

# Haringey Review of Overview & Scrutiny

## Report July 2014

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### 1. Introduction and Summary of Recommendations

1.1. CfPS was commissioned by Haringey Council to carry out a very brief review of overview and scrutiny and make recommendations on potential topics for the scrutiny work programme for 2014-15. There were 4 specific questions to be addressed by the review:

- a) What has worked well/not so well over the past two years?
- b) Given the existing challenges and priorities in the borough, what issues should the scrutiny panels consider as part of their work programme for 2014/15 and what should the consequent number of panels be?
- c) Are there any changes that could be made to the existing Overview and Scrutiny Protocol which could improve the effectiveness of O&S?
- d) Is there anything we can learn from O&S structural redevelopment in other boroughs?

1.2. I would like to thank all the members and officers who assisted with the review and who gave their time to answer questions. No interviewee will be quoted or identified as responsible for any specific comments and I was grateful for the frank and also constructive way in which everyone approached the discussions. Particular thanks to Melanie Ponomarenko for working with us to find slots for the interviews at very short notice.

1.3. We make seven recommendations:

1. There should be an opportunity later in the year for senior officers, cabinet and the OSC to have a discussion – which may benefit from external facilitation – about the medium to long-term approach to scrutiny, how it can engage constructively with the big programmes and plans of the council, and what it needs from the rest of the council to be most effective.
2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be proactive in managing and overseeing the workload of the panels, and should adopt a more rigorous approach to deciding whether topics can be added to the work programme.
3. An OSC meeting in June / July each year should look at the MTFP and determine the key questions to be asked by panels during their budget scrutiny sessions, focusing on risk, assumptions, areas of over or under-spending and comparing expenditure to performance. Panels should have access to advice from finance officers to assist in challenging departmental budgets, and should set aside time distinct from the formal

scrutiny meetings to improve their understanding of the figures and ask questions of clarification so that their scrutiny questions can be better informed.

4. Scrutiny should use performance data more effectively to drive the focus of their scrutiny inquiries. Haringey should consider offering some member skills development in this area and the CfPS-Grant Thornton offer (attached at Appendix 2) may be one option to consider.
5. The list of topics generated through this review should be further tested, developed and prioritized at the session on 30 July, and then further scoping should be done once the final list is agreed at the formal OSC meeting on 31 July. Consideration should be given to using different approaches and public involvement should be sought in all reviews. The remits of the OSC and Panels should be amended to reflect the new agreed work programme once finalised.
6. The Protocol should be amended as set out in Section 4, including the development and use of Chair role profiles (if not already in use).
7. In discussing the future role, purpose and function of Overview and Scrutiny in Haringey, the Council should take account of trends and lessons in other boroughs, in particular the benefits to be gained from a leaner structure and from scrutiny focusing more on its contribution to members' outward-facing community champion role.

## **2. What has worked well / not so well over the past two years?**

2.1. A number of pieces of scrutiny work were cited as having been constructive and had a positive impact on the council, partners or residents. These included:

- Mental health reviews which were felt to have been well-received and seen as constructive by the Mental Health Trust.
- A review of learning disabilities which was mentioned by a few people.
- Some environmental reviews, for example on public engagement in planning which had looked at best practice elsewhere and helped mollify residents who were angry with council, and a review of environmental enforcement.
- A review which had included looking at the future of area forums, where the cabinet member had been able to use scrutiny to develop the policy and had worked well with them to develop recommendations that were constructive.
- Reviews from a few years ago on betting shops and post office closures which were felt to be good examples of scrutiny picking up on issues that were important to the community and not inwardly focused on council services.

