PARliament Engagement

Applying Participatory Action Research & creative

approaches to the committee scrutiny process

within the Scottish Parliament

Dr Cara Broadley
Ailsa Burn-Murdoch
Laura Black

PARliament Engagement

Applying Participatory Action Research & creative approaches to the committee scrutiny process within the Scottish Parliament

This report is the result of a SPICe Academic Fellowship in which Dr Cara Broadley, Research Fellow at the School of Innovation and Technology at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA), explored how to gather evidence in diverse and creative formats from participative and deliberative activities, and effectively build this into the body of evidence upon which Parliamentary Committees base their scrutiny and use to inform their recommendations to the Scottish Government.

The research has been carried out in partnership with the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), the Participation and Communities Team (PACT), the Parliament Communications Office (PCO), and Clerking Teams in the Committee Office. We would like to thank all participants from the Scottish Parliament for their time and contributions to the research.

The Fellowship was supervised by Ailsa Burn-Murdoch (SPICe) and Laura Black (PACT), who provided guidance and oversight throughout the research process. This marks SPICe's first fellowship in collaboration with GSA, highlighting new opportunities for design-led research to contribute to parliamentary scrutiny and evidence gathering beyond the social sciences.

In addition to putting forward a set of co-design concepts for tools to enhance committee scrutiny, the report sets out a roadmap and underpinning principles to disseminate and embed creative approaches in the work of the Scottish Parliament in session 7 (2026-2031).

This briefing has been drafted independently of the Scottish Parliament and with the aim of showcasing the visual nature of the project. Because of this, some users may have difficulty accessing the content. If you require a different format (for example text only), please contact c.broadley@gsa.ac.uk

April 2025.

SCHOOL OF
INNOVATION
AND TECHNOLOGY
THE GLASGOW
SCHOOL OF ART

Dr Cara Broadley
Ailsa Burn-Murdoch
Laura Black

Contents

List of Figures

Glossary of Terms

Clerking:
Clerks support Parliamentary business, both in the Chamber and in committees. Each committee has a team of clerks who provide support and procedural advice, liaise with witnesses, help committees to plan and manage their work programmes, and coordinate specialist support on research, participation and communications from other teams.

Co-design:
Co-design is a specific form of participatory design that emphasises equal collaboration between designers, users, and stakeholders throughout the design process. It goes beyond consultation by integrating participants as active contributors in defining problems, generating ideas, and shaping solutions. Co-design is particularly valuable in complex policy and service challenges, where diverse perspectives are needed to develop innovative, inclusive, and contextually relevant solutions.

Ethnographic Shadowing:
A qualitative research method rooted in ethnography, which is the study of people and cultures through immersive observation in real-world settings. Ethnographic shadowing involves following individuals to understand routines, decision-making, and interpersonal dynamics in context.

PACT:
The Participation and Communities Team (PACT) provides participation expertise to embed the involvement and impact of more diverse and missing voices in the life and work of the Parliament. It does so by building relationships and providing specialist and trauma-informed support. In a scrutiny context, Participation Specialists connect committees with the communities who are impacted by policy through activities like engagement events, lived experience panels, and deliberative activities such as people's panels.

Committee:
In the Scottish Parliament, a committee is a group of Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) responsible for examining specific policy areas, scrutinising government actions, and reviewing legislation. Committees play a central role in gathering evidence, engaging with experts and the public, and making recommendations to improve governance. They undertake inquiries, consider legislation at different stages, and hold the Scottish Government to account. Committees operate independently of government and are a key mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability in policymaking.

Parliamentary Scrutiny:
Parliamentary scrutiny in the Scottish Parliament refers to the processes through which MSPs examine the actions, decisions, and policies of the Scottish Government and other public bodies. This scrutiny is primarily carried out by parliamentary committees, which gather evidence from ministers, officials, experts, and the public to assess the effectiveness, impact, and implementation of legislation and policy. Scrutiny aims to enhance democratic accountability, improve decision-making, and ensure that policies serve the public interest effectively.

Parliamentary Session:
A 'session' described a term of Parliament and runs from when a new parliament is formed after an election, until that parliament is dissolved in advance of the next session. Sessions of the Scottish Parliament run for a fixed 5-year term, and the next session, Session 7, will begin after the election in May 2026.

Participatory Action Research (PAR):
Participatory Action Research is a collaborative approach to research that involves participants – such as community members, practitioners, or stakeholders – as active partners in the process. Instead of treating participants as research subjects, PAR engages them as co-researchers in identifying issues, generating insights, and developing solutions together. It places strong emphasis on people's experiences and the specific contexts they work in. PAR is iterative, reflective, and focused on action, aiming to bring about meaningful change and improve real-world practices.

Participatory Design:
Participatory design is a design approach that involves end users, stakeholders, and affected communities in the design process to ensure that solutions reflect their needs, experiences, and perspectives. Originating from Scandinavian cooperative design traditions, it emphasises collaboration, shared decision-making, and iterative development. It is widely used in public sector innovation, technology development, and service design to create more inclusive and person-centred outcomes.

PCO:
The Parliamentary Communications Office (PCO) promotes the work of the Parliament. This includes managing the Parliament's website and social media channels and liaising with the media. Communications Managers support committees by developing communications plans and creating content to share committee work and opportunities to get involved.

SPICe:
The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) provides impartial and timely research and information to support MSPs in their roles, both directly and through committees. Subject researchers support committees by providing research briefings, advice, and analysis of evidence provided to the committee.

Executive Summary

This report presents findings from the PARliament Engagement research project, undertaken through a SPICe academic fellowship to explore how creative, participatory, and visual approaches can enhance public involvement in parliamentary scrutiny.

The Scottish Parliament has committed to enhancing its inclusion of citizen voices by embedding participatory approaches within its committee inquiry process. These inquiries play a critical role in the scrutiny of legislation and governance, serving as fact-finding, deliberative, and reporting mechanisms on Scottish Government policy and legislation. However, the time and resources available for inquiries varies significantly, affecting the nature and scope of evidence gathering.

Traditionally, evidence has been collected through 'calls for views' and oral evidence during formal committee meetings, primarily engaging expert witnesses and key stakeholders. While effective, this approach often privileges established voices, limiting the representation of diverse lived experiences.

Recognising these limitations, the Parliament has been expanding its expertise in participatory and deliberative approaches. A dedicated team now facilitates in-person and online engagements, broadening access to parliamentary scrutiny. While this has enabled more individuals and communities to contribute to policy discussions, challenges remain in capturing and integrating evidence from these engagements into formal briefings and reports. The traditional hierarchy of evidence – where formal, oral evidence is often prioritised – persists, as noted by the 2017 Commission on Parliamentary Reform.

PARliament Engagement sought to address these challenges by investigating how creative, participatory, and visual approaches can stimulate and re-present lived experiences and deliberative dialogue as robust forms of evidence for scrutiny.

Research Methodology, Analysis, and Findings

The research was framed by Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a flexible and inclusive methodological framework that foregrounds contextual issues and lived experience. In collaboration with parliamentary staff supporting committee inquiries, iterative cycles of qualitative data collection were undertaken, including ethnographic shadowing and observational drawing to understand how scrutiny is enacted and how evidence is gathered and used; semi-structured interviews to identify challenges and opportunities in scrutiny processes, and co-design workshops to develop prototype tools that enhance participatory scrutiny.

Thematic analysis was used throughout the project – shaping ongoing actions and reflections, as well as drawing key insights about the committee scrutiny process. This highlighted key scrutiny challenges and opportunities. The findings of this report suggest that the Scottish Parliament should:

• Strengthen communication with witnesses to ensure evidence is effectively shared and understood.

• Enhance inclusive and equitable public engagement to diversify the voices contributing to policy discussions.

• Align creative approaches with the Parliament's core values of transparency, accountability, and participation to strengthen decision-making and outcomes.

• Embed design-led innovation within and across committees to foster institutional learning.

Research Outcomes

The final phase of the project focused on piloting and a co-designed prototype within a specific programme of work, co-creating a roadmap proposing the phased delivery of tools to support new ways of working towards Session 7 of the Parliament, and defining principles for embedding creative approaches in committee scrutiny.

The principles developed through this research emphasise:

• **Accessibility and Inclusion** – Ensuring engagement techniques accommodate diverse voices and needs.

• **Transparency and Legitimacy** – Strengthening trust in scrutiny processes by clearly demonstrating how evidence informs decision-making.

• **Creative Approaches** – Using visual and participatory tools to broaden and deepen engagement.

• **Iterative and Reflective Practices** – Embedding continuous learning to refine scrutiny approaches over time.

The research provides a foundation for embedding creative approaches into parliamentary scrutiny, offering pathways to enhance democratic engagement, strengthen evidence use, and foster a more inclusive legislative process.

PARliament Engagement:

Applying Participatory Action Research & creative approaches to the committee scrutiny process within the Scottish Parliament

Research Context

Practices, processes, and perceptions of evidence within Parliament.

People's Panel – deliberative democracy for public participation

Contributing to field of design and policy and governance.

Research Focus

How can creative approaches contribute to building parliamentary scrutiny processes that are more inclusive of diverse perspectives and forms of evidence?

Participatory Action Research Methodology

Ethnographic Shadowing   Co-Design Workshops

Semi-Structured Interviews

Thematic Analysis

13 Participants: SPICe | PCO | Clerking | PACT

Thematic Findings

Barriers to Participation and Engagement

Tensions in Evidence Gathering and Use

Opportunities for Creative Approaches

Embedding Innovation in Scrutiny Processes

Research Outcomes

A co-created roadmap to develop and deliver co-designed tools to enhance scrutiny.

10 Principles to support new ways of working across Parliament.

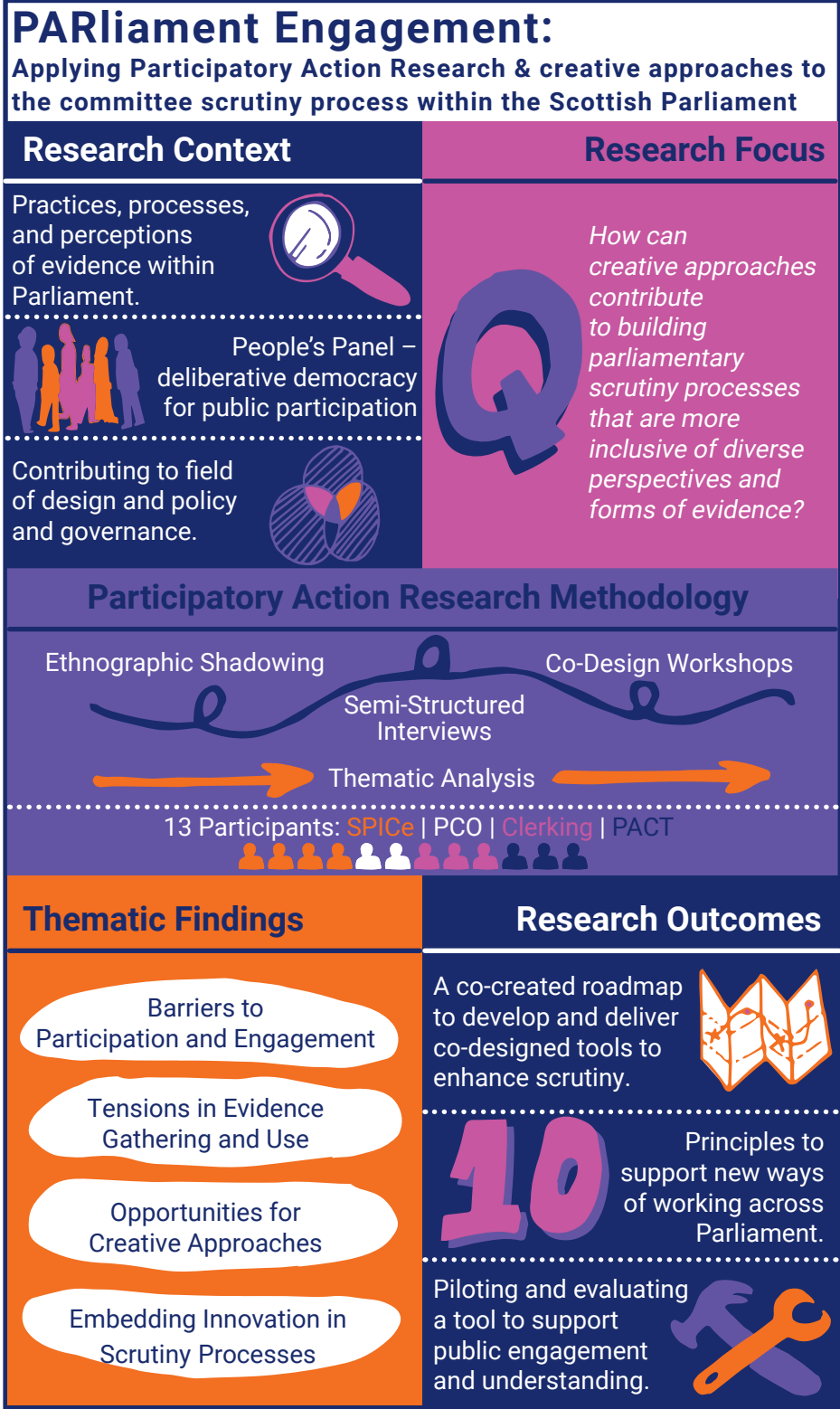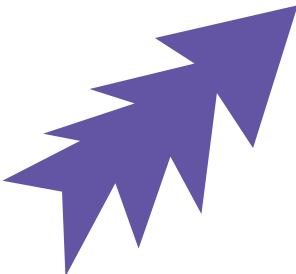Piloting and evaluating a tool to support public engagement and understanding.

Figure 1. *PARliament Engagement Research Summary* (diagram). 2025. Cara Broadley.

Research Context & Introduction

The Scottish Parliament, like most legislatures, uses an evidence-gathering approach within scrutiny based on two traditional forms of evidence – written submissions, and oral evidence taken at public meetings (and captured in writing within the Official Report). The growing use of participatory and engagement-based methods within the Scottish Parliament scrutiny processes has created a unique challenge. How best to capture the evidence gathered during engagement processes and integrate this into scrutiny in an engaging manner which sees it used alongside 'traditional' evidence on an equal footing? This was the question that SPICe and PACT sought to address in scoping this project.

Challenges and Opportunities for Parliamentary Scrutiny

The Committee Office (Clerks) are most familiar with written and oral evidence. Most inquiries follow a linear pattern – written evidence is gathered, summarised by SPICe and used to inform witness selection and questioning for oral evidence sessions, and then oral evidence often forms the bulk of committee reports. Although anonymised summary notes of engagement sessions are used, these are often only lightly reflected in Committee reports, and the impact of participation on Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), which can be significant, is challenging to reflect.

The exception to this is the deliberative People's Panel process which the Parliament hopes to embed in the next Parliamentary session. This involves the development of a report and recommendations to be submitted to the commissioning committee, with a commitment for that committee to respond. Workshops, focus groups, lived experience panels and smaller deliberative sessions, however, are not subject to such rigorous reporting. Reporting, in all cases, focuses on verbal communication, so views and experience of participants can only be captured based on what they articulate.

The aspiration for this project was that by using PAR, creative solutions could be found to capturing evidence from participation and engagement activities, including through non-verbal means. Solutions might be suggested on how to build the evidence from these activities into scrutiny and communicating this in an engaging and effective way. The expectations of what this might look like were open – it could have become a tool or method, a template or creative way of recording views, a way of exploring and summarising the evidence, or a skillset to foster within the parliamentary service.

Current Participatory Practice at the Scottish Parliament

The creation of the Participation and Communities Team (following the recommendations of the Commission on Parliamentary Reform) was a recognition of the need for the Parliament to enhance its community reach and participatory practice. Over the past five years PACT has been developing its capacity to deliver a range of innovative participatory methods, taking a community development approach to ensuring it reaches seldom heard voices.

