

## Appendix 2

	Very useful	Fairly useful	Neutral	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Total replies
Individual access to Mayor & executive members	2	2	3	2	2	10
Questions at Executive Board	2	1	4	2	-	9
Questions on reports at Council meeting	2	1	3	4	-	9
Formal questions at Council meeting	4	1	2	2		9
Seminars & presentations	3	3	1	2	1	10
Presentations to political groups	3	1	2	2	1	10
Overview & Scrutiny – CPP, performance clinics, etc	3	3	2			8
Overview & Scrutiny – in depth investigations	3	2	2		1	8
Overview & Scrutiny – call-in	2		2	1	3	8
Totals	24	14	21	15	8	

### COMMENTS

- scrutiny gives non-executive members a real contribution to the corporate decision process
  - the general public could be more closely involved – e.g. details of meetings to be advertised in the local press
  - the present system working well – is transparent
  - input by non-executive members will always be determined by interest, time & availability
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- are any recommendations from in depth investigations acted on?
  - executive members and officers decide ‘what will be, will be’.
  - there should be a monthly open debate on preferred subjects

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- no knowledge of call-in procedure
  - how can I be informed of what is called in for scrutiny?
  - should be a members' seminar on scrutiny process, especially call-in
  - weekly/monthly question/answer session with executive members
  - executive members should have voicemail or answerphone to improve access
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- scrutiny panels are only as strong as their chairs
  - scrutiny panels should use the University & LGIU as expert witnesses
  - area committees for scrutiny
  - backbench 'advisory' groups for executive members
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- questions in council are not answered properly – too much heckling
  - scrutiny recommendations to executive should then be applied
  - should return to the 'old system' – i.e. the committee system
  - the executive system is totally undemocratic; doesn't allow for democratic processes in decision making
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- it is difficult to get access to the mayor
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- council meetings are overwhelmingly dominated by the mayor and executive members saying what is already written in their reports
- council members are effectively intimidated into making minimal contributions in the time left available
- mayoral briefings to groups are very open, frank and useful
- should be a two-day notice question on items not in an executive member's report
- should allow wider questioning while avoiding the unfairness of on-the-spot questions on obscure matters

- one-stop-shop – no two-way communication – it's like feeding a black hole – can't we get a reply through lotus notes saying who is dealing with the problem and what the service response is?
  - the computer form is very tiresome to complete when it is the councillor who is originating the complaint
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- there is very little inclusion for members – the scrutiny process needs more resources put in to make it work effectively
  - the council meeting is a farce – there is no opportunity for political groups to alter executive or mayoral decisions
  - mayor and executive members should be more accountable to council members
  - there should be area committees with members in full control, who would decide for their areas what resources should be spent – the executive should accept the decisions of the area committees unless they did not support the overall strategy for Middlesbrough
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- back benchers should have the opportunity for greater input
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