- The work across North London by the Joint Health OSC was felt to be positive and to involve members in working well with health partners – although we have not been able to test this perception with health partners themselves.
- 2.2. However, the strong message from a number of people was that scrutiny is not as well-connected into the core work of the authority as it could be, and its contribution to the big issues facing the borough is too often limited or not focused on the right questions. There is good will on all sides for improving this, and a strong opportunity is felt to exist with the election of a large number of new members to refresh the approach, building on what has worked well but refocusing and working in different ways. In reflecting back this message to the council, the intention is not to criticize anyone involved, but rather to highlight the obvious point that any system can benefit from review and renewal every now and again.
- 2.3. A key issue that was flagged up by several of the people spoken to was that there is a poor collective ownership of the purpose and role of scrutiny in Haringey. This was felt to be simply a reflection of the degree of change at corporate level, with a busy programme that has not permitted discussion about the potential contribution of overview and scrutiny to the forward agenda of the council and borough. There was appreciation of the positive and open approach of several senior officers, cabinet members and departments who have welcomed and engaged scrutiny in their work, but an acknowledgement that engagement varied, and was overly dependent on individual personalities to work (or not). There is a desire amongst officers and members to collectively agree the core purpose and role of democratic scrutiny and challenge in Haringey and to integrate and systematise its contribution to the rest of the council's work.

**Recommendation 1:**

There should be an opportunity later in the year for senior officers, cabinet and the OSC to have a discussion – which may benefit from external facilitation – about the medium to long-term approach to scrutiny, how it can engage constructively with the big programmes and plans of the council, and what it needs from the rest of the council to be most effective.

- 2.4. A further issue seems to have been an uneven workload amongst the existing four panels, and a lack of oversight of the work programme for scrutiny over the year, which had resulted in one panel in particular being very active, although it was acknowledged that this had generated some positive outcomes on issues of importance to the community. There is concern about the overall scrutiny workload and its impact on the small – and valued – team of scrutiny officers. Perhaps more importantly than the size of the work programme is a concern that there is a lack of transparency about how it is arrived at, and whether the interests of individual members are driving the choice of

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topics at the expense of a more collectively shared agenda about what are the big issues facing the borough and council, and where scrutiny can most usefully add value.

2.5. We feel that this is a symptom of scrutiny's relative disconnectedness from the rest of the council and will be helped by the recommendation above. We say more about workload and panels in the next section, but there needs to be stronger oversight and management of the programme by the OSC, and willingness by members to prioritise and match ambitions to resources. The former use of feasibility studies to decide whether to carry out a scrutiny review was referred to as having been useful in assessing whether the proposed piece of work would be valuable, and this could be revisited. We attach at Appendix 1 the "Scrutiny in one page" approach to determining whether a scrutiny project should be agreed, developed by Gloucestershire, which may be useful.

**Recommendation 2:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be proactive in managing and overseeing the workload of the panels, and should adopt a more rigorous approach to deciding whether topics can be added to the work programme.

2.6. Budget scrutiny was also acknowledged to be an area which Haringey – in common with many others – had not yet managed to get right. There is felt to be a lack of clarity about its role and purpose, despite this being set out in some detail in the O&S Protocol (Section 8). The process set out there seems to be a reasonable one – and one which is used in a number of councils – but we would suggest a more directive approach by the OSC to the panels to ensure their scrutiny of the budget and financial plans in their areas is focused on the right questions and on challenging risks, assumptions, value for money and the degree to which the budget enables the stated priorities of the council to be delivered. This will help avoid the temptation to try and scrutinize the budget line-by-line which can lead to a focus on small items of expenditure at the expense of big risks, assumptions and plans.

**Recommendation 3:**

An OSC meeting in June / July should look at the MTFP and determine the key questions to be asked by panels during their budget scrutiny sessions, focusing on risk, assumptions, areas of over or under-spending and comparing expenditure to performance. Panels should have access to advice from finance officers to assist in challenging departmental budgets, and should set aside time distinct from the formal scrutiny meetings to improve their understanding of the figures and ask questions of clarification so that their scrutiny questions can be better informed.

2.7. This needs to go alongside better use of financial and performance information and data by scrutiny. The council is improving its corporate use of data and information, with a view to making this more transparent for the public, and this needs to flow through into how members access and use data to inform their challenge of performance, for example identifying the key performance indicators which panels and the OSC wish to monitor over the year, and using this data to inform the choice of areas for deeper scrutiny.