In 2022 and 2023 the Parliament delivered two "Third Sector in the Parliament" conferences. Over the past year PACT has managed a series of visits across the eight regions of Scotland celebrating 25 years of the Parliament, bringing community members and organisations together with the Presiding Officer, to explore local issues and share thoughts on how communities currently connect and understand how the Parliament works.

In the run up to Session 7 of the Parliament PACT's piloting and testing of practice will be consolidated into a Communities Strategy incorporating learning and innovation. Separately, the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee will put forward a Blueprint for Embedding Deliberative Democracy. All of this will contribute to a revised Public Engagement Strategy, and PACT's consideration of how it addresses democratic wellbeing in what and how it delivers committee support work and designing a delivery framework with the processes necessary to consistently improve PACT's reach and capacity. This project explores new approaches to engagement,

evidence creation, and scrutiny within the Scottish Parliament, with a particular focus on the role of creative approaches in shaping scrutiny processes.

Design-led Participation in Policy Creation and Scrutiny

Public sector scrutiny plays a crucial role in democratic governance, shaping how evidence is gathered, interpreted, and acted upon in decision-making processes. However, scrutiny mechanisms often rely on traditional methods of engagement and evidence synthesis that may not fully capture the complexity of lived experiences or encourage equitable, representative, and consequential participation (Geddes, 2023). This project responds to these challenges by exploring new approaches to engagement, evidence creation, and scrutiny within the Scottish Parliament.

While initially focused on creative ways to capture lived experience in scrutiny, the research evolved to address a more fundamental challenge: enabling committees and their support teams comprising SPICe, PACT, PCO, and Clerking to collaboratively, critically, and creatively reflect on how each specific inquiry is designed and delivered. As discussed in this report, this shift reflects participants' reflection and recognition that crucial groundwork is required to address this broad aim. Mutual understandings of engagement and participation across teams and collaborative inquiry framing are central to addressing barriers to public access and involvement in scrutiny, ultimately, to ensuring that the resulting evidence better represents the experiences and needs of diverse communities.

The project aligns with a body of research at the nexus of design and policy studies (Kimbell et al. 2023; 2022; Whicher 2020; Bason, 2017), particularly concerning design-led approaches to public governance and the potential of design as a mediating practice between citizens, policymakers, and institutions (Vaz, Koria, and Prendeville, 2022; Kimbell and Bailey, 2017). In examining how scrutiny processes might be made more reflexive, inclusive, and adaptive, the research builds on existing research on participatory design practices (Broadley and Dixon, 2022) to test how visual and creative

approaches might enhance accessibility, transparency, and engagement in political institutions. The Scottish Parliament's ambition to strengthen public engagement in scrutiny processes provides a critical opportunity to test these ideas in practice.

Research Aim, Question, and Objectives

Through a participatory, cross-service approach, this research engages researchers, participation specialists, communications managers, and committee clerks to critically examine how scrutiny processes could be more responsive, inclusive, and impactful. The PARliament Engagement project seeks to build on and complement ongoing efforts by addressing the central research question:

How can creative approaches contribute to parliamentary scrutiny processes that are more inclusive of diverse perspectives and forms of evidence?

This is explored through the following objectives:

1. Mapping current scrutiny practices – Understanding how committees and their support teams gather and use evidence within scrutiny, including identifying insights concerning public engagement, incorporating lived experience, and innovative approaches to handling evidence.

2. Investigating opportunities for creative approaches – Exploring how visual and participatory methods can enable committees and their support teams to address scrutiny challenges.

3. Co-designing and testing prototype tools – Developing approaches that enable committees to design and deliver scrutiny in ways that enhance accessibility, inclusivity, and legitimacy.

4. Articulating principles and a roadmap – Outlining pathways for embedding creative approaches into scrutiny processes while aligning with the Parliament's commitments to transparency, accountability, and participation.

By addressing these objectives, this research contributes to a broader conversation about innovative parliamentary practice and offers strategic recommendations for how the Scottish Parliament can continue evolving its approaches to inquiry framing, public engagement, and evidence-based scrutiny.

Report Structure

The report outlines the research methodology and methods, focusing on the Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework that guided the study. This describes ethnographic shadowing, semi-structured interviews, and co-design workshops, along with the analysis and evaluation activities that led to the development of a series of co-designed prototype tools that aim to strengthen inclusive and effective scrutiny. The analysis and findings section presents key insights from the research, culminating in the collaborative development of a roadmap that sequences the development of the co-designed tools in the lead up to Session 7 of the Scottish Parliament, and an accompanying set of design principles that outline the values and practices required to enable this vision. The report concludes with a synthesis of research findings, contributions to practice and scholarship, and suggestions for future research.

Research Methodology & Methods

PARliament Engagement adopts a qualitative, design-led, and participatory approach to investigating parliamentary scrutiny processes. Research methods were selected to provide in-depth, situated insights into the practical and institutional challenges of scrutiny, while also exploring opportunities for creative and participatory interventions or tools. The study combines ethnographic methods, co-design methods, and thematic analysis to build a comprehensive understanding of how evidence is created, communicated, and used in scrutiny processes.

Participatory Action Research:
a framework for reflection and action

The research is underpinned by Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a framework that supports community dialogue, collective learning, and action to develop new knowledge (Howard and Somerville, 2014). As a flexible approach that values lived experience and local context, PAR "promotes pluralism and creativity in the art of discovering the world and making it better at the same time" (Chevalier and Buckles, 2019: 3). In this project it provided an inclusive structure for dialogue, idea generation, co-creation, and reflection – bringing committee support teams together as a community of practice to explore scrutiny and evidence collaboratively.

While this project marks an early-stage use of PAR within the Scottish Parliament, it follows earlier work by Ishani Erasmus, who undertook a doctoral study within SPICe to develop a sustainable development tool for the Parliament using a PAR approach (Erasmus, 2021). Together, these projects signal a growing interest in participatory and reflective methodologies to support institutional learning and innovation.

The research was organised into four distinct phases, each incorporating formative and iterative thematic analysis to guide the study's development.

Phase 1 (September – October 2024) began with ethnographic shadowing and initial data collection, where the researcher recruited and observed a core group of four participants from each of the service teams: SPICe, Committee Clerking, PCO, and PACT. This phase helped gain an in-depth understanding of the parliamentary processes related to evidence creation and scrutiny. At the outset, an orientation meeting was held with the core participant group to introduce the project, clarify their roles and participation, and provide a space for participants to meet one another in the context of the Fellowship. This session also enabled early dialogue about the challenges and opportunities within scrutiny that the project might explore. A *swimlane* diagram (Appendix 01) was used during this meeting to capture participant dialogue and to begin locating roles, relationships, and practices within existing scrutiny processes and the evolution of evidence. Desk-based research was also conducted to explore the current structures and identify areas where creative approaches could be integrated. Initial thematic analysis of the observations was carried out to refine the focus for the subsequent interviews and workshops.

Phase 2 (October – November 2024) involved semi-structured interviews. After ethical assessments and participant recruitment, a topic guide was developed to frame four interviews, which were conducted with each participant. These interviews aimed to uncover challenges and opportunities for innovation in the scrutiny process. Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts followed, revealing insights that informed the design and focus of the co-design workshops.

Phase 3 (November – December 2024) centred around two co-design workshops bringing together and extended participant group of cross-service parliamentary committee staff. The workshops focused on co-developing prototype tools and exploring visual and participatory methods to enhance parliamentary scrutiny processes. The tools were iteratively developed based on collaborative feedback and discussion during these workshops.

Ethnographic Shadowing to explore issues surrounding the collection, analysis, & communication of evidence within the scrutiny process

Semi-structured Interviews to articulate design opportunities and contexts for piloting

Co-design workshops to conceptualise tools and practices for creatively documenting and disseminating evidence

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe)

Extended Participant Group

Core Participant Group

Communications Specialists

Service to the work of 15 Parliamentary Committees

Committee Clerks

Participation and Communities Team (PACT)

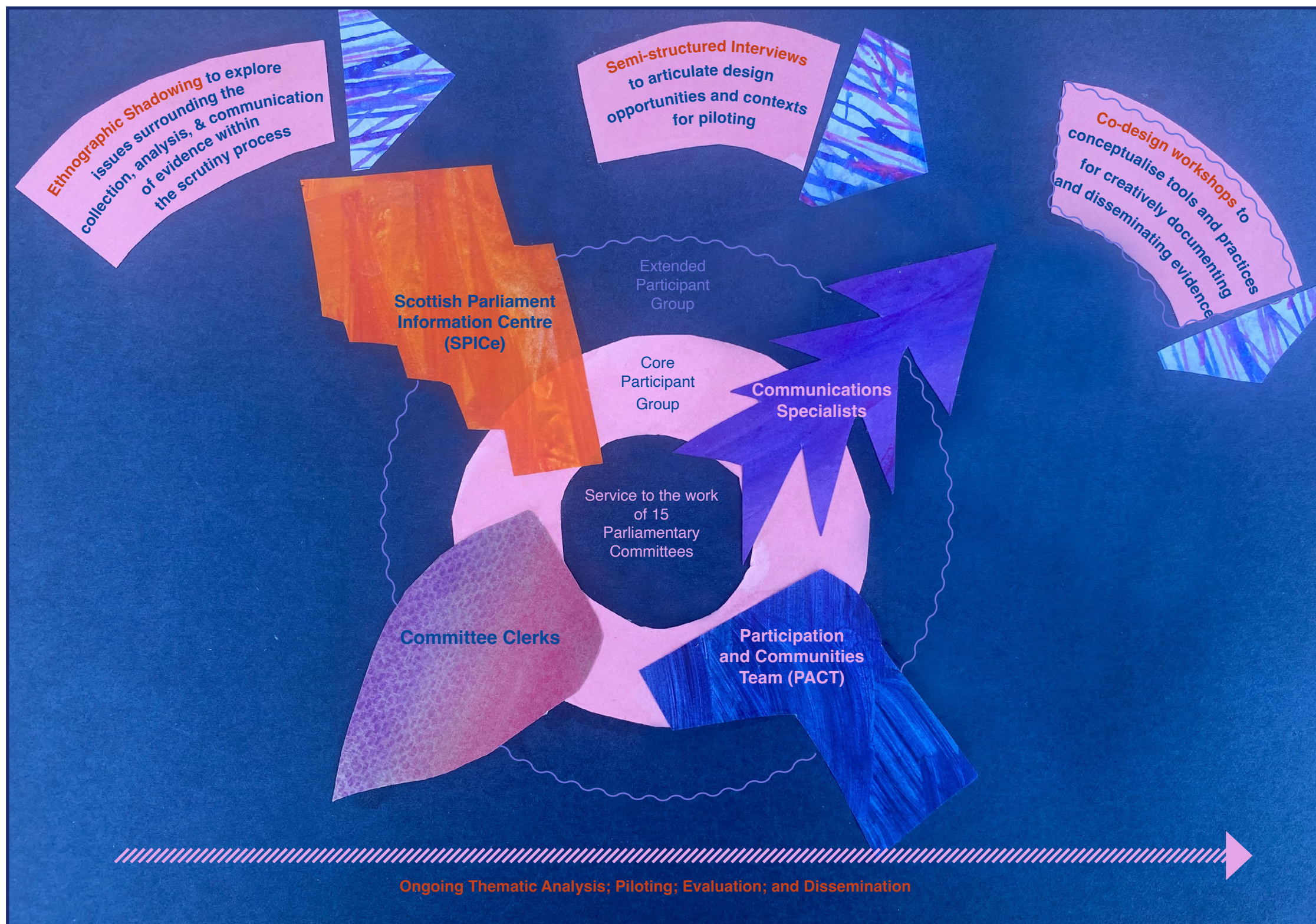Ongoing Thematic Analysis; Piloting; Evaluation; and Dissemination

Figure 2. *PARliament Engagement Research Approach* (collage). 2024.
Cara Broadley.

Phase 4 (January – March 2025) involved the synthesis of all collected data, including findings from the ethnographic shadowing, semi-structured interviews, and co-design workshops. An opportunity arose in this phase to further develop and pilot one prototype tool within a defined parliamentary context. Thematic insights were synthesised into a roadmap and accompanying principles for embedding creative approaches into parliamentary scrutiny.

Immersion in Institutional Practice:
Ethnographic Shadowing as a Window into Scrutiny

Shadowing was conducted with a core group of participants from SPICe, Clerking, PCO, and PACT. This ethnographic approach allowed for a firsthand understanding of the day-to-day practices, constraints, and decision-making processes that shape evidence creation and use. Ethnographic methods such as shadowing have been increasingly recognised as valuable tools in parliamentary research, offering deeper insight into both formal procedures and the informal dynamics that shape political discourse. As Crewe, Taylor-Robinson, and Martin maintain (2022: 757), ethnography provides a diverse and flexible methodological framing to examine "taken-for-granted culture and symbolism, rapid change or serious contradictions, and/or intense contestation in viewpoints".

The shadowing process involved observing committee meetings and engagement sessions to examine how evidence is gathered, structured, and used in scrutiny. The researcher immersed herself in the daily work of committee support teams to capture formal and informal interactions, collaboration dynamics, and the exchange and evolution of supporting information and artefacts. This methodological orientation aligns with Bussell's view that shadowing offers "a privileged vantage point into the everyday decision-making practices of political elites" (2020: 470), allowing researchers to witness how parliamentary actors navigate competing priorities and constraints.

Observations were documented through fieldnotes (Figure 3) and drawings (Figure 4; Appendix 02), focusing on initial themes such as roles and priorities, internal and external

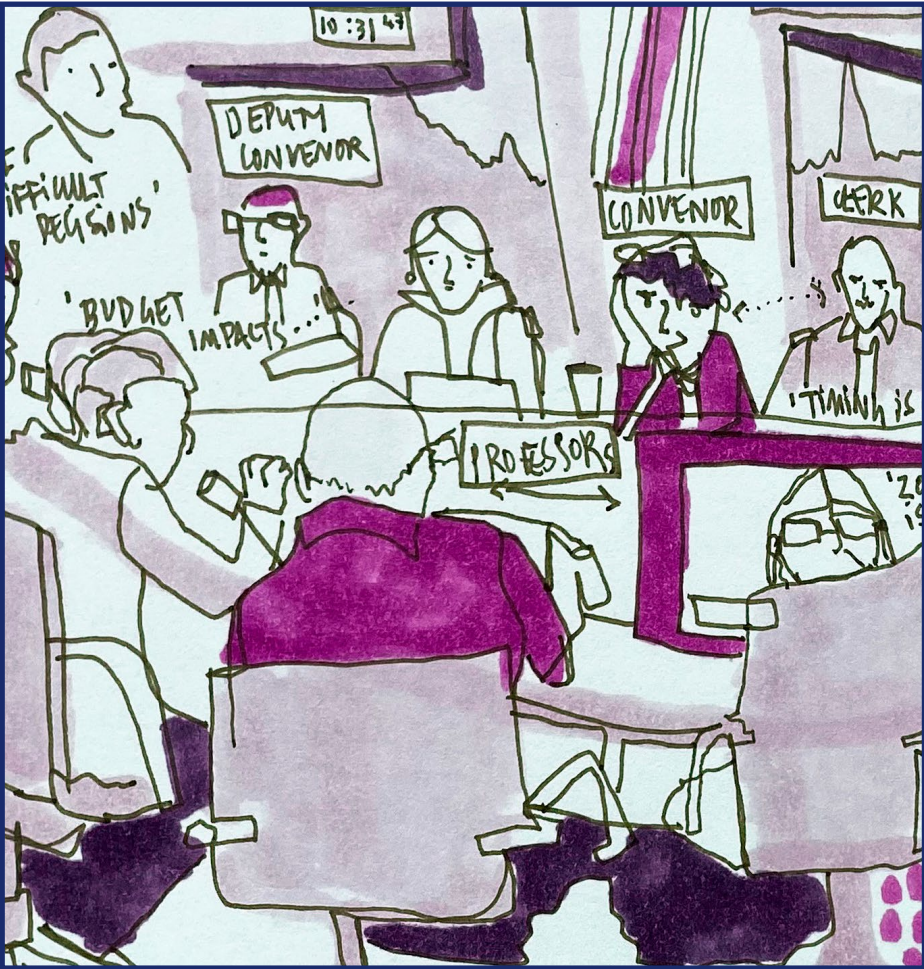Figure 3. *Shadowing Framework – Clerking* (drawing). 2024. Cara Broadley.

