I research"

"Lengthy evening meetings until 2100hrs or later, leaving ... "

...

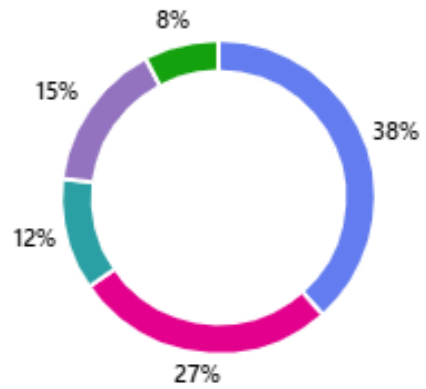
4 respondents (40%) answered Time for this question. Update

Word cloud content:

- easily found
- evening meetings
- Online meetings
- meal or R&R
- proper scrutinySize
- Private number
- not always possible
- Time**
- no time
- Preparation time
- amount of Reading
- phone
- Remote mtgs3
- memorable and rooms
- evening meal
- certain room
- Childcare and my job
- computer screen
- difficult
- scrutinySize of so many Agendas

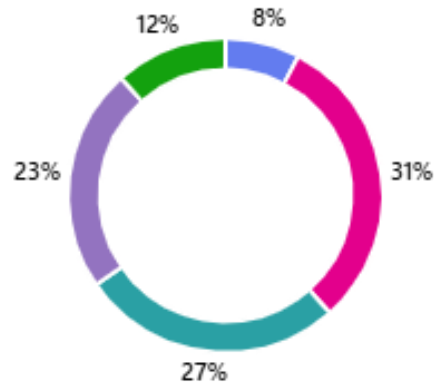
22. How satisfied are you with the level of wellbeing support provided to you in your role?

● Very satisfied	10
● Satisfied	7
● Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
● Dissatisfied	4
● Very dissatisfied	2



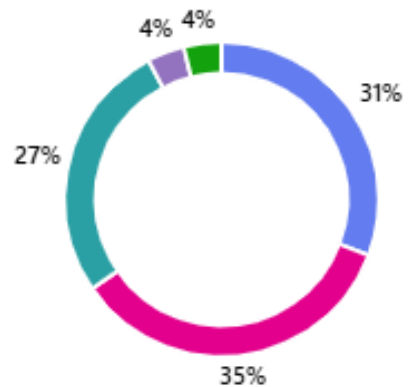
23. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Scrutiny arrangements in the Council have a positive impact on decision-making and service improvement."

● Strongly agree	2
● Agree	8
● Neither agree or disagree	7
● Disagree	6
● Strongly disagree	3



24. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I have sufficient access to the information I need to undertake my role as a Scrutiny Member."

● Strongly agree	8
● Agree	9
● Neither agree or disagree	7
● Disagree	1
● Strongly disagree	1



### 25. How do you think Scrutiny could be more effective?

26  
Responses

Latest Responses

"Stop the waffle"

"I am not a member of a Scrutiny Committee"

"Base on the fomate of Westminster Select Committes, whic..."

...

11 respondents (46%) answered scrutiny for this question.

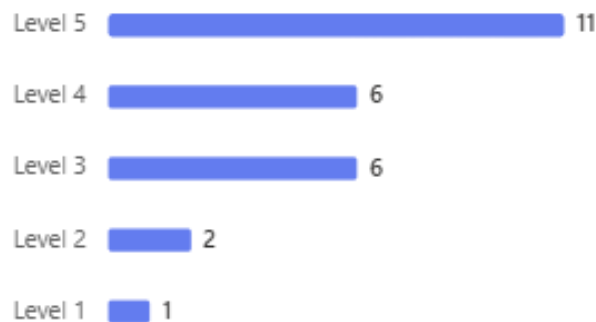
Update



### 26. Overall, how satisfied are you with the support you receive as an Elected/Co-opted Member?

3.92

Average Rating



27. What one thing would make the biggest positive difference to your experience?

26  
Responses

Latest Responses

"Nothing said would be acceptable"

"I have no comment to make"

"Improved information sharing from across the Council an... "

...

7 respondents (29%) answered officers for this question.

Update



28. Do you have any further comments?

15  
Responses

Latest Responses

"None"

"I have entered a score for Scrutiny as the survey does not... "

"no"

...

2 respondents (15%) answered officers for this question.

Update



## Appendix B – Action Plan

Theme	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Implementation Date
MemberNet	Undertake awareness campaign making Members aware of how they can access MemberNet via mobile devices	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer – Digital Specialist	September 2026
MemberNet	Review content and format of monthly newsletter	Operational Manager – Democratic Services	August 2026
MemberNet	Review content on MemberNet surrounding practical support for ICT processes (including linking to Halo platform)	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer – Digital Specialist	October 2026
MemberNet	Promote currently available directory of contact details (in line with Member-Officer protocol) to Members	Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	November 2026
Member Briefings	Consider survey findings as evidence base when designing induction and development programme for 2027 cohort of Members	Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	November 2026
Member Briefings	Review proposed topics for 2026/27 against topic lists provided by Members and schedule accordingly.	Operational Manager – Democratic Services	August 2026
Member Expo	Review format and frequency of future expos to maximise effectiveness for stakeholders involved	Operational Manager – Democratic Services	September 2026
ICT	Raise awareness of ICT drop in offerings to Members	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer – Digital Specialist	September 2026
Engagement	Raise awareness of Well-being support offered to Members	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer – Digital Specialist	August 2026