2.8. We believe that members would benefit from some specific skills training in use of performance data and information to develop their approach to performance management which was also acknowledged to be weak. CfPS is developing an offer in partnership with Grant Thornton around member development in these areas and would be happy to offer Haringey access to this on a pro bono or reduced cost basis as the offer is still in pilot form.

#### **Recommendation 4:**

Scrutiny should use performance data more effectively to drive the focus of their scrutiny inquiries. Haringey should consider offering some member skills development in this area and the CfPS-Grant Thornton offer (attached at Appendix 2) may be one option to consider.

### **3. What issues should the scrutiny panels consider for their work programme for 2014-15?**

3.1. The members and officers with whom we spoke had a number of suggestions for good topics for scrutiny for the coming year and the full list is attached as Appendix 3 for completeness, which demonstrates that there was a strong measure of agreement from interviewees about the priorities. Obviously we were not able to speak to a large number of people in the time available, and the previous approach involving a survey of members / partners / the public has not been possible this year for a variety of reasons. However, there is considerable appetite for some work on which scrutiny can get started as soon as possible. Accordingly we suggest below a 'starter for ten' on an initial work programme, which should be tested and then further developed, prioritised, refined and some scoping begun at the planned workshop on 30<sup>th</sup> July with a wider group of members.

3.2. These topics are currently very broad-brush and there was a strong view expressed that it would be important to think about different ways of 'doing' scrutiny – not just through long, in-depth reviews – for example through one-off performance reports and challenge panels or 'single day' evidence sessions. The scoping and prioritising 'scrutiny on one page' approach suggested earlier could help refine the topics and choose the most appropriate format and approach. It is important that this is done rigorously as part of the scoping exercise and that an appropriately focused scope for each piece of work is

identified, in consultation with officers and cabinet members so that scrutiny's contribution can be as constructive and relevant as possible.

### **OSC**

- Budget strategy / impact of cuts / impact of welfare reform (latter could be another take on community resilience)
- Customer services / online services / channel shift (could be part of community engagement in service transformation)

### **Children's**

- Haringey 54,000 – contract with Impower
- Children's social care – Implementing Munro and safely bringing down numbers of children in care
- Looking at comparisons between academies and community schools
- CAMHS, including support at transition from children's to adults mental health services

### **Adults and Health**

- Adults social care and health integration
- Access to health services, tackling obesity
- Early help and prevention work - could be cross cutting, depends on area of focus
- Care homes – holding external providers to account where don't have formal powers of scrutiny – develop approach to doing this

### **Communities and Environment**

- Enhancing community resilience – different ways of working with community to co-create new ways of working and delivering services
- Community engagement in service transformation (could be linked to one above)
- Streetscene and liveability
- Street cleansing and waste management (could form part of the one above, depending on scope)

### **Housing and Regeneration**

- Private sector housing regulation and landlord licensing – develop a Haringey approach
- Regeneration – land sales, Housing Associations' compliance with planning conditions to support regeneration
- Regeneration – development of new housing products – what is a distinctive Haringey approach, what are different products available?

### **Recommendation 5:**

The list of topics generated through this review should be further tested, developed and prioritized at the session on 30 July, and then further scoping should be done once the final list is agreed at the formal OSC meeting on 31 July. Consideration should be given to using

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different approaches and public involvement should be sought in all reviews. The remits of the OSC and Panels should be amended to reflect the new agreed work programme once finalised.