Figure 4. *Observational Drawing – Clerking* (drawing – detail). 2024. Cara Broadley.

communication and relationships, the format and content of evidence, and the underpinning practices, platforms, and technologies that shape scrutiny. Such visual and textual documentation methods can help capture both explicit and implicit aspects of institutional practice, and as Kuschnir notes, "drawing contributes positively to anthropological research and vice-versa: researching anthropologically contributes to drawing the world about us" (2016: 104). These insights provided a situated understanding of the institutional context and helped shape the interview and workshop phases by identifying key areas for further exploration.

Co-Constructing Understandings: Exploring Engagement and Evidence through Semi-Structured Interviews

Building upon the insights from the shadowing phase, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with the core participant group to collaboratively explore the challenges and opportunities associated with evidence gathering and use. This method balances structure with flexibility, facilitating a co-construction of knowledge between interviewer and interviewee. As Harrell and Bradley note, semi-structured interviews "ensure that data are collected in a scientific and consistent manner" while providing the "flexibility to explore emerging themes" (2009: 24).

An interview topic guide was developed (Appendix 03), encompassing key themes such as evidence credibility, engagement approaches, barriers to participation, and potential areas for innovation. This served as a framework to shape dialogue, ensuring consistency across interviews while allowing participants the freedom to express their perspectives. The semi-structured format is effective in qualitative research, as it "allows for researchers to acquire in-depth information and evidence from interviewees while considering the focus of the study" (Ruslin et al., 2022: 25).

Each interview lasted approximately one hour, providing ample time for participants to reflect on their experiences and insights. The conversations were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis, a systematic approach that facilitates

the identification of patterns and themes within qualitative data. This approach is instrumental in uncovering nuances related to scrutiny challenges, power dynamics, and opportunities for integrating creative approaches into evidence practices. As Braun and Clarke contend, thematic analysis is a foundational method for qualitative analysis, offering "a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data" (2006: 78).

The insights gleaned from these interviews informed the creation of design briefs (Figure 5; Appendix 04) to frame subsequent workshops and played a pivotal role in developing principles and tools aimed at enhancing scrutiny processes. By engaging participants in this way, the research not only gathered valuable data but also fostered a collaborative environment conducive to innovation and inclusive engagement.

Collaborative Innovation:
Co-Design Workshops to Reimagine Scrutiny Processes

Building upon insights from previous phases, participants came together alongside an extended group from SPICe, Clerking, PCO, and PACT through two co-design workshops. These workshops aimed to explore innovative approaches to parliamentary scrutiny through visual and participatory techniques, fostering collective problem-framing and ideation.

Workshop 1: Exploring and Expanding Design Briefs
In the first workshop, participants engaged with and evaluated the design briefs developed through the shadowing and interview phases to frame a range of concepts for new tools to support the scrutiny process. Workshop activities included reflecting on notions of evidence (Figure 6) and mapping scrutiny challenges and opportunities (Figure 7). This collaborative approach aligns with the principles of participatory design, where stakeholders are actively involved in shaping the design process to ensure outcomes that are more attuned to their needs and contextual circumstances (Blomkamp, 2018: 60). Here participants also explored how these tools could integrate into parliamentary practice, considering feasibility and longer-term implementation and selecting three briefs to focus on in the next co-design session (Figures 8 and 9).

Workshop 2: Framing Prototype Tools and Approaches

The second workshop focused on developing initial concepts into prototype scrutiny tools. This process resonates with Blomkamp's argument that systemic design approaches in policymaking "offer structured ways to surface assumptions, explore complexity, and generate alternative models of governance" (2022: 15). By iterating design concepts together, participants were able to envisage tools that could potentially strengthen scrutiny processes and increase inclusivity.

Throughout both workshops, particular attention was paid to the negotiation of different perspectives and power dynamics within the co-design process. As Andersen and Mosleh observe, co-design frequently involves "frictions and contestations that can be productive if managed carefully, as they reveal underlying tensions and prompt deeper engagement with different stakeholders' needs and concerns" (2021: 475). To support an equitable and reflective design process, participants used tangible artefacts, including mapping templates, storyboards, and paper modelling, to mediate discussions and collaboratively develop tool prototypes (Figures 10–13). The use of such material artefacts in co-design has been widely recognised as a means of helping participants "envision new ideas in more meaningful ways" by making abstract concepts more concrete and accessible (Ehn and Kyng, 1991: 177).

Co-design was documented through audio recordings, as well as visual and textual documentation of insights on paper-based templates and artefacts. Here the workshops provided a collaborative space for generating and refining design-led solutions aimed at enhancing parliamentary scrutiny processes.
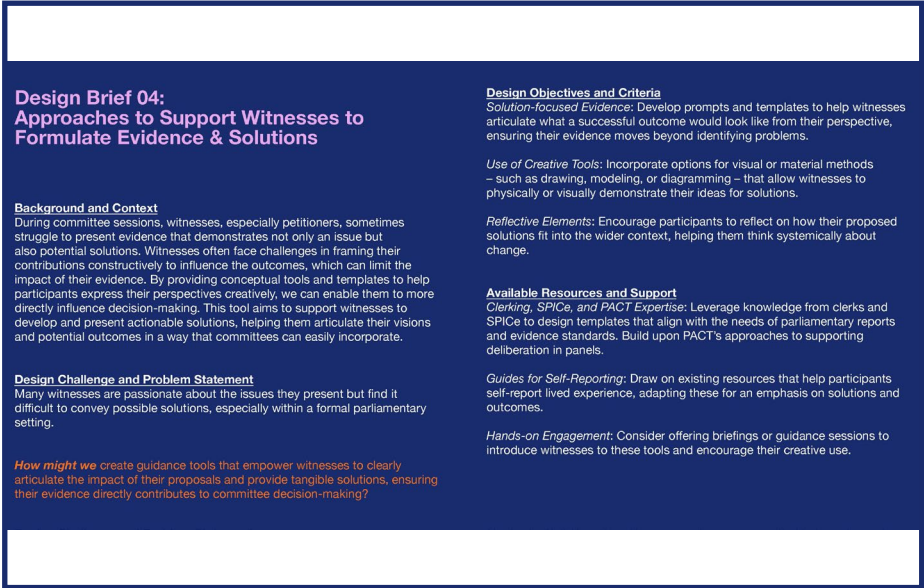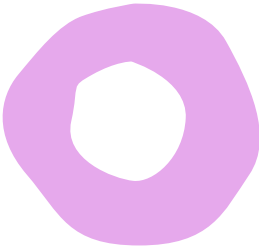

Design Brief 04:
Approaches to Support Witnesses to Formulate Evidence & Solutions

Background and Context
During committee sessions, witnesses, especially petitioners, sometimes struggle to present evidence that demonstrates not only an issue but also potential solutions. Witnesses often face challenges in framing their contributions constructively to influence the outcomes, which can limit the impact of their evidence. By providing conceptual tools and templates to help participants express their perspectives creatively, we can enable them to more directly influence decision-making. This tool aims to support witnesses to develop and present actionable solutions, helping them articulate their visions and potential outcomes in a way that committees can easily incorporate.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
Many witnesses are passionate about the issues they present but find it difficult to convey possible solutions, especially within a formal parliamentary setting.

How might we create guidance tools that empower witnesses to clearly articulate the impact of their proposals and provide tangible solutions, ensuring their evidence directly contributes to committee decision-making?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Solution-focused Evidence: Develop prompts and templates to help witnesses articulate what a successful outcome would look like from their perspective, ensuring their evidence moves beyond identifying problems.

Use of Creative Tools: Incorporate options for visual or material methods – such as drawing, modeling, or diagramming – that allow witnesses to physically or visually demonstrate their ideas for solutions.

Reflective Elements: Encourage participants to reflect on how their proposed solutions fit into the wider context, helping them think systemically about change.

Available Resources and Support
Clerking, SPICe, and PACT Expertise: Leverage knowledge from clerks and SPICe to design templates that align with the needs of parliamentary reports and evidence standards. Build upon PACT's approaches to supporting deliberation in panels.

Guides for Self-Reporting: Draw on existing resources that help participants self-report lived experience, adapting these for an emphasis on solutions and outcomes.

Hands-on Engagement: Consider offering briefings or guidance sessions to introduce witnesses to these tools and encourage their creative use.

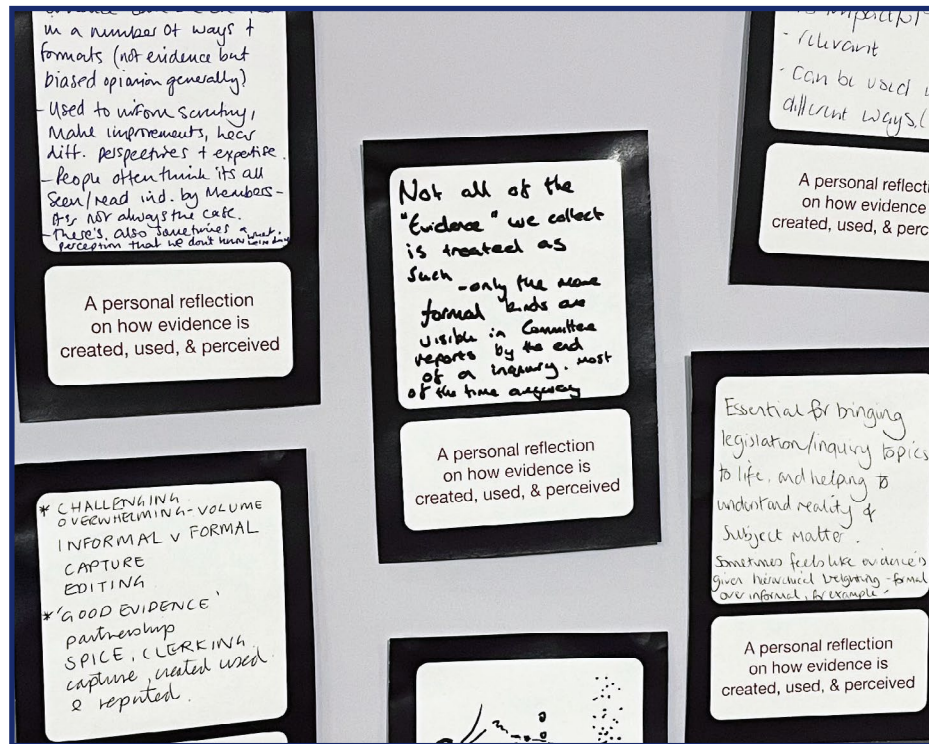Figure 5. *Example of Analytic Design Brief* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.

Figure 6. *Co-design Workshop 01: Participant Reflections on Evidence* (photograph – detail). 2024. Cara Broadley.

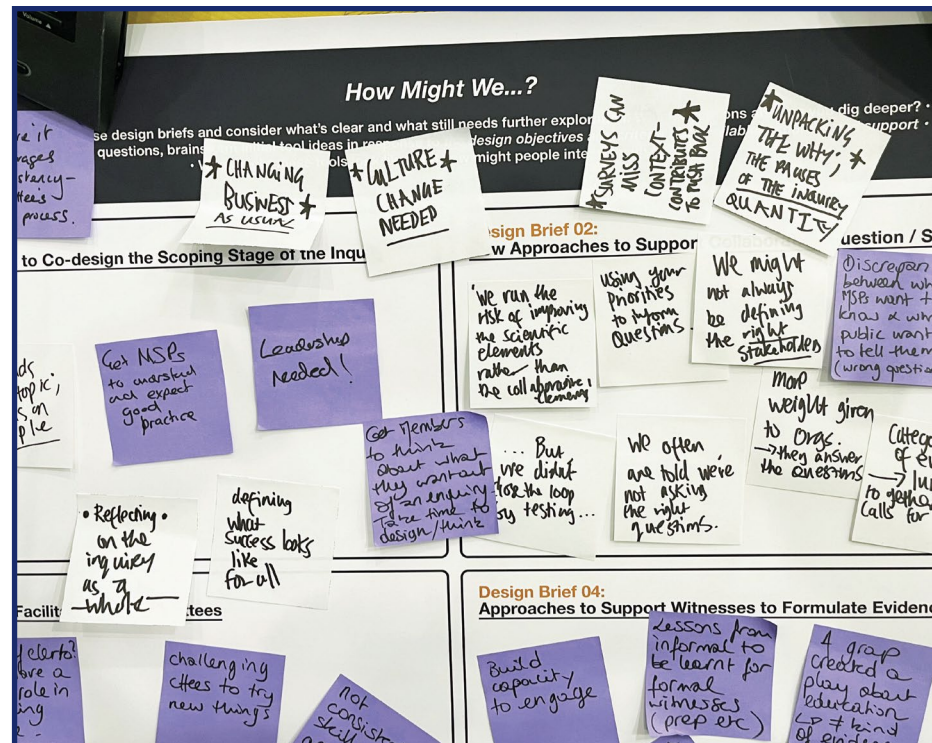Figure 8. *Design Brief Prioritisation Matrix* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.

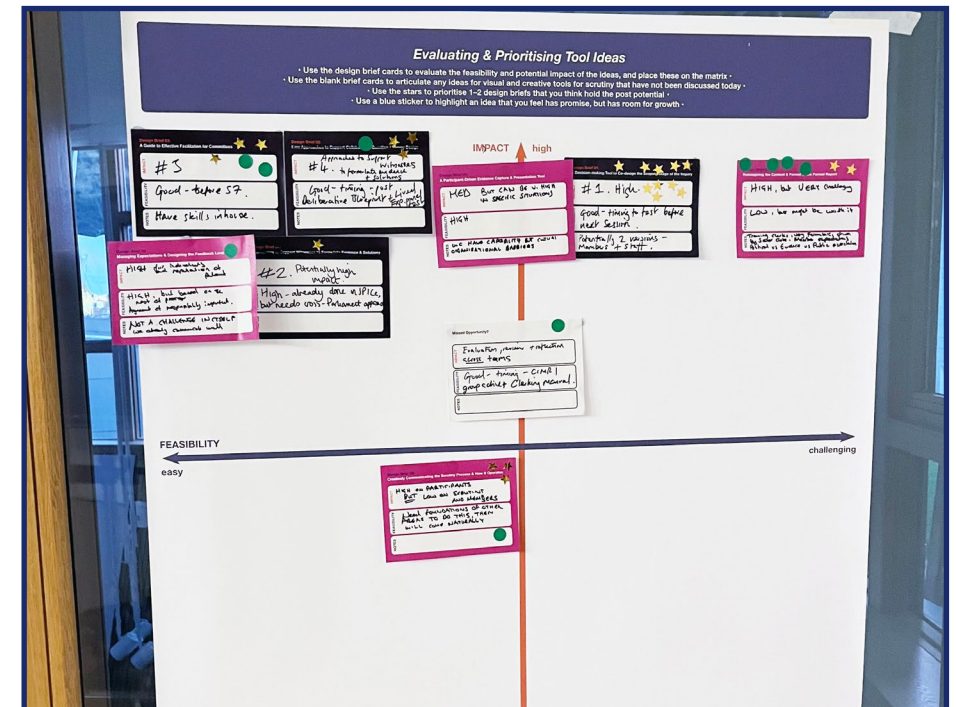Figure 7. *Exploring Design Briefs: "How might we...?" Ideation Canvas* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.

