

## SCRUTINY NETWORK

Friday 28 September 2018, 10:00 – 12:30

### Blaby District Council

Council Offices, Desford Road, Narborough  
Leicestershire, LE19 2EP

### AGENDA

- 9:30      **Registration and refreshments**
- 10:00      **Welcome from Cllr Karl Reid, Chair of the East Midlands Scrutiny Network**  
Welcome and Introductions  
Minutes from the last meeting
- 10:10      **New statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny in local government**  
Ed Hammond, Centre for Public Scrutiny  
The Government is preparing new statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny in local government. This will be published in December 2018. The Centre for Public Scrutiny has been commissioned by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to draft parts of the guidance.  
  
(For more information and to see the discussion items suggested by the Centre for Public Scrutiny please see page two of the agenda).  
  
A comfort break to be included within this item.
- 11:30      **Scrutiny Induction**  
An opportunity for colleagues to share plans or ideas and for Councillors to share their experiences of what has worked well and what they wished they had known.
- 11:50      **Sharing Current Scrutiny Work**
  - An opportunity for authorities to share current and future Scrutiny work
- 12:05      **Work programming**
  - An opportunity for network members to feed into the Scrutiny network work programme
  - Network members are invited to consider items they would wish to see on future network meeting agendas
- 12:25      **Any Other Business and dates of future meetings**  
  
**2018 dates**
  - 14 December 2018 - Rutland County Council
- 12:30      **Close**

Government's view is that each council is best placed to decide which arrangements best suit its own individual circumstances. With this in mind:

- How can the guidance help by making it clear to council executives / senior officers the kind of support that should be given to scrutiny (in a cultural sense)?
- In a more general sense how might the guidance help scrutiny to build a positive relationship with the executive, emphasising the need for scrutiny's independence?
- Should the guidance highlight the need for a greater profile and respect for scrutiny by the executive?
- Should the guidance go into detail on issues around work planning – recommending focus and prioritisation?
- How can the guidance help scrutiny with access to and use of information?
- Local councillors are best placed to understand the needs of local people, but how can the guidance help scrutiny councillors to ensure that scrutiny is supported to engage with the public in this way?
- How can the guidance help scrutiny more generally to develop a positive profile for itself at local level?
- Are there sections / elements that you think might be particularly helpful – or unhelpful?

There are three specific issues where Government is keen that the guidance provides some further detail. These are:

- **Scrutiny of “external bodies”** (this might be bodies operating under contract, commissioned partners, alternative delivery vehicles, more traditional partners and so on)
- **Access to information** (access to, and use of, information effectively by scrutiny having been a challenge for many practitioners)
- **Scrutiny of financial resilience and sustainability of councils** (recognising the recent, and continuing, pressures on the sector and scrutiny's role in helping to understand them)

<https://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018-09-03-guidance-explainer-final.pdf>