- 3.3. Everyone I spoke to agreed that form should follow function and that the most important thing was for the structure to be evidence-based and to follow the agreed choices of topics and themes. There was no desire to return to a fully flexible task and finish way of working as it was felt that having standing panels enabled expertise to be built up amongst members. However, clearly the remits of the panels need to respond to the issues that the council collectively feels are currently the most important rather than staying frozen in their original composition. I have carefully considered the proposal for a fifth panel but do not feel it is necessary in order to have a panel that can give adequate attention to regeneration issues.
- 3.4. Virtually everyone agreed with the proposal that regeneration was such a major and important issue for Haringey it should form part of some in-depth panel work rather than being added on to the OSC remit. However there was very limited support for the idea of an extra panel and considerable concern about the potential impact on work load – both member and officer. The scrutiny officer team is dedicated and hard-working but it is important that members do not inadvertently abuse that commitment; it is hard for officers to say no to members, however good the working relationship.
- 3.5. Managing workload, however many panels there are, is accepted as absolutely vital to ensuring scrutiny's effectiveness, and I was encouraged that members are alive to the risks inherent in having more formal entities that require servicing and can create work simply by the fact of their existence. However, there are some big issues that have been suggested for the work programme and if they are to be carried out effectively they will need to be properly resourced, both by members and by officers. Trying to do too much on limited resources will limit their impact.
- 3.6. It would be possible to divide up the list of topics in a variety of different ways. For example there is an argument for combining communities and regeneration rather than housing and regeneration. To some extent this will depend on the ultimate focus decided for any scrutiny work on regeneration, which is obviously a very broad topic. From what interviewees said, it seemed to me that the focus which was of most interest was around housing, land and development, rather than the community development aspect of regeneration. However, there was considerable interest in the idea of community engagement and resilience, which is obviously another angle on regeneration. The scoping work will be vital to help resolve this. On balance it is my view that the topics that have been suggested by members and officers – once further refined and prioritised – can be effectively managed and delivered in some combination of remits for four panels and the OSC. The workshop on the 30 July will contribute to refining and prioritizing and lead to the final work programme to be agreed on 31 July by the OSC,

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and the final panel structure should flow from that, taking into account the issues around deliverability and workload flagged up during this review and the requirement for cross-party consensus on the final structure.

#### **4. Are there any changes that should be made to the existing O&S Protocol which could improve its effectiveness?**

- 4.1. The main feedback I got from interviewees about the Protocol is that they do not use it. It is felt to be out of date and not very helpful. Therefore additional or amended processes have been developed on an ad hoc basis, without reference to the Protocol itself. One example of this is that the Council has occasionally convened a joint meeting of the OSC and Cabinet to build the relationship and collaboration between the two, but there is nothing on this in the section in the Protocol on the process for Cabinet involvement.
- 4.2. More generally it is my view that the Protocol is not enabling enough and in some places inadvertently restricts how scrutiny might work and develop. For example the Aims of the OSC in section 2 are all about council performance and services, and 3.6 states that the Scrutiny Panels are intended to “examine designated public services”. This contradicts 3.1 under Responsibilities which correctly highlights that the power of overview and scrutiny is to consider any *issue* affecting the authority’s area or residents’ wellbeing – not limited to council or other public services. Increasingly crucial services are not provided by public sector bodies, for example housing associations or care home providers, but interviewees themselves acknowledged that some of the best work in the past had been projects like the reviews of betting shops and post office closures as these were responding to a big issue for the public not being focused on council service minutiae.
- 4.3. Similarly, 7.2 states that “any partner, member or service user may suggest an item for scrutiny” and “the OSC shall have regard to all such suggestions”. It would send a much stronger signal about the intention of scrutiny to engage proactively with partners and service users if this was worded in a more proactive way, such as “the OSC will actively seek suggestions from partners, members and service users to contribute to the development of its work programme”. This would also help focus overview and scrutiny outwards beyond the activities of the Cabinet and Council.
- 4.4. The Protocol could do more to enhance the transparency of how scrutiny operates, for example through incorporating the earlier recommendation around development of the work programme to involve clear criteria for prioritizing and agreeing whether an item should be included in the work programme. It is also unclear from the Protocol what the criteria are for determining membership of the OSC and how the allocation of particular Panel chair positions to particular members is determined, other than that they must be members of the OSC. Given every OSC member is likely to become a chair of a Panel, it is important that they understand the skills required from a Scrutiny Chair and those



appointing them are able to demonstrate why they are the best person for that role. A role profile for a Scrutiny Chair could usefully be appended to the Protocol and a set of principles and characteristics of good scrutiny up front would help set the tone and expectations for those involved in the function. Having looked on the website I could not find any role profiles for Scrutiny and this should be developed if they do not exist. CfPS can provide examples.