Figure 9. *Prioritised and Refined Design Briefs* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.
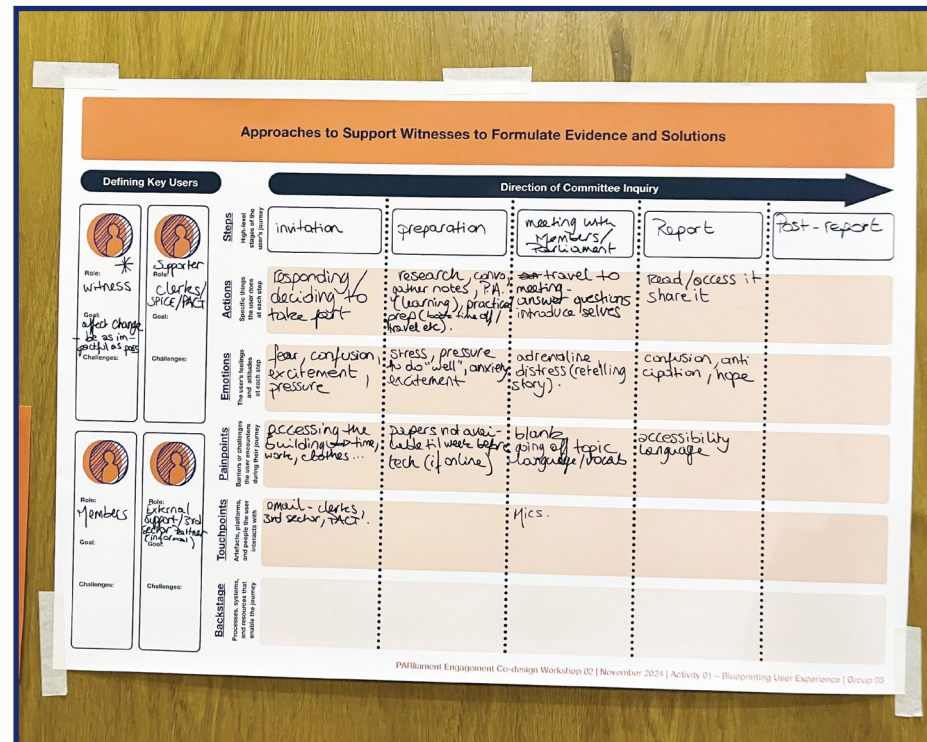
Figure 10. *Co-Design Workshop 02: Blueprinting User Experience* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.

Figure 11. *Developing Mockups 01: Paper Prototyping an Interative Planning Collaborative Tool* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.
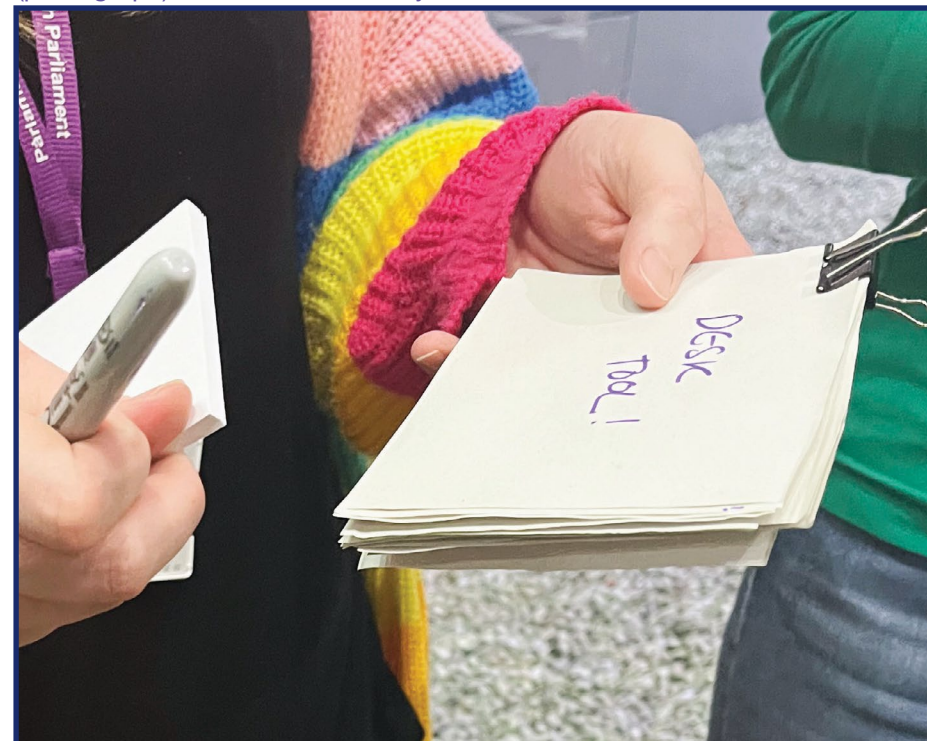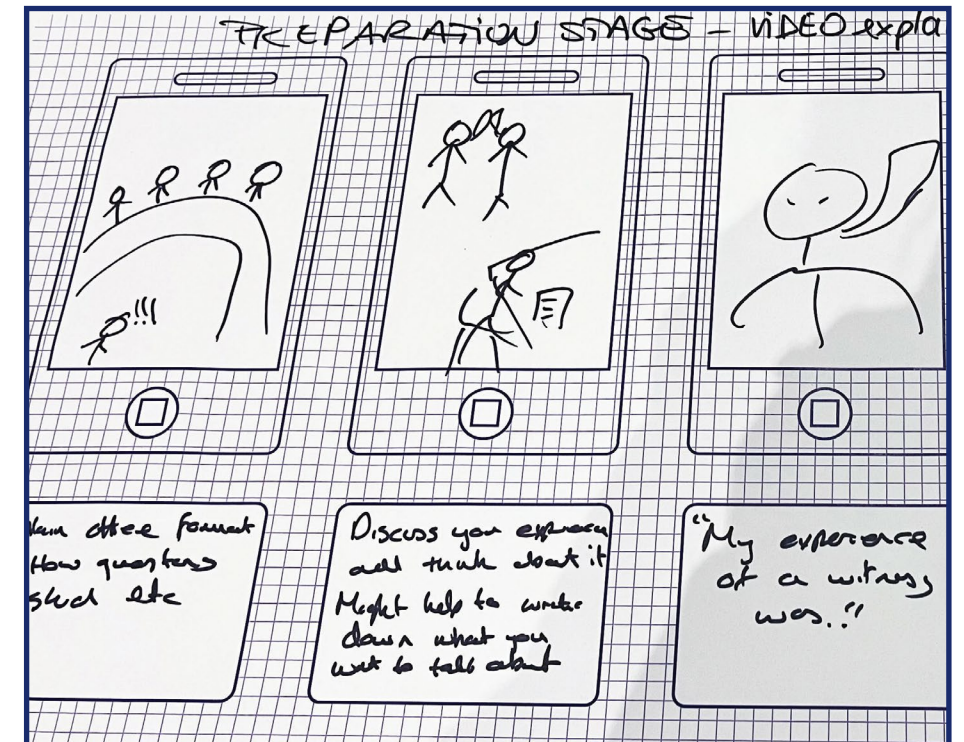

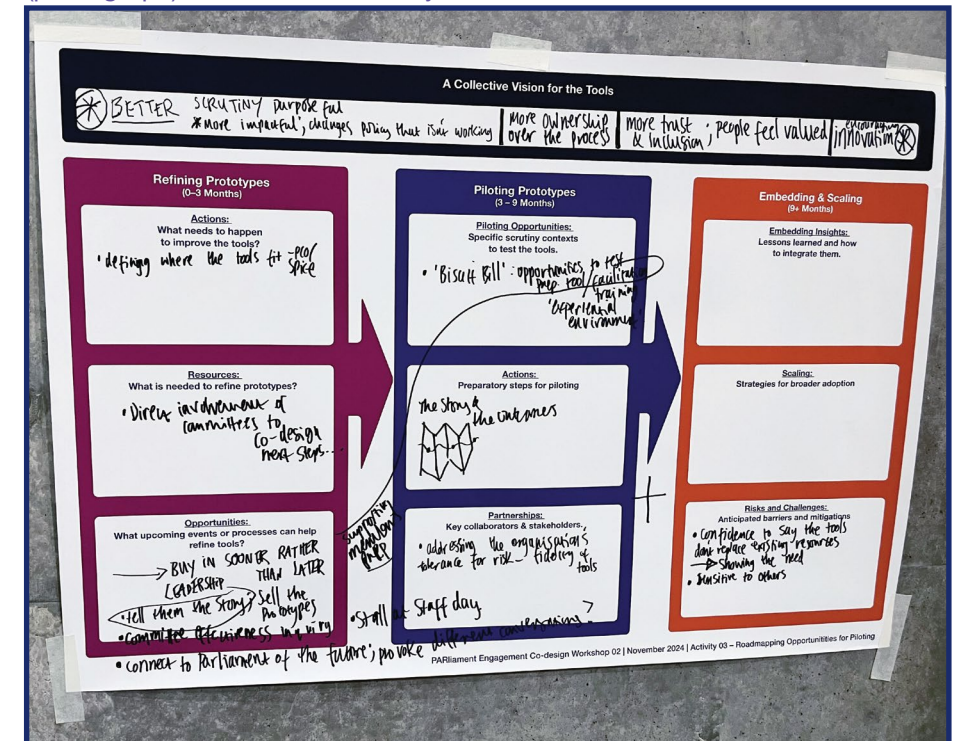Figure 12. *Developing Mockups 02: Paper Prototyping an Explainer Video* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.

Figure 13. *A Collective Vision for the Tools: Planning Steps for Development and Piloting* (photograph). 2024. Cara Broadley.

Research Ethics

The ethical implications of this research were carefully considered with the support of the Glasgow School of Art's Research Office and in accordance with institutional policies on research integrity. The study adhered to the **Glasgow School of Art's Research & Knowledge Exchange Ethics Policy** and **Data Protection Policy** ensuring compliance with best practices in design-led and public sector research. Institutional ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection, and additional ethical considerations were discussed in collaboration with the Scottish Parliament.

To safeguard participants' rights and wellbeing, a comprehensive Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 05) and Participant Consent Form (Appendix 06) were developed. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were upheld throughout, particularly in relation to discussions about the challenges of parliamentary scrutiny. Participation was entirely voluntary, with individuals able to withdraw at any stage without consequence.

The study also engaged in reflexivity, with the researcher actively considering their relative positions and the power dynamics inherent in parliamentary settings. This was particularly important given the collaborative and participatory nature of the research. Ethical considerations were embedded throughout the study, ensuring that all research activities aligned with institutional policies and broader ethical frameworks guiding public sector and design research.

Participant Recruitment

A range of representatives involved in parliamentary scrutiny were invited to take part in the research. This comprised SPICe Researchers, Committee Clerks, Parliamentary Communications Managers, and PACT Participation Specialists who support the work of committees in gathering and assessing evidence. Given the study's focus on exploring creative and participatory approaches to evidence use, purposive sampling was used—

that is, participants were deliberately selected to ensure a diverse range of perspectives from those directly involved in scrutiny processes.

The core participant group (n=4) were recruited through initial distribution of a flyer (Appendix 07) created by the researcher across teams within the Scottish Parliament. Interested participants were invited to contact the researcher directly for further information. Introductions facilitated by parliamentary staff helped to recruit the extended total participant group (n=12) for co-design workshops and subsequent activities. Efforts were made to diversify participation by engaging individuals with different professional backgrounds, contextual expertise, and disciplinary specialisms.

While the findings from the interviews and workshops provide valuable insights into the role of evidence in scrutiny, they are not intended to be fully representative of all scrutiny staff or processes. Instead, they offer a qualitative understanding of key issues and areas for potential innovation, forming the basis for the subsequent co-design activities.
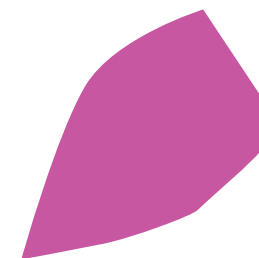
Analysis & Findings

This section presents key findings from the research, drawing on insights from ethnographic shadowing, semi-structured interviews, and co-design workshops. Each research phase contributed to developing a deeper understanding of challenges in parliamentary scrutiny while also identifying opportunities for creative and participatory approaches to enhance engagement and evidence processes. The findings are structured around four key themes that emerged across the research (Figure 14).

Barriers to Participation and Engagement

Accessibility

Inequality

Outreach

Exclusion

Transparency

Tensions in Evidence Gathering and Use

Hierarchy

Expertise

Lived Experience

Bias

Synthesis

Opportunities for Creative Approaches

Innovation

Engagement

Visualisation

Participation

Experimentation

Embedding Innovation in Scrutiny Processes

Sustainability

Institutionalisation

Leadership

Collaboration

Implementation

Figure 14: *Mapping Analytic Themes* (diagram). 2025. Cara Broadley.

Barriers to Participation and Engagement

Structural and procedural challenges continue to limit the accessibility of parliamentary scrutiny. Across shadowing, interviews, and workshops, several factors emerged as significant barriers, including complex engagement processes, inconsistent outreach strategies, and the use of formal, inaccessible language.

Observations from ethnographic shadowing highlighted disparities in how committees engaged different types of witnesses. While some committees embraced community engagement, others relied primarily on formal written submissions, limiting participation to those familiar with parliamentary procedures. Interviews also revealed that even when opportunities for engagement existed, many groups lacked the time, resources, or institutional knowledge required to meaningfully contribute. Participants frequently noted the extractive nature of some consultations, where public input was sought but rarely led to visible change. As one participant noted, "Even when we use the word 'witnesses' to describe people that are coming into the Parliament, some of the feedback that we've had is that even language like that can be a bit intimidating for people – it makes you feel like you're on trial". Similarly, another emphasised the importance of proactive inclusion, stating "It's not just about who is invited to participate, but how we remove barriers that stop people from engaging in the first place".

These challenges foreground broader concerns around whose voices are heard in scrutiny processes. As another participant noted, "When we only hear from the same types of stakeholders, we reinforce existing inequalities instead of challenging them". Yet at the same time, participants noted that while lived experience and participation are invaluable, in some cases formal engagement with professional expertise may be more appropriate.

The workshops reinforced the need for committee teams to define the most suitable approach based on the scrutiny context and objectives, with participants advocating for structural changes to lower barriers to engagement and emphasising the importance of engaging and accessible formats that make scrutiny processes more transparent and inclusive.

Tensions in Evidence Gathering and Use

A central challenge identified across all research phases was the hierarchical weighting of evidence, with formal reports and expert testimony often given greater weight than lived experience and participatory evidence. Shadowing observations indicated that parliamentary teams struggled to integrate qualitative, community-based insights alongside policy reports and statistical data. This was further reinforced by interviewees, who described challenges in synthesising diverse forms of evidence while meeting procedural demands.

Limited feedback loops were another recurring issue. Participants highlighted that public contributors rarely received updates on how their evidence influenced decision-making, leading to disengagement and mistrust in the scrutiny process. "We're striving to capture a balance of evidence that's representative of the people of Scotland, incorporating both expert opinion and lived experience" noted one participant. However, another acknowledged that "There's definitely still a bias towards expert evidence over lived experience – it's maybe still a bit of an adjustment for some members".

Another participant reinforced these concerns, stating, "Good evidence is about more than just the usual suspects; it should offer something new and reflect lived experiences as well as formal perspectives". Further discussion highlighted associated practical challenges, and that "Sometimes people are quite stuck in an issue and actually have problems articulating either what the problem is, what the evidence is they have to support that, or what the solutions are". These insights underscore the need for scrutiny processes to actively support different ways of gathering and presenting evidence.

Co-design workshops explored potential solutions, including the development of visual mapping tools and interactive storytelling formats to present qualitative evidence more effectively. This led participants to foreground the benefits of continuous refinement in evidence processes to improve inclusivity and responsiveness, ensuring scrutiny captures a wider spectrum of perspectives.

