

(xiv) Mr A Jarvie

To the Leader of the Council,

“You have increasingly accused my efforts of scrutinising this Council at such a critical time, when Councillors feel they have less and less of a say about how this Council operates, as being “political statements”. Most recently, without any hint of irony, at the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

You stated this after I highlighted a report last month which showed 50% of Members of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee did not fully believe that the Council was open to scrutiny and only 40% believed that scrutiny is actively encouraged.

Is your dismissal of these concerning statistics from our own Audit and Scrutiny Committee as a “political statement” not symptomatic of the issue that this Council is not open to scrutiny?”

Thank you for the opportunity to further clarify my comments at the Audit & Scrutiny Committee. The attendance of non-Members at Committee is welcomed, however it is of concern to me given how positive the report was that you focused on negativity. Members of the Committee’s responses to the survey included, for example, 90% saying to a large or great extent Councillors work constructively together on the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

I do not agree with your interpretation of the results. Members were asked the extent to which they felt the Council is open to scrutiny with 50% saying they felt the Council was open to a large or great extent and a further 20% to a moderate extent. Therefore 7 Members (70%) felt the Council was open to scrutiny to at least a moderate extent with no one having a view it was not open to scrutiny.

Similarly, in relation to scrutiny being encouraged, 40% believed it was encouraged to a large or great extent with a further 40% feeling scrutiny was encouraged to a moderate extent. Therefore 8 Members (80%) felt that scrutiny was encouraged to at least a moderate extent with a further 20% to a small extent and no one having a view it was not encouraged.