- 4.5. If the other recommendations made in this report are adopted, the Protocol should also be amended to reflect these, for example the addition of an OSC meeting at the start of the budget scrutiny timescale set out in 8.3, to determine the focus for budget scrutiny by the Panels.

#### **Recommendation 6:**

The Protocol should be amended as set out in Section 4, including the development and adoption of Chair role profiles (if not already in use).

## **5. What can we learn from structural developments in other boroughs?**

- 5.1. There was considerable interest expressed by many in looking outwards and learning more from what others are doing, and a feeling that O&S in Haringey had perhaps become too insular and set in a single way of doing scrutiny over the years. Broadly (according to the evidence from the most recent CfPS Annual Survey of Overview and Scrutiny in Local Government, published last week):
- Officer support is declining, down to an average of fewer than two per council, its lowest level since 2004. London is comparatively well-resourced still with an average of 2.65, making Haringey slightly over the average with a team of three officers.
  - More councils are moving to a system where scrutiny is supported by officers who also have traditional democratic services / committee responsibilities, away from the dedicated scrutiny officer resource which Haringey still has, although it is still the most common form of support in London. This type of dedicated, specialist support does correlate with being more effective on some of the measures of effectiveness that we use.
  - Size of committee does not appear to impact on effectiveness, but having fewer committees *does* appear to be linked to being more effective on the measures of effectiveness that we use. Anecdotally we think there is a trend towards fewer committees.

- Ensuring there is a proper system for monitoring and evaluating impact eg through tracking progress with implementing recommendations also appears to correlate with more effectiveness, although not on all measures.
- Those councils where scrutiny of external partners is considered an important role for scrutiny (ie not focusing solely on cabinet reports and policies / decisions but seeing councilors fulfilling their role as democratic representatives of the place and using scrutiny therefore to challenge and hold to account others who deliver services in the place), tend to feel more positive about scrutiny and that it has more value. Seeing scrutiny as a vehicle for this outward-facing, community champion role of councillors was suggested by some of our interviewees and may be worth considering as part of the future role and purpose of scrutiny discussions that are proposed.

5.2. Not drawn from our survey, but there is anecdotal evidence that some boroughs are moving away from having an overarching coordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee altogether, and instead are convening more informal meetings of panel or subject committee scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs to review progress with the work plan and ensure coordination and collaboration where required. One London borough has adopted an interesting model where the chair of this meeting, which in their borough takes place biannually and jointly with the Cabinet, is the civic Mayor. This is in their capacity as the impartial 'conscience' or 'convenor' of the whole council, and is also apparently intended to help make the role more substantive and less purely ceremonial.

#### **Recommendation 7:**

In discussing the future role, purpose and function of Overview and Scrutiny in Haringey, the Council should take account of trends and lessons in other boroughs, in particular the benefits to be gained from a leaner structure and from scrutiny focusing more on its contribution to members' outward-facing community champion role.

## **6. Conclusion**

There is a great deal of scope for scrutiny in Haringey to play a much greater role in contributing to the forward strategic agenda of the council, and an opportunity for members, including the large number newly elected to the council in May, to refresh the council's approach to scrutiny, building on what has worked well in the past. It will require the function to be better connected with the rest of the council's corporate and service improvement and development work, and to become more outward-focused on issues that matter to the community.

At a time when resources are stretched and all councils and local public services are facing major socio-economic, demographic and other challenges, scrutiny's work programme must be focused on the priorities and issues where it can best help meet these challenges in the most effective way. Members will have more impact by focusing in depth on a few issues and doing it

well than by trying to cover too wide a range which will make it harder to find something new or meaningful to add within the resources and time available. There is clearly good will for taking scrutiny to another level and by taking time to reflect on what scrutiny's contribution should be I am confident that Haringey will be able to achieve this.