Opportunities for Creative Approaches

Despite the challenges identified, the research also revealed significant opportunities for creative approaches to enhance scrutiny. Co-design workshops demonstrated how participatory and visual tools could support more engaging and transparent evidence processes. Participants co-developed prototypes to synthesise complex information and engagement frameworks to structure participatory sessions more effectively.

Here participants explored the value of images and artefacts within scrutiny, with one stating, "We need to think about visual diagrams to help communicate evidence effectively – something that shows what a better outcome might look like". Another noted, "Interactive workshops can make scrutiny more engaging and bring different perspectives into the process in a way that formal hearings can't."

Further reinforcing these insights, a participant emphasised the capacity of such approaches to break down complexity: "People switch off when faced with a 100-page report. We need to explore creative ways of making scrutiny more engaging" Similarly, another noted, "The language we use is often too complex—it needs to be clearer, more direct, and more human." These reflections highlight the need for accessible and interactive formats that facilitate meaningful engagement.

The findings suggest that creative approaches, including principles and practices grounded in participatory design and co-design, can clarify complex ideas and bring together diverse perspectives in new ways. In identifying the potential for creative approaches to bring in external perspectives and to strengthen collaboration across committee support teams across Parliament, participants demonstrated an openness to trialling new tools and techniques within scrutiny processes, recognising that iterative testing is necessary for meaningful change. As one participant expressed, "Scrutiny should be about testing and trying new things, even if it involves some risk – that's where real innovation happens".

Embedding Innovation in Scrutiny Processes

While participants expressed enthusiasm for creative approaches, their sustainability within parliamentary scrutiny remains a challenge. Institutional norms and procedural constraints often limit the extent to which innovation can be embedded in routine practices. Interviewees highlighted concerns about the longevity of pilot initiatives, noting that without clear implementation strategies, novel approaches risk being one-off experiments rather than sustained changes.

Workshops explored strategies for embedding design-led methods, with participants identifying short-term actions (such as piloting tools and training staff) and long-term goals (such as integrating co-design as a standard scrutiny practice). As one participant noted, "We don't always need to reinvent the wheel – looking at what has worked well in other inquiries or other parliaments can save time and effort". Another emphasised the need for structured institutional learning, stating, "Some committees have already trialled innovative approaches, but that knowledge doesn't always carry over".

A further consideration is the role of leadership in driving change. A participant noted, "There has to be leadership to drive this – getting MSPs to expect collaboration and structured inquiry planning as business as usual is key". Similarly, another emphasised, "Effective collaboration takes time and trust, but without it, scrutiny risks being fragmented."

Embedding creative approaches requires not just procedural adaptation but a cultural shift within parliamentary scrutiny. This transformation must be supported by strategic partnerships, training, and sustained commitment from parliamentary leadership. Long-term impact depends on evaluating and disseminating pilot experiments effectively, with a view to institutionalising innovative practice. As one participant noted, "There are already good examples of cross-team working, but they often depend on individuals rather than being systemic". By documenting best practices and integrating them into standard scrutiny processes, creative approaches can become embedded as a norm rather than an exception.

Summary of Findings

The research identified critical barriers and tensions in parliamentary scrutiny, while also demonstrating the potential of design-led, visual and participatory practices to address these challenges. Key barriers to participation include procedural complexity, inconsistent engagement practices, and the hierarchical weighting of evidence. However, findings also indicate strong opportunities for visual and interactive techniques to make scrutiny more inclusive and transparent.

To ensure sustained impact, the research underscores the need for strategic efforts to embed creative into parliamentary scrutiny. The principles developed through this work provide a framework for strengthening engagement, improving evidence processes, and fostering a culture of experimentation within scrutiny. The next section explores how these principles translate into co-designed tools and strategies, illustrating their potential role in addressing the identified challenges.
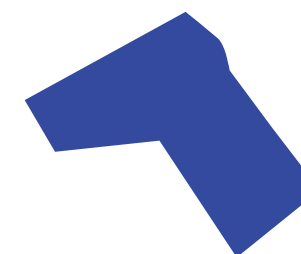
Research Outcomes

Building on the insights generated through co-design workshops, the research outcomes sought to move from conceptual tool development to practical application, ensuring that the work had both immediate relevance and long-term impact. These outcomes – comprising the prototyping of a defined tool, the development of a roadmap, and the articulation of design principles – each serve a distinct but interconnected purpose in embedding creative and participatory methods into parliamentary scrutiny.

Prototyping and Piloting a Defined Tool

Following the co-design workshops, in December 2024 an opportunity was identified to further develop and pilot one of the proposed tools, focusing on Design Brief 08: Creatively Communicating the Scrutiny Process and How it Operates to Diverse Public Audiences. This tool was selected due to its immediate applicability within an upcoming 25th Anniversary community engagement programme. A subset of workshop participants took part in two additional co-design sessions – one online (January 2025) and one in-person (February 2025) – to further develop the tool's content, format, and intended use (Figures 15 and 16). The objective was to develop a working iteration that could be piloted with key audiences in April 2025, providing valuable insights into its effectiveness and integration potential within parliamentary processes.

This iterative process aligns with best practices in participatory prototyping, ensuring that tools evolve in response to real-world constraints and user needs. As Page and Heiss (2023) demonstrate, generative prototypes serve as effective tools for promoting active participation and collaboration with end-users, allowing the design to adapt continually to their experiences and contextual challenges. The prototype remains in development (Figure 17), with further refinements and testing planned beyond the scope of the Fellowship.
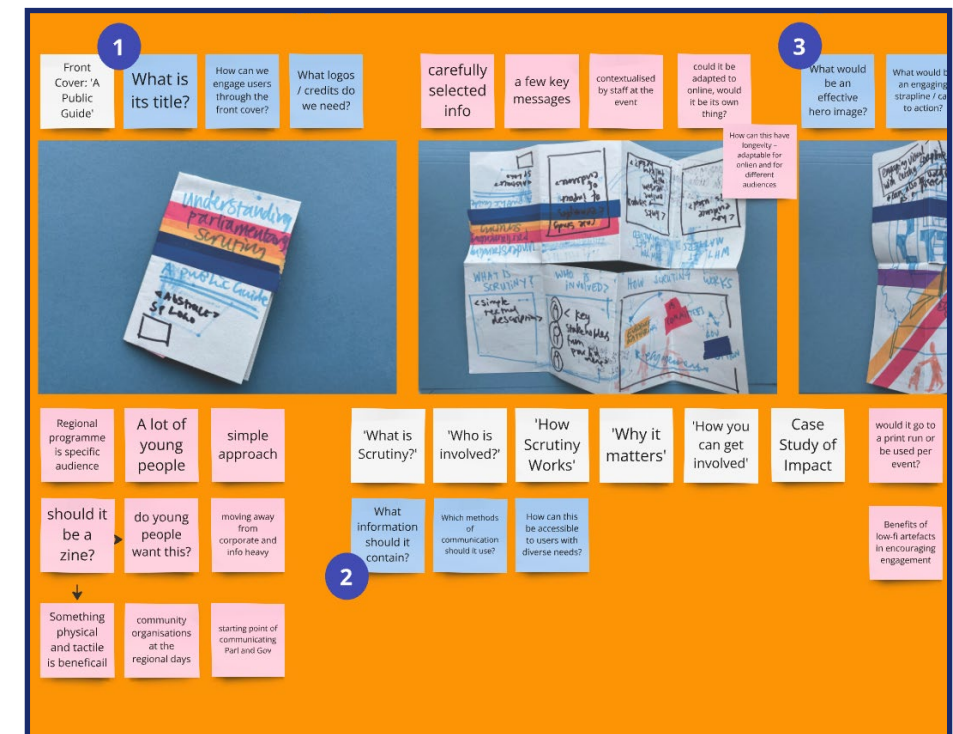

Figure 15. *Tool Development Session 01: Capturing Discussion on Purpose, Users, and Features of Zine Tool* (photograph). 2025. Cara Broadley.

Figure 16. *Tool Development Session 02: Creating Mockups to Envisage Content and Form of Zine Tool* (photograph). 2025. Cara Broadley.

Figure 17: *PARliament Engagement Zine Prototype for Piloting* (photograph). 2025. Cara Broadley.

Developing a Roadmap: Sequencing and Aligning Tools

Recognising that the breadth of tool concepts generated during the workshops should not be lost, a roadmap (Figure 18) was developed to provide a structured, time-bound framework for their continued refinement, testing, and implementation. This roadmap sequences the tools in relation to relevant parliamentary milestones and external events, aligning their development with opportunities for integration into scrutiny practices. It also considers dependencies between different tools, highlighting where resources, enablers, or preliminary steps are needed to ensure feasibility and impact.

Through a discursive evaluation session with participants, the roadmap was reviewed and refined, ensuring it accurately reflected collective aspirations while remaining adaptable to institutional constraints. By offering a strategic, phased approach, it provides a pathway for sustaining co-designed methods within parliamentary scrutiny, ensuring their relevance over time.

Articulating Design Principles for Sustainable Impact

Following a summative analysis of all the research data — including ethnographic observations, interviews, and workshop discussions — a set of design principles (Figure 19) was developed to accompany the roadmap. These principles outline the key conditions that can help embed creative approaches into committee scrutiny in a consistent and meaningful way. They aim to support teams in sustaining these practices over time, while also responding to challenges identified during the research, such as barriers to participation, complexities in evidence gathering, and the need to make scrutiny processes more transparent and engaging.

Participants engaged in an evaluative session to refine these principles, ensuring they resonated with both practical experience and institutional realities. These principles simultaneously serve to highlight the qualities and features of effective scrutiny practice, reflect upon current needs and priorities, and provide aspirational framework for strengthening scrutiny in Session 7 of the Scottish Parliament.

Developing, Piloting, Implementing, & Embedding PARliament Engagement Tools within Scrutiny Settings

Tools to Support:

Planning | Engagement | Reporting

Reimagining the content & format of the formal report for multi-level communication.

Creatively Communicating the Scrutiny Process & How it Operates to Diverse Public Audiences

A participant-driven evidence capture & presentation tool.

Approaches to support witnesses to formulate evidence & solutions.

Managing expectations & designing the feedback loop for community participants.

A guide to effective facilitation for committees.

New approaches to support collaborative question / survey design.

A decision-making tool to co-design the scoping stage of the inquiry.

PARliament Engagement SPICe Fellowship

April 2025 – April 2026

Session 7 of the Scottish Parliament

Opportunities to Pilot Tools; Disseminate Principles; & Explore the Application of Co-Design & PAR Within Parliament

25th Anniversary Engagement Days

Standards, Procedures & Public Appointments Committee – Committee Effectiveness Inquiry

Explainer Video for People's Panel

Strategic Planning for Session 7

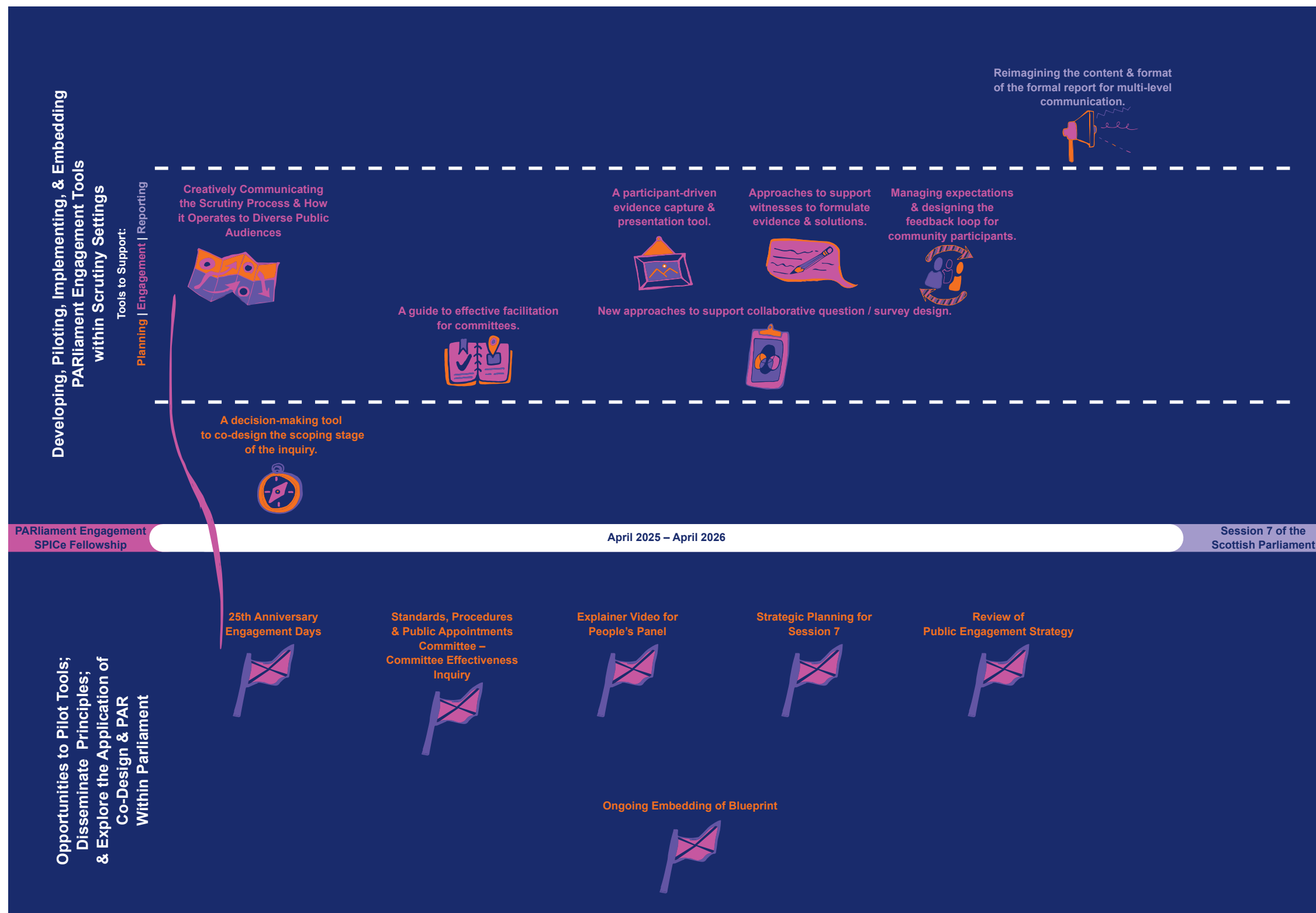Review of Public Engagement Strategy

Ongoing Embedding of Blueprint

Figure 18: *PARliament Engagement Roadmap: Sequencing Tool Development Opportunities Towards Session 7* (diagram). 2025. Cara Broadley.

Design Principles for Strengthening Inclusive and Effective Scrutiny in the Scottish Parliament

1. Adopt an Inclusive Mindset

Scrutiny processes must go beyond simply inviting diverse voices; they must proactively remove barriers to participation. Without this effort, the same voices dominate, reinforcing existing inequalities. Some communities do not see Parliament as a space for them, so scrutiny must actively challenge this perception. True inclusivity requires a fundamental rethink of how underrepresented groups are engaged in the process.

2. Communicate Clearly and Creatively

Traditional scrutiny documents can be overwhelming and disengaging. To bridge this gap, more accessible formats such as infographics, videos, and storytelling can help make scrutiny more transparent and engaging. Too often, it is assumed that people understand how scrutiny works when, in reality, clearer, more direct, and human-centred communication is needed to demystify the process.

3. Collaborate Across Teams and Stakeholders

The most effective scrutiny happens when committees and teams work together rather than operating in silos. Building trust and embedding collaboration into scrutiny structures is essential, yet this often relies on individuals rather than being an institutional norm. Strengthening cross-team cooperation ensures a more cohesive and impactful scrutiny process.

4. Acknowledge and Learn from Good Practice

Scrutiny does not need to start from scratch each time; there is already valuable knowledge from previous inquiries and other institutions. However, these insights are not always carried forward systematically. If Parliament took a more structured approach to learning from past successes, scrutiny could evolve in a more intentional and effective way.