Jessica Crowe, Centre for Public Scrutiny  
14 July 2014

# Haringey Review of Overview & Scrutiny

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## Appendix 1

### Gloucestershire: Scrutiny in One Page

Gloucestershire has developed a simple, one-page strategy to test any request for a new scrutiny review or task and finish group.

It asks the following questions:

1. Is there public demand or need for the review, giving scrutiny a powerful mandate to demand change from policy-makers and service providers?
2. Is there a genuine opportunity to influence policy and practice - ie, will recommendations have a chance of making a difference?
3. Is there a clear focus for the review, recognising that going deep and narrow can have more impact than broad but shallow?
4. Have we thought about the most effective format and approach to the review, ensuring it is tailored to the particular subject?

Gloucestershire argues that if other authorities only carried out scrutiny reviews that met these principles, there might be less scrutiny but it would probably be better scrutiny.

# Haringey Review of Overview & Scrutiny

APPENDICES 14/7/2014

## Appendix 2



## Effective Governance Programme

(Draft Scope – July 2014)

## **Scope for CfPS Grant Thornton Member Development**

### **Overall concept**

A joint offering to review member-level governance arrangements and provide skills development opportunities for local authority members, in order to support the leader and the chief executive in establishing effective governance arrangements.

CfPS are at the forefront of developments in governance and scrutiny in local government and are highly influential in the sector. Grant Thornton provide extensive experience of financial management and governance in local authorities, from many years of working with an extensive audit and advisory client base.

### **Introduction**

May 2014 local council elections have taken place with significant changes to membership, and to administrations at many local authorities. New leaders, cabinet and committee members, portfolio holders and general members will be coming in with varying degrees of experience. Many new leaders will be keen to establish (or re-establish) effective governance arrangements.

Council members face a significant financial challenge at their organisations as funding for local government has been subject to significant cuts, with more to come, with many facing a financial tipping point in 2015/16. Many authorities are undertaking major transformation and other significant projects, in order to address this situation. In order to be successfully managed, the challenges and the solutions require strong governance and scrutiny on the part of members.

There is a steady stream of new members and new appointments to governance roles resulting from council elections or following council AGMs each year. Local authority governance can also benefit from developing the skills of existing and experienced members. Therefore the need for support is on going.

The general level of effective governance provided by members under the normal local authority arrangements has some disadvantages when compared to typical arrangements in other parts of the public sector. For example:

- the Non-exec Chair and non-executive director type of arrangement seen in the NHS has the benefit of being able to appoint members on the basis of the complementary skills and experience they bring collectively, and;
- The advantage of the independent board of governors or trustees type of arrangement, as seen at major Charities and not-for-profit organisations, is the non-political independence they bring.

Local government is different to other parts of the public sector, with the key driver being local democratic representation and legitimacy on the part of the members. The opportunity therefore, lies in helping local authorities to develop governance arrangements that build on some of the strengths this

provides, for example, the representation of local priorities, and to overcome some of the challenges, for example, how to balance political debate with the need for decisive and timely action and willingness to consider new policies and strategies in an objective and non-partisan way.

### **Benefits**

There are a number of potential benefits to local authorities and to individual members who establish effective governance and scrutiny arrangements:

- Members are able to more effectively and proportionately hold management to account, with a better understanding of the basic financial and other principles behind council decisions.
- Members can ensure that they fully understand the potential consequences of decisions, for which they are accountable.
- The risk of significant errors in decision making or of a failure to identify and address emerging risks, that may be politically damaging, is significantly reduced.
- Representation and protection of the public interest is increased.
- All members, particularly those with ambitions within the organisation, or for wider political office, can take the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment and develop their skills.
- The council can demonstrate to the public that it is committed to strong and transparent governance.

### **Barriers**

There are also some barriers to overcome, that may limit the attractiveness of the offering, which the benefits described above should help address:

- Members' motivations may be narrowly political and this can override the motivation for good governance and even good decision making.
- Members may be resistant to the threat of disproportionate challenge and scrutiny
- Management may be resistant to the threat of disproportionate challenge and scrutiny
- Disproportionately intensive governance arrangements may incur additional costs and cause delay to key projects or even contribute to decision paralysis.
- The resultant increased opportunity for public scrutiny may also incur costs and cause delay in implementing key projects.

It is likely therefore that the direct sponsorship and support of the leader as well as the chief executive, will be needed to make the offering viable . It will also be important to have the support of the Audit Committee Chair and key executive directors.

### **The nature of the offering**

The proposed offering can be split into two distinct areas, a review of current governance arrangements to identify development areas and a member skills development programme. These elements are designed to work together as a package or as independent modules. The package can be tailored and built up following an initial needs assessment process and discussion with the leader and chief executive.

## **Review of current governance arrangements**

This area of the work is intended to provide assurance to the local authority, that the Committee structure, agendas and process provide an effective platform for governance, scrutiny and decision making, and highlight any areas of risk or that require development.

Often councils will recognise an issue with their governance or with the quality of member scrutiny and decision-making when it is flagged up briefly by their auditor or via a Peer Challenge. There may be a need for further in-depth analysis of exactly where the weakness may lie – for example, is it about member skills and confidence, is it to do with political, personal or member-officer relationships, an issue with the wider corporate culture or with systems and structures.

Each of these developmental areas requires a different kind of support, and the presenting problem may not in fact be the one that needs treatment. For example it may appear to be a developmental need in member skills which councils might seek to address through member training, but underlying this might be a more fundamental cultural and relationship related issue. If this is not addressed, member training is unlikely to be effective on its own. CfPS Accountability Works for You framework provides a methodology for asking in-depth questions about an organisation's accountability, transparency and involvement arrangements to draw out exactly where the problems lie. Our review would:

- Use the Accountability Works for You framework as a starting point to design the interview questions, tailored to the brief provided by the client.
- Draw on our respective skills and experience of different aspects of governance to provide a balanced and experienced team of interviewers.
- Review key documentation, processes and agenda papers, again using respective skills and expertise in finance, audit and corporate governance (GT), overview and scrutiny, democratic services and council constitutions (CfPS).
- Produce an holistic set of recommendations covering all relevant areas of governance that may need improvement, including the potential to draw on the three elements of the member development offer outlined below.

The benefits of this approach to the council concerned are that diagnosis and follow-up improvement support will be done by the same team, ensuring that the offer more accurately meets member and organisational needs and is properly targeted to resolve the underlying problem.

The output will be in the form of a short report and/or slide presentation.

## **Member skills development**

This area of the work could be designed to follow a review of arrangement as described above, or would be used independently to address known developmental issues identified from other sources. The developmental programme is divided into three modules, that can be tailored to fit the specific needs of the Council.

### ***Module 1 – for all members***

Induction and top-up training for members.

- Definitions – governance & scrutiny
- Statutory powers & remit of members



- Principles of good governance (overview, scrutiny, behaviours and challenge) – e.g. Nolan Principles
- Understanding local government finance
- Understanding risk
- How to ask a good question
- What to look for (evidence and assurance)

### ***Module 2 – for Committee members and Portfolio Holders***

More advanced skills for those in specific governance roles or those aspiring to this.

- Chairing skills (advanced hints and tips)
- Establishing/managing consensus
- Listening & communicating (e.g. provided by GT talent team)
- Project governance
- Leading overview and scrutiny reviews
- Engaging with external partners and stakeholders
- Commissioning, prioritising and scoping scrutiny reviews
- The characteristics of good information and using data to inform effective challenge
- Individualised skills for corporate Scrutiny Chair or Portfolio roles.

### ***Module 3 – for Leaders & Committee Chairs***

Tailored support to help leaders improve governance to help drive change and deliver political objectives.