5. Foster a Culture of Experimentation and Risk-Taking

Scrutiny often follows established routines, but a more flexible and experimental mindset is needed. Committees should feel empowered to try new approaches, recognising that not everything will work perfectly the first time. Rather than fearing failure, scrutiny should embrace trial and error as a way to develop more innovative and effective methods of engagement.

6. Engage in Iterative Learning and Critical Reflection

Scrutiny tends to be treated as a linear process, but real impact comes from continuously refining approaches based on experience. Without structured reflection points, opportunities for improvement may be lost. Even small adjustments can lead to significant improvements, but only if committees actively incorporate learning at every stage.

7. Align with Parliamentary Priorities and Scotland's Context

Scrutiny does not exist in isolation – it must connect with Scotland's broader policy landscape and long-term strategic goals. Engaging with local initiatives could provide valuable real-time insights and community perspectives. Strengthening these links ensures that scrutiny remains relevant, responsive, and reflective of Scotland's diverse communities.

8. Commit to Equity and Power-Sharing

Effective scrutiny is not just about gathering input but ensuring that all contributions have a genuine impact. Traditional approaches can reinforce power imbalances, with some perspectives carrying more weight than others. True democratic scrutiny requires a commitment to power-sharing, where diverse voices are not only heard but actively shape decisions.

9. Use Participatory and Visual Methods

Using participatory workshops and visual tools can help clarify complex ideas and make scrutiny more engaging. These approaches reveal connections that might not be apparent in traditional written formats. Strengthening public understanding through visual and interactive methods fosters greater transparency and trust in the scrutiny process.

10. Embed Technology for Enhanced Engagement

Digital tools offer new possibilities for participation, making scrutiny more interactive and accessible. Real-time feedback mechanisms and online engagement platforms can broaden participation beyond traditional audiences. However, technology should be used thoughtfully, ensuring it enhances rather than complicates the scrutiny process.

Figure 19: *Principles to Enable the PARliament Engagement Roadmap* (diagram). 2025. Cara Broadley.

Conclusions & Next Steps

This research has explored the role of creative approaches in supporting evidence creation and use within parliamentary scrutiny, uncovering both challenges and opportunities for more effective, inclusive, and transparent engagement with evidence. By employing Participatory Action Research and co-design methods, the study has highlighted the potential for visual and participatory tools to strengthen collaboration within committee support teams, and enhance how they engage with internal and external stakeholders and audiences.

Findings suggest that while there is a strong institutional commitment to improving evidence use in scrutiny, existing processes often struggle with issues of accessibility, transparency, and the meaningful integration of diverse forms of evidence. Co-design has demonstrated its value as a method for identifying these challenges and collaboratively developing approaches that better align with the needs of parliamentary staff and external stakeholders. The workshops provided a structured space for participants to reimagine evidence-handling practices and prototype tools that could enhance both the communication and synthesis of evidence.

A key insight concerns the importance of iterative engagement in the early stages of scrutiny. Scoping processes present an opportunity to recalibrate inquiry design, ensuring that the most relevant evidence is identified, and that parliamentary committees can better engage with complex, multi-faceted issues. Additionally, the role of visual and creative methods in making evidence more legible and engaging has emerged as a critical consideration for future practice.

Limitations

While this research provides valuable insights, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The co-design workshops involved a relatively small sample of participants, limiting the scope for generalising findings across different parliamentary contexts. Additionally, the short timeframe of the project meant that while conceptual tools were developed, there was limited opportunity for full-scale implementation and evaluation. Future research should explore the longer-term impact of these approaches and consider broader engagement with diverse parliamentary actors, including elected representatives, to ensure that the tools and strategies developed are both practical and scalable.

Next Steps

This report is intended as a practical and strategic resource for the Scottish Parliament to support the ongoing development of scrutiny practice. The outcomes – comprising a prototyped tool, roadmap, and co-developed design principles – represent an integrated and actionable package of insights, developed in partnership with committee support staff. These are offered as clear recommendations for the Parliamentary Service to consider, adopt, and build upon. While participants in this project played an active role in shaping the direction of this work, formal responsibility for progressing the proposals would rest with relevant service leads and team heads within the Parliament.

A starting point may be for relevant office heads to consider a follow-up session with the project team to discuss any approaches which the service wishes to take forward. This discussion might cover ownership, prioritisation, availability of resources and opportunities for integration into current and future scrutiny work. This would also serve as a starting point for establishing a small internal working group tasked with testing, adapting, and scaling the tools and approaches developed.

Such a collaborative and adaptive approach aligns with Owen et al. and their work on living labs (2013) as "a platform for continuous feedback, allowing for the evaluation of prototypes within complex, real-world settings" (2013: 91). By iterating tools within live parliamentary contexts, this research seeks not only to innovate but to institutionalise change, ensuring that creative and participatory methods become enduring features of scrutiny practice.

The following recommended next steps are intended to support this aim:

1. Prototype Development and Testing
Collaborate with one or more committees to pilot and adapt selected tools in live inquiries. These pilots should include structured feedback from staff and stakeholders, allowing for real-time refinement and assessment of relevance and impact.

2. Stakeholder Engagement and Knowledge Exchange
Organise targeted workshops or roundtables with researchers, civil society organisations, and other evidence users to share and test tools, build buy-in, and identify further use cases across sectors.

3. Longitudinal Evaluation of Impact
Commission or conduct follow-up research to assess whether and how the tools and approaches have influenced scrutiny work over time. This could include case studies, user feedback, and performance metrics focused on inclusivity, evidence quality, and stakeholder engagement.

4. Integration into Parliamentary Practice
Develop internal training resources and formal guidance to support staff in adopting these approaches. Consider how design and participatory methods can be embedded in existing processes, including scoping, evidence synthesis, and reporting.

5. Exploration of Broader Applications
Encourage dialogue with other public bodies or local authorities to explore how PAR and creative approaches could be applied to improve evidence use in adjacent areas of governance and policy-making.

By advancing these steps, the Parliament has an opportunity to lead the way in embedding creative, participatory, and inclusive approaches into democratic practice. The work initiated through this research provides a strong foundation – what is now required is institutional commitment, leadership, and continued collaboration to carry it forward. A clear route to implementation beginning with ownership, oversight, and alignment with scrutiny priorities will be critical to ensuring that these outcomes achieve lasting impact.
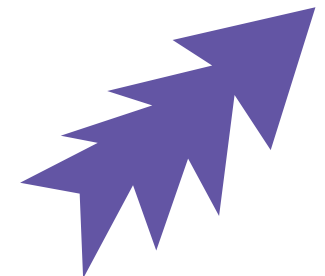
References

Andersen, P. V. K. and Mosleh, W. S (2021) "Conflicts in co-design: Engaging with tangible artefacts in multi-stakeholder collaboration", *CoDesign*, 17 (4), 473–492.

Bason, C (2017) *Leading public design: Discovering human-centred governance.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Blomkamp, E (2018) "The promise of co-design for public policy", in Howlett, M. and Mukherjee, I. (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Policy Design.* 59–73. New York: Routledge.

Blomkamp, E (2022) "Systemic design practice for participatory policymaking", *Policy Design and Practice*, 5 (1), 12–31.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V (2006) "Using thematic analysis in psychology", *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), 77–101.

Broadley, C. and Dixon, B (2022) "Participatory design for democratic innovation: participation requests and community empowerment in Scotland", *Policy Design and Practice,* 5 (4), 444–465.

Bussell, J (2020) "Shadowing as a Tool for Studying Political Elites", *Political Analysis*, 28 (4), 469–486.

Chevalier, J. M. and Buckles, D. J (2019) *Participatory Action Research: Theory and Methods for Engaged Inquiry*. 2nd edn. London: Routledge.

Crewe, E., Taylor-Robinson, M.M. and Martin, S (2022) "The future of parliamentary and legislative studies". *Parliamentary Affairs*, 75 (4), 754–766.

Ehn, P. and Kyng, M (1991) "Cardboard computers: Mocking-it-up or hands-on the future", in Greenbaum, J. and Kyng, M. (eds.) *Design at Work: Cooperative Design of Computer Systems*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 169–195.

Erasmus, I (2021) *Sustainable Development Thinking: disrupting business as usual.* PhD Thesis. University of Stirling.

Escobar, O (2017) "Pluralism and democratic participation: What kind of citizen are citizens invited to be?", *Contemporary Pragmatism*, 14 (4), 416-438.

Geddes, M (2023) *Good Evidence: How do select committees use evidence to support their work?* Edinburgh.

Harrell, M. and Bradley, M (2009) *Data Collection Methods: Semi-Structured Interviews and Focus Groups*, RAND Corporation. Technical reports. United States.

Howard, Z. and Somerville, M. M (2014) "A comparative study of two design charrettes: Implications for codesign and participatory action research", *CoDesign*, 10 (1), 46–62.

Kimbell, L. and Bailey, J (2017) "Prototyping and the new spirit of policy-making", *CoDesign*, 13 (3), 214–226.

Kimbell, L., Durose, C., Mazé, R. and Richardson, L (2023) *Design and Policy: Current debates and future directions for research in the UK.* London: University of the Arts London.

Kuschnir, K (2016) "Ethnographic Drawing: Eleven Benefits of Using a Sketchbook for Fieldwork", *Visual Ethnography*, 5 (1), 103–132.

Owen, R., Bessant, J. and Heintz, M (2013) *Responsible Innovation: Managing the Responsible Emergence of Science and Innovation in Society*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Page, R., and Heiss, L (2023). "Generative Prototypes to Promote Participation in the Collaborative Design of Wearable Health Technologies", *The Design Journal*, 26 (1), 121–141.

Ruslin, R., Mashuri, S., Sarib, M., Alhabsyi, F., and Syam, H(2022) "Semi-structured Interview: A Methodological Reflection on the Development of a Qualitative Research Instrument in Educational Studies", *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education,* 12 (1), 22–29.

Vaz, F., Koria, M. and Prendeville, S (2022) "Design for policy'from below: grassroots framing and political negotiation", *Policy Design and Practice*, 5 (4), 410–426.

Appendices

Appendix 01: Swimlane Diagram for Orientation Meeting: Mapping Interactions and Information across the Committee Inquiry Process
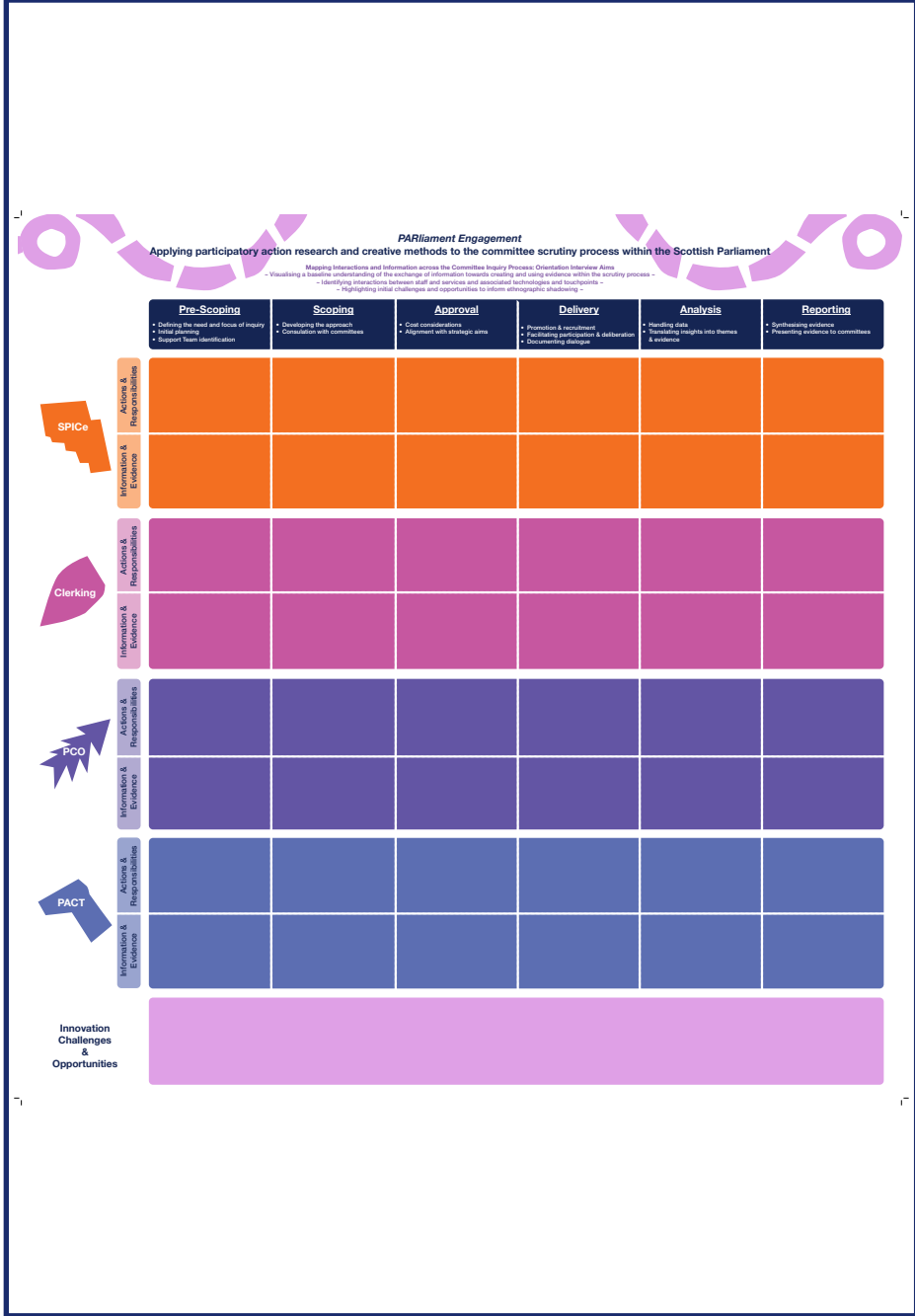
Appendix 02: Observational Drawings

Top left (Tuesday Group):

TUESDAY GROUP
CLERKING

~SURVEY A CALL FOR EVIDENCE ~3.5K/7.K~

ASSISTED DYING BILL

'SOMEWHAT SKEWED BY 1 ORGANISATION...'

CALL FOR VIEWS: 'REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF FRAMEWORK LEGISLATION.'

CLERKS RELATIONSHIP WITH MINISTER FOR...

'WE EXPECTED THE PEG TO BE A LOT SMALLER...' A LOT

WORKING WITH SPACE TO CONTEXTUALISE results

~SOME EV.

A BILL MIGHT BE COMING YOUR WAY...

CLIMATE CHANGE BILL PRE-LEG, CALL FOR VIEWS

BLOGS SNIPPETS

EVIDENCE IS NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENTATIVE

'THE BUREAU'

CLERKING 'CORRESPONDENCE TEMPLATE'

Top right (Weekly health team meeting):

weekly health team meeting

PEOPLE'S PANEL: reports aren't implemented

'MOST POLICY IS JUST A REACTION'

'SOMETIMES IT SEEMS LIKE THEY'VE BEEN ASKED TO DO A PIECE OF WORK, SO THEY JUST ASK SPICE...'

'THIS ISN'T A VERY BUSY DAY...'

'YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE POLICIES THAT AREN'T IMPLEMENTABLE!'

I DON'T WANT TO OVERLOAD THEM WITH GUFF...