- Reviewing and improving governance processes and structures
- Establishing clear political and managerial accountability and responsibility
- Building and managing political consensus
- The composition and membership of governance bodies
- Appointing individuals to the right roles
- Ensuring effective performance management and delivery of outcomes
- Being proactive about transparency and making it manageable
- Understanding, involving and getting value from members, partners and other stakeholders

### **Format for skills development**

We recognise that traditional short, slide based presentations will not be an attractive package for skills development. Therefore we propose to tailor the offering along the following options:

- At least two presenter/ facilitators (e.g. GT and CfPS)
- Bring in speakers from other Councils (identified as good practice)
- Sessions to be at least half day (or multiple part day sessions)
- CfPS input key to political credibility
- GT input will be finance focused, but using our wider experience – e.g. project management and risk.
- Seminar format and/or facilitated round table discussion
- practical exercises and role play [similar to the approach GT took to UGA].
- 'Board to board' style challenge sessions similar to that undertaken as part of FT assessment.
- Analysis of existing arrangements using CfPS Accountability Works for You framework as basis for engagement via Module 3 (see below)
- Accessing members is not easy, so weekend delivery should be considered.
- Should include both introductory sessions and follow up sessions to re-enforce the messages.
- Supporting collateral

# Haringey Review of Overview & Scrutiny

APPENDICES 14/7/2014

The Centre for Public Scrutiny is a charity (1136243) and company limited by guarantee (5133443). Our vision is for transparent, inclusive and accountable public services which lead to better outcomes for citizens and communities. CfPS promotes the value of these principles and supports their practical application to underpin governance at both national and local level.

## Expert, Practical, Innovative

- Independent expert analysis of good governance, scrutiny and accountability in public services
- High quality practical support that helps those who commission, deliver and scrutinise public services become more accountable, transparent and inclusive towards the communities they serve
- Innovative governance approaches that help communities, service users and beneficiaries and those who commission and deliver public services co-create better outcomes together

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## Appendix 3

### List of all work programme topics suggested by interviewees

- Integration of health and social care
- CAMHS
- Housing – private sector housing, tenants support.
- Universal credit and wider welfare reform – how prepared council is, how prepared community is.
- Mental health – CAMHS especially child to adult transition
- Waste management street sweeping
- Housing, land sales, social housing and regeneration
- Managing cuts
- Are any of the 4 programmes being looked at by scrutiny because they are transformation progs – fundamental to council's savings plans and future operation.
- Regeneration is important, also issues around health.
- Community resilience – could decide what element of this to focus on. Eg different ways of working and working with community, existing groups, eg different ways of doing parks management
- Access to health services, tackling obesity
- Customer services - Channel shift and on-line services
- All three areas could involve new public engagement and involvement
- If do choose regeneration – need to decide what aspect of this they want to look at, eg is there a distinctive Haringey approach, if about housing, could investigate different housing products – get a different take and perspective.
- Community resilience
- Supporting parks
- Tackling childhood obesity
- Creating a high skills economy
- Post-16 education
- On-line services

- Mental health and children. Wants to ensure scrutiny panel produces something that can have an impact and help improve things.
- Munro report implementation
- Housing associations' compliance with planning permission conditions, management practices – engaging with external partners even where no formal powers
- Landlord licensing – get an evidence base for it, investigate IT, legal provisions – scrutiny could investigate details of what would work in Haringey
- Children – looking at academies and community schools comparisons, ensuring using all the authority's powers
- Care homes – ditto re looking at external providers on behalf of residents
- Scrutiny fulfilling role of looking at a range of providers as part of democratic representative role, facilitating council's role as enabler.
- Community engagement – new ways of engaging residents and getting them more self-reliance, more community resilience
- Early help and prevention work - could be cross cutting
- Haringey 54,000 – contract with Impower, also safely bringing down numbers of children in care
- Adults social care and health integration
- Budget – strategy
- Service transformation – how are residents being involved
- Streetscene and liveability
- Housing regulation