BACK & FORTH WITH THE CLERK
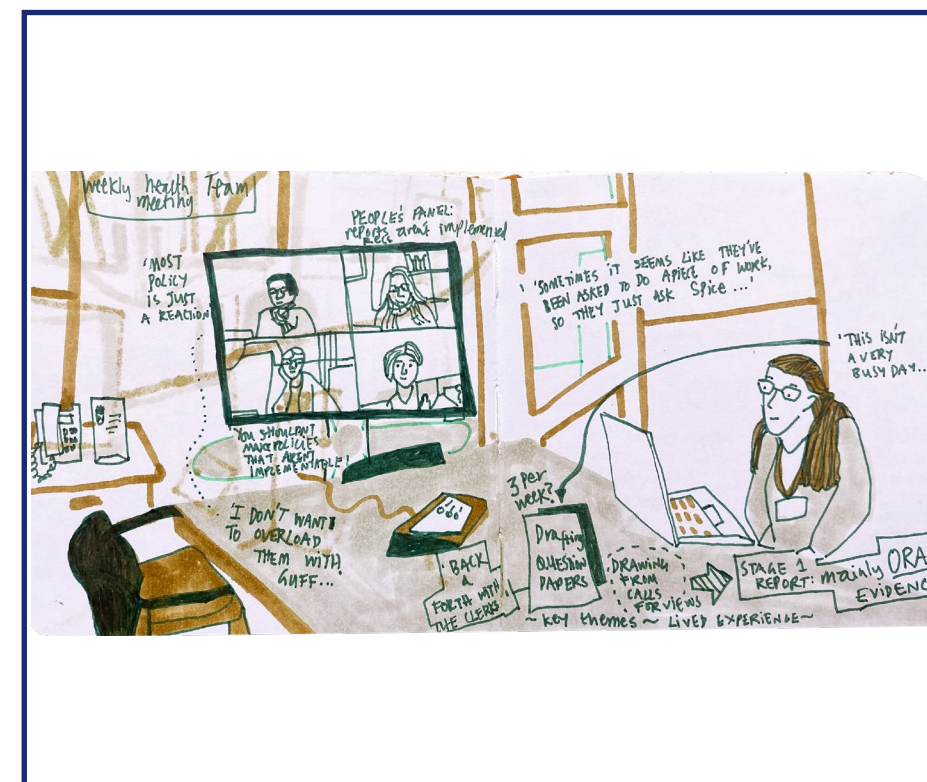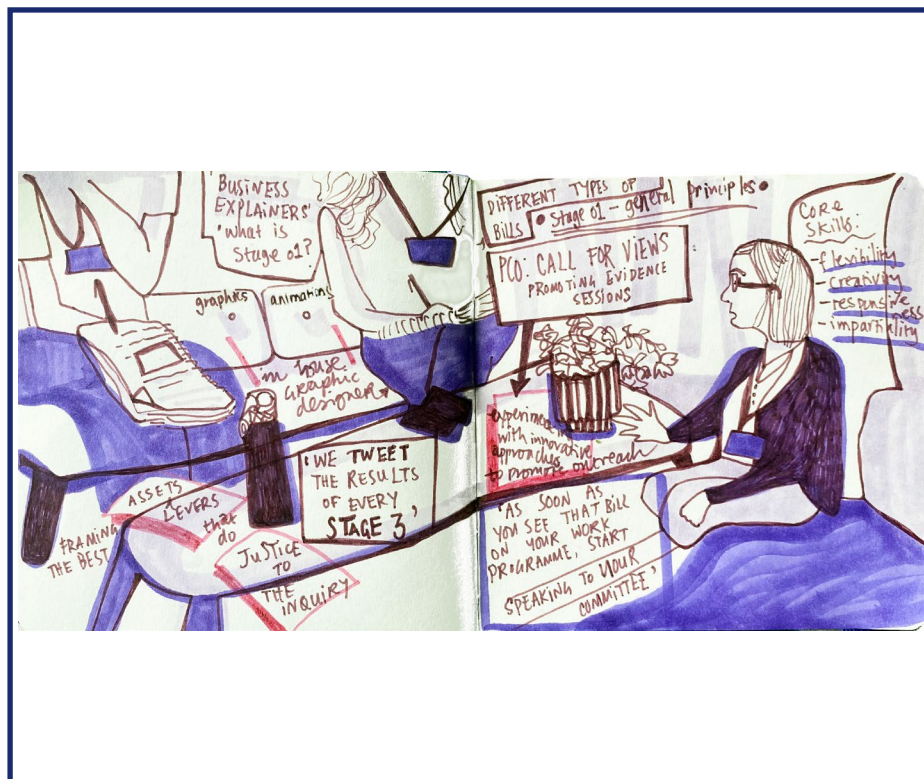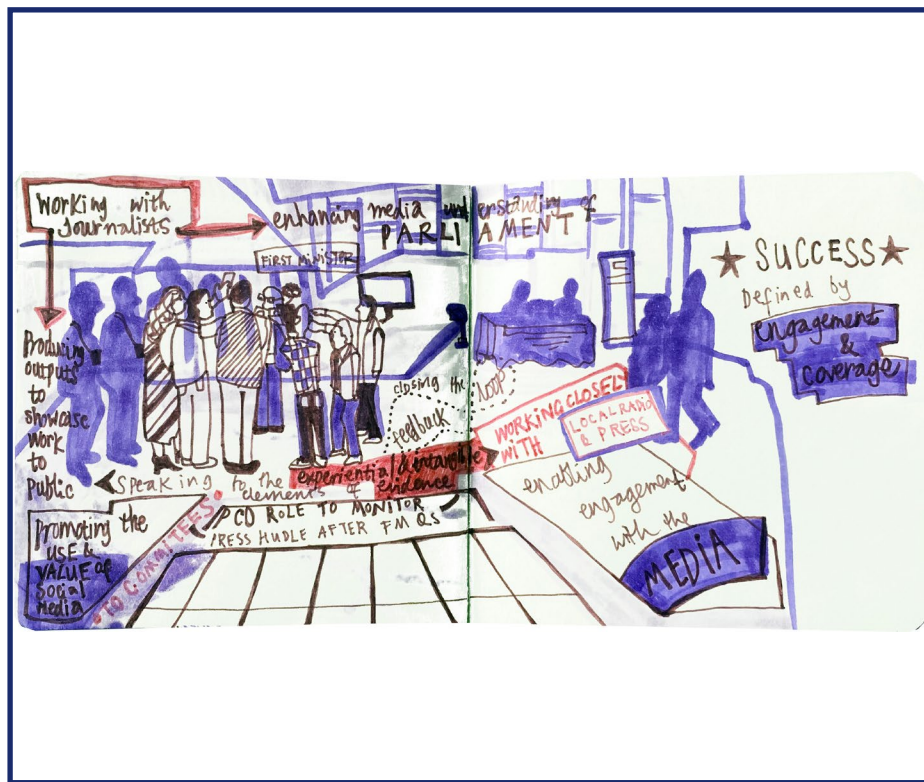
3 per week?

DRAFTING QUESTION PAPERS

DRAWING FROM CALLS FOR VIEWS

STAGE 1 REPORT: mainly ORAL EVIDENCE

~key themes ~ LIVED EXPERIENCE~

Bottom left (SPICE Shadowing):

SPICE Shadowing

Analysis of Public responses to Assisted Dying Bill — Health, Social Care & Sport committee

SUMMARISING A HIGH VOLUME OF RESPONSES

13.5K

~ survey design
~ Timelines developed with Clerks
~ PACT raising awareness
~ Data vis. of quants

fresh air

spreadsheet

Bills and laws

*initial themes from manual coding
*direct quotations BRING THE RENT ALIVE

*making it explicit in summaries that the results don't represent the population
*Participants self select
*title & text
'I WOULD PUT THIS IN IMPARTIAL IF I COULD.'

Bottom right (Shadowing PCO):

Shadowing PCO 10.10.24

Clerking

'Pulling the 3 threads together'

SPICE

PACT

CALENDAR

CLERKS

PRODUCING CLIPS

Seeing the power of CREATIVE approaches

STORYTELLING IN context

*PUTTING A FACE TO A LOCAL STORY

Final Report doesn't do its ... to creativity

key focus on ACCESSIBILITY

Economy and Fair Work. Today our committee is pleased to welcome 20 women to learn about providing evidence

SUPPORTING COMMITTEES

'PEELING BACK, LANGUAGE'

NEWS RELEASE

CASE STUDIES

The top line, 2-3 paragraph, key quote

balancing perspectives on legislation

the report ... around the report

Topic	Question
Roles and responsibilities of each team and participant	1. Can you describe **your role** in the process of evidence creation and how it fits into post-legislative scrutiny?
Scoping and pre-engagement	2. Can you reflect on the distinctions between **formal and informal** engagement? 3. Which factors influence decisions about engaging **people with academic or subject specific expertise, and members of the public with lived experience**? 4. Clerks, SPICe, and PACT play in **shaping the themes and questions** for engagement – what are the strengths and limitations of this approach? 5. When it comes to **inviting and preparing people to engage in committee inquiries**, and your role within that, what would you say are some of the challenges there?
Engagement and Gathering Data	6. Moving on from that and thinking about 'live' engagement, discussion and dialogue, and evidence being captured through committee inquiries, from your perspective, **what do you think makes evidence 'good'** in these contexts? 7. Its standard practice for engagement to be **facilitated by members** – what are the strengths and limitations of this approach?
Analysis and Reporting / Outcomes	8. How are **quantitative and qualitative** evidence perceived and valued by teams and members? 9. How **does the presentation of evidence** influence how it is perceived by committees and the public?
Opportunities for Visual and Creative Methods	10. Reflecting on our discussions – of pre-engagement and planning the inquiry; the status and perceptions of evidence; engagement itself – the collection of data and the logistical and social implications that surround it; how it is analysed, presented, and communicated; **is there a key area for you where there are challenges that you would like to address**, opportunities for innovation, and potential to explore and develop visual and creative methods?

1

Appendix 04: Analytic Design Briefs

Design Brief 01:
A Decision-making Tool to Co-design the Scoping Stage of the Inquiry

Background and Context
The initial planning and scoping stages are critical to setting a strong foundation for inquiries. Tight timelines can constrain collaborative input and strategic reflection, leading to misalignment between teams, limited creativity, and insufficient integration of stakeholders' perspectives. A well-designed tool could streamline decision-making, improve collaboration, and allow for more innovative approaches that align with committee goals and ultimately lead to more effective evidence.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
There is a need for a tool that can guide teams in making well-informed, strategic choices during the scoping phase. This should facilitate open discussions, prompt consideration of diverse approaches, and offer flexibility to tailor the inquiry based on context, timelines, and potential stakeholder engagement. By enabling structured but adaptable decision-making, this tool aims to improve inquiry planning and reduce reactive decision-making.

How might we create a tool that empowers teams to make strategic, well-informed choices during the scoping phase of inquiries, fostering collaboration and creativity from the outset?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Enable Strategic Alignment: Support alignment and foster collaborative input amongst SPICe, PCO, Clerking, and PACT to create a shared vision for the inquiry.

Promote Creative Thinking: Include prompts or modules that inspire creative approaches and flexible strategies, encouraging non-standard, innovative methods where appropriate.

Provide Adaptable Templates: Offer customisable modules or templates for different inquiry types, allowing teams to adjust based on the specific goals of each committee.

Available Resources and Support
Case Studies and Examples: Curated examples of past inquiries, illustrating successful scoping strategies, common challenges, and lessons learned to provide practical guidance within the tool.

User-Tested Templates and Modules: Customisable templates and modular options that allow teams to tailor the tool to the unique goals of different inquiries, with feedback from initial users for iterative improvements.

Training and Onboarding Resources: Guidance materials, including brief training videos and written tutorials, to familiarise committee staff with the tool and promote effective use.

Design Brief 02:
New Approaches to Support Collaborative Question / Survey Design

Background and Context
As the Scottish Parliament aims to enhance engagement and evidence-based decision-making, the design of surveys and questions plays a critical role in capturing diverse perspectives. There is an opportunity to develop approaches that leverage domain-specific knowledge and expertise in research design. By integrating different viewpoints, the resulting surveys can be more inclusive and reflective of the committee's needs, and inform the collection of broader and deeper evidence.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
Current survey design practices often lack the collaborative elements that could enrich the questions posed to participants. This results in questions that may not fully capture the complexity of public concerns or the nuances of specific issues.

How might we develop a framework or tool that facilitates collaborative question design, ensuring that a wide range of stakeholders can contribute effectively to the survey process?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Inclusivity: The tool must allow diverse stakeholders to participate in the question design process, ensuring all voices are heard.

Real-time Collaboration: The design should support real-time feedback and discussions among participants to refine questions iteratively.

Template Flexibility: Provide customisable templates to guide users in formulating questions while allowing for creative input.

Available Resources and Support
Survey References: Access to current survey examples to guide collaborative question design.

Expert Feedback: Input from SPICe and other specialists in participation and survey design to ensure clarity and inclusivity.

Co-Creation Workshops: Collaborative sessions with stakeholders to prototype and refine the tool.

Design Brief 03:
A Guide to Effective Facilitation for Committees

Background and Context
The role of facilitation in committee engagements, particularly those involving community members, is critical to ensuring that participants feel valued, heard, and empowered. Differences in facilitation style, experience, and focus can impact how community voices are captured, sometimes resulting in overlooked perspectives or a lack of cohesion in discussions. There is a growing recognition within parliamentary teams of the need for guidance on facilitation best practices that foster inclusive, respectful, and productive interactions.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
There is an opportunity to design a facilitation guide that strengthens committee members' skills to lead inclusive and sensitive discussions. This guide would support members in managing group dynamics, creating a comfortable environment for sharing, and capturing and reflecting upon diverse perspectives effectively, whilst still gathering meaningful evidence to inform the inquiry, thus improving the overall quality of evidence and engagement.

How might we create a practical facilitation guide that helps committee members foster productive, respectful, and inclusive dialogue in committee sessions, thus improving the overall quality of evidence and engagement?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Clarity in Process: Provide a structure for committees to follow, covering preparation, setting expectations, active listening, and respectful handling of sensitive topics.

Practical Techniques: Include hands-on facilitation methods, such as reconfiguring seating arrangements, using visual tools, and integrating non-verbal forms of engagement (e.g., written notes or collaborative drawing).

Sensitivity to Committee Member Roles: Recognise that suggesting facilitation skills to Members may imply critique; therefore, design the guide to introduce facilitation techniques in a way that feels supportive rather than corrective, emphasising how these methods enhance overall engagement rather than implying any shortfall in current practices.

Available Resources and Support
PACT Team Expertise: Participation specialists with experience in facilitation and community engagement can help frame key elements of the guide and offer training support.

Existing Parliamentary Materials: Information from past engagement sessions, such as approaches used in the Scottish Youth Parliament and Disability Commissioner events, to illustrate effective facilitation techniques.

Committee Business Planning Days: Opportunities to integrate facilitation training sessions or briefings for committee members, providing hands-on practice and direct feedback.

Design Brief 04:
Approaches to Support Witnesses to Formulate Evidence & Solutions

Background and Context
During committee sessions, witnesses, especially petitioners, sometimes struggle to present evidence that demonstrates not only an issue but also potential solutions. Witnesses often face challenges in framing their contributions constructively to influence the outcomes, which can limit the impact of their evidence. By providing conceptual tools and templates to help participants express their perspectives creatively, we can enable them to more directly influence decision-making. This tool aims to support witnesses to develop and present actionable solutions, helping them articulate their visions and potential outcomes in a way that committees can easily incorporate.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
Many witnesses are passionate about the issues they present but find it difficult to convey possible solutions, especially within a formal parliamentary setting.

How might we create guidance tools that empower witnesses to clearly articulate the impact of their proposals and provide tangible solutions, ensuring their evidence directly contributes to committee decision-making?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Solution-focused Evidence: Develop prompts and templates to help witnesses articulate what a successful outcome would look like from their perspective, ensuring their evidence moves beyond identifying problems.

Use of Creative Tools: Incorporate options for visual or material methods – such as drawing, modeling, or diagramming – that allow witnesses to physically or visually demonstrate their ideas for solutions.

Reflective Elements: Encourage participants to reflect on how their proposed solutions fit into the wider context, helping them think systemically about change.

Available Resources and Support
Clerking, SPICe, and PACT Expertise: Leverage knowledge from clerks and SPICe to design templates that align with the needs of parliamentary reports and evidence standards. Build upon PACT's approaches to supporting deliberation in panels.

Guides for Self-Reporting: Draw on existing resources that help participants self-report lived experience, adapting these for an emphasis on solutions and outcomes.

Hands-on Engagement: Consider offering briefings or guidance sessions to introduce witnesses to these tools and encourage their creative use.

Design Brief 05:
A Participant-Driven Evidence Capture & Presentation Tool

Background and Context
Committee scrutiny relies on a deep understanding of lived experiences and informal interactions to inform decision-making effectively. Traditional evidence capture methods, however, often miss the full richness and nuance of participant perspectives. This tool aims to empower stakeholders to document and present their insights through creative, participant-driven methods, blending visual storytelling and structured reporting to capture the true impact of personal experiences in scrutiny contexts.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
While lived experiences and informal engagements play a critical role in the scrutiny process, standard approaches to evidence collection often overlook participants' unique contributions. There is a need for an engaging, user-friendly tool that enables participants to capture and present their perspectives in a way that is authentic, visually rich, and influential in foregrounding key evidence.

How might we design a tool that empowers participants to capture and convey their experiences effectively, integrating visual and narrative elements to reflect the value of lived experience in committee scrutiny?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Capture Authentic Voices: Develop creative techniques – such as storytelling, visual methods, and photography – to enable participants to convey their perspectives and lived experiences in ways that resonate with committees.

Document Informal Engagements: Create a structured yet flexible approach for recording both formal and informal interactions, ensuring that all participant contributions are valued in the scrutiny process.

Facilitate Accessible Reporting: Design user-friendly templates and an interface that help participants organise and present their evidence in a structured way that aligns with parliamentary needs.

Available Resources and Support
Training Workshops: Sessions for facilitators on effective storytelling, photography, and visual communication techniques, supporting them in capturing meaningful moments and insights.

Template and Guidance Library: Customisable templates and resources on best practices for combining text and visual evidence in a way that is compelling for committees.

Facilitation Guides: Resources for facilitators on implementing the tool effectively, ensuring consistent documentation of informal interactions and lived experiences.

Design Brief 07:
Reimagining the Content & Format of the Formal Report for Multi-Level Communication

Background and Context
Formal reports are essential for communicating findings and recommendations in parliamentary settings, yet their traditional formats often hinder effective engagement with diverse audiences. This tool aims to transform how formal reports are structured and presented, enhancing clarity and accessibility for committees, and further stakeholders including policymakers, community members, and the media.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
Current formal reporting methods can be overly complex, limiting their effectiveness in reaching and resonating with broader audiences.

How might we redesign the content and format of formal reports to facilitate multi-level communication and ensure that critical information is accessible and engaging to all stakeholders?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Audience-Centric Design: Develop formats tailored to the needs and preferences of various audience groups, ensuring that reports are understandable and engaging.

Visual Communication: Develop guidance for how and when to best integrate visual elements (infographics, charts, and photography) to complement textual content, making complex information more digestible and visually appealing.

Interactive Formats: Explore digital formats that allow for interactivity, enabling users to engage with the content dynamically and access information at different levels of detail.

Available Resources and Support
Training Sessions: Offer workshops for report writers to develop skills in creating audience-focused content, visual communication, and narrative techniques.

Feedback and Iteration: Implement a feedback loop with target audiences to refine report formats based on user experience and comprehension, ensuring]] continuous improvement.

Pilot Programs: Test new report formats with select projects, gathering insights on effectiveness and areas for enhancement before broader implementation

---

Design Brief 06:
Managing Expectations & Designing the Feedback Loop for Community Participants

Background and Context
Participants can face challenges when engaging with committee scrutiny processes. Community members often engage with parliamentary inquiries under the assumption that their input will lead to concrete changes. However, the distinction between legislative scrutiny and decision-making by the Scottish Government can create confusion. This gap can lead to frustration, especially when participants invest emotionally in sharing lived experiences but feel that their contributions are not acknowledged or acted upon.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
There is a need to establish clear, transparent mechanisms that manage community expectations and close the feedback loop following their participation. The current system relies on sporadic updates and is limited by a lack of systematic follow-up, often leaving participants unaware of the impact of their input.

How might we design a feedback system that honors the time, insights, and emotional investment of community participants, keeping them informed and engaged without overburdening parliamentary staff?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Responsiveness: Create an accessible system to update participants on the outcomes of their contributions, including any references in committee discussions or reports.

Sustainability: Ensure the feedback process is manageable within existing resources, avoiding heavy reliance on manual tracking by clerks or PACT.

Accessibility: The feedback should be easy for participants to understand and access, potentially using multimedia elements like short video clips or summary infographics.

Available Resources and Support
PACT Support: Experienced facilitators who understand participants' needs and can help frame the feedback mechanisms.

Parliamentary Tools: The Scottish Parliament TV clipping tool for sharing brief video updates of discussions involving participant input.

Community Partners: Established relationships with third-sector organisations who can assist in sharing updates within community networks.

Design Brief 08:
Creatively Communicating the Scrutiny Process & How It Operates to Diverse Public Audiences

Background and Context
Effectively communicating the nuances of committee scrutiny to the public can be challenging. Many people are unfamiliar with the process and may find parliamentary language and formality alienating. To build trust and engagement, the public needs accessible, engaging, and relatable information that demystifies the work of committees and illustrates how the scrutiny process impacts real issues.

Design Challenge and Problem Statement
Current communications can feel overly formal or disconnected from the public's perspective, which limits broad engagement. There is an opportunity to develop creative materials that break down complex topics, make committee work visible, and use storytelling to connect with diverse audiences. The goal is to foster a more informed public that understands and values the scrutiny process and feels empowered to participate.

How might we communicate the scrutiny process in an accessible, engaging way that resonates with diverse public audiences and highlights its relevance to their lives?

Design Objectives and Criteria
Demystify Parliamentary Procedures: Use simplified language and clear visuals to explain how scrutiny operates, addressing common barriers like parliamentary terminology and procedural complexity.

Use Engaging Visuals and Media: Develop a range of media (e.g., infographics, videos, interactive timelines) to represent the work of committees in an accessible and appealing format.

Build Trust through Transparency: Ensure the materials convey a clear narrative of accountability, showing that committees are actively listening and valuing stakeholder input.

Available Resources and Support
Storytelling Resources: Examples of how scrutiny impacts real issues, enabling relatable narratives that emphasise the public's role in parliamentary work.

PCO and PACT Expertise: Understanding the interests and preferences of diverse community groups, shaping messaging, simplifying language.

Multimedia Content Creators: Working with videographers, graphic designers, and digital media specialists to produce engaging infographics, short explainer videos, and interactive timelines.

Appendix 05: Participant Information Sheet

PARliament Engagement:
Applying Participatory Action Research and Creative Methods to the
Committee Scrutiny Process within the Scottish Parliament

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research project led by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) and the Participation and Communities Team (PACT) through the Scottish Parliament Academic Fellowship Scheme 2024/25. The research is being carried out by the School of Innovation and Technology (SIT) at The Glasgow School of Art (GSA). Before you decide whether to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being undertaken and what it will involve. If anything is unclear or if you require further information, please ask.

What is the purpose of the research project?
Underpinned by the Scottish Parliament's Strategic Plan and Engagement Strategy, the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee have been looking to institutionalise deliberative democracy within the Scottish Parliament, and work is ongoing to build a blueprint to deliver this aspiration in Session 7 of the Parliament. To complement this work, this research explores how creative and participatory methods can support effective ways of gathering evidence to enhance parliamentary scrutiny and committee recommendations. The research adopts an immersive Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology to support engagment with Researchers, Committee Clerks, Participation Specialists, and Communications Specialists to identify opportunities for new approaches and to co-design and pilot tools and techniques to harness these. Insights and findings will inform guidance on applying visual approaches to rigorously gather and use evidence and the development of a toolkit to support alternative working practices.

Why have I been invited?
You have been invited because you have experience and expertise in the parliamentary scrutiny process and supporting the work of committees. You are being invited to be part of the core participant group for the research (see below).

What will the research involve?
As part of the research we are conducting the following engagement activities:
- **An Ethnographic Shadowing Activity**: Exploring your role and practices concerning collection, analysis, reporting, and external communication of evidence within the scrutiny process.
- **A Semi-structured Interview**: Reflecting upon challenges; identifying opportunities for new approaches and tools to support innovation; framing these within *design briefs*;
- **Two Co-Design Workshops**: Collaboratively developing proposals to prototype and evaluate within live scrutiny settings.

1

- **An Evaluation Session and Follow-on Survey:** Sharing reflections on the research outcomes and contributing to shaping recommendations.

The core group of participants are invited to take part in the full programme of activities, and a further extended group to be involved in co-design and evaluation, aligned to their roles, experiences, interests, and availability. Participation will entail a time commitment of approximately 10 hours from September to December 2024 for each participant. There will also be opportunities for informal discussion and support for piloting as the research progresses. The GSA Researcher will be in touch to provide further details of how and when activities will take place and where possible, dates, times, and venues will be arranged to accommodate your needs.

What will happen if I decide to take part?
If you think that you would like to take part in the research, please complete the attached Participant Consent Form and return this to the GSA researcher by **03.09.24**.

Each element of consent will be carefully and simply explained. Ethnographic Shadowing will take place for an agreed period of over the course of one day in the Scottish Parliament. Semi-structured Interviews will last one hour and take place as a follow-up activity. Two Co-design Workshops will be carried out – the first to develop ideas for new tools and approaches; the second to develop proposals and plans for prototyping these. Each workshop will last two hours. The potential impact of co-designed tools and approaches will be explored collaboratively in a one hour Evaluation Session, and individually through a brief Evaluation Survey. Interviews, Workshops, and the Evaluation Session will take place in-person at The Scottish Parliament and remotely over Microsoft Teams video meetings, hosted by the researchers using GSA's licenced and secure institutional account, where appropriate. They will be structured by a systematic framework and methods for supporting and capturing group discussion, ideation, and reflection.

Research data will be captured during Ethnographic Shadowing through notetaking and sketching. In the interviews, visual prompts will be used to structure dialogue and research data will be captured through digital audio recording. In the Workshops and Evaluation Session research data will be gathered by digital audio recording in-person activity, and recording Teams meetings directly onto the researcher's GSA laptop for any remote engagement. Across the in-person activities a range of creative techniques including participatory mapping, paper prototyping, and storyboarding will be used to conceptualise issues, challenges, and opportunities; generate mock-ups of new tools and approaches; and envisage their effects and impacts within the scrutiny process. Please indicate via the Participant Consent Form or speak with the researcher if you are uncomfortable being recorded in this way.

2

Following data collection, text and image-based data will then be extracted from observational notes and sketches, audio recordings, and creative artefacts generated by participants and coded thematically within a visual framework. All audio recordings will be transcribed by the researchers. During transcription details that might identify participants will be removed. After transcription audio recordings will be securely destroyed and not used directly in the research. Further detail is provided below outlining how the research will be used.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

Your personal data collected through the research will be stored securely, as approved by GSA's Data Protection Officer, with access restricted to the named GSA researcher. Your research data (responses and contributions captured through shadowing, interviews, workshops, and surveys) will be used solely for the purpose of this project.

The personal and research data collected through the research will be stored securely on the researchers' GSA password-protected laptop computers, before being transferred to password-protected sections of GSA's network. Hard copies will be stored in a secure cabinet in the SIT office. This cabinet is only accessed by SIT staff, and an administrator is the keyholder.

The researcher will carry out a phase of thematic analysis to examine patterns and foreground insights and recommendations from the research data. Taking the form of a written report with tables, charts, and figures to communicate key findings, this aggregated analysis of the research will be presented to the Scottish Parliament to support their position on the use of visual methods to the committee scrutiny process. Key reflections and findings will also be disseminated through a blog on SPICe Spotlight and the outcomes of the research may also be included in further conference presentation and / or academic journal publication.

Your personal and research data will be managed in accordance with GDPR legislation. Everything that you choose to share will be made anonymous and will only be disseminated through the use of pseudonyms. Personal data will be retained for one year, and research data will be retained for ten years then securely destroyed in line with GSA's research data management policy.

Who is conducting and funding the research?

The research is being conducted by Cara Broadley, Research Fellow at GSA, in partnership with SPICe and PACT. The research is led and part-funded by The Scottish Parliament.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. In this case, your permission will be sought to include your contributions anonymously in the reporting of the research. If you do not give your permission your contributions will be destroyed securely and withdrawn from the research.

3

Who should I contact for further information?

Dr Cara Broadley
Research Fellow
School of Innovation and Technology
Haldane Building
24 Hill Street
The Glasgow School of Art
Glasgow G3 6RQ

C.Broadley@gsa.ac.uk | 07538308391

The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) is committed to producing research and knowledge exchange that is of the utmost rigour and of the highest quality. Please refer to our Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Policy at the following link: https://gsadocuments.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/gsa-research-ke-ethics-policy-2016.pdf

For further information or to make a complaint contact Research Office, The Glasgow School of Art, research@gsa.ac.uk

4

Appendix 06: Participant Consent Form

PARliament Engagement:
Applying Participatory Action Research and Creative Methods to the Committee Scrutiny Process within the Scottish Parliament

Participant Consent Form

Dr Cara Broadley | Research Fellow | School of Innovation and Technology
The Glasgow School of Art | c.broadley@gsa.ac.uk | 07538308391

Please circle or highlight yes or no:

1. I have read and understood the Information Sheet about the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions about it.
   Yes   No

2. I agree to being a participant for the purposes of the above research project.
   Yes   No

3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. Any information I have given will be used with my permission or may be withdrawn from the research.   Yes   No

4. I agree to participate in an ethnographic shadowing activity.
   Yes   No

5. I agree to participate in a semi-structured interview.
   Yes   No

6. I agree to participate in two in-person co-design workshops.
   Yes   No

7. I agree to participate in an evaluation session.
   Yes   No

8. I understand that the data I provide in this research will remain anonymous and will be reported through the use of pseudonyms.
   Yes   No

1

---

9. I agree to my anonymous contributions being directly quoted where appropriate, and aggregated into an analysis of the research and to be used in a report to inform the work of the Scottish Parliament.
   Yes   No

10. I agree to my anonymous contributions being directly quoted where appropriate, and aggregated for purposes such as funding proposals, journal articles, conference paper / presentations, lectures or broadcasts.
    Yes   No

11. To ensure that we can accommodate any specific needs you might have, please let us know if you have any accessibility requirements or preferences for participating in the research.

   ....
   ....
   ....

12. Do you wish to add any other instructions or restrictions in relation to your contribution?
    Yes   No

   If **yes** please give details

   ....
   ....
   ....

   Signed:...

   Date:..

   Name (please print):...

   ....

2

Appendix 07: Participant Recruitment Flyer

PARliament Engagement

PARliament Engagement is a research project led by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) through the Scottish Parliament Academic Fellowship Scheme 2024/25. The research is being carried out by Dr Cara Broadley from The Glasgow School of Art, and aims to understand how creative and participatory methods can support effective modes of evidence to enhance parliamentary scrutiny and committee recommendations.

We have developed an immersive and collaborative approach to undertake the research and are passionate about working closely with Researchers, Committee Clerks, Participation Specialists, and Communications Specialists to identify issues within your working practices and to co-design and pilot tools and techniques to address these.

Your participation in the research would require:
· 10 hours direct participation and further engagement in piloting and evaluating the research outcomes;
· curiosity and willingness to embrace an exploratory and participatory research approach.

The research aims to support your work by:
· co-creating prototype tools and techniques to apply and evaluate within live settings;
· providing opportunities to reflect individually and with colleagues upon challenges and opportunities around how evidence is framed and used;
· promoting the development of your innovative and creative skills and capacities.

If you are interested in finding out more about the research and what your participation would involve, please contact Cara at c.broadley@gsa.ac.uk.

SCHOOL OF
INNOVATION
AND TECHNOLOGY
THE GLASGOW
SCHOOL OF ART