

## SCRUTINY NETWORK

Friday 1 February 2019, 10:00 – 12:30

### Rutland County Council

#### Attendees

Blaby District Council	Linda	McBean
Bolsover District Council	Joanne	Wilson
Bolsover District Council	Cllr Karl	Reid
Charnwood Borough Council	Michael	Hopkins
Chesterfield Borough Council	Amanda	Clayton
Chesterfield Borough Council	Rachel	Appleyard
Chesterfield Borough Council	Cllr Kate	Sarvent
East Midlands Councils	Kirsty	Low
Erewash Borough Council	Angelika	Kaufhold
Gedling Borough Council	Cllr Marje	Paling
Lincolnshire County Council	Nigel	West
Northampton Borough Council	Cathrine	Russell
Northampton Borough Council	Tracy	Tiff
Rutland County Council	Natasha	Taylor
Rutland County Council	Jo	Morley
University of Birmingham	John	Cade

#### Apologies

Bassetlaw District Council	Richard	Gadsby
Bassetlaw District Council	Cllr John	Shepherd
Blaby District Council	Suraj	Savant
Chesterfield Borough Council	Cllr Peter	Innes
Gedling Borough Council	Helen	Lee
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	Rebecca	Owen
Kettering Borough Council	Cllr Mick	Scrimshaw
Northampton Borough Council	Cllr Graham	Walker
South Northamptonshire and Cherwell	Emma	Faulkner
South Northamptonshire and Cherwell	Lesley	Farrell
South Northamptonshire and Cherwell	Natasha	Clark

#### Notes

#### Welcome from Cllr Karl Reid, Chair of the East Midlands Scrutiny Network

Cllr Karl Reid welcomed network members to Oakham and thanked Rutland County Council for hosting the network meeting.

#### Minutes from the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

## **CfPS Scrutiny Guidance Workshop**

John Cade from the Institute of Local Government Studies at the University of Birmingham provided an overview of the recent Centre for Public Scrutiny workshop on the Government guidance that is due to be published in the coming weeks.

John provided an update on the guidance and the journey so far, from the initial Select Committee review into Local Government Overview and Scrutiny.

John's presentation provided details of what is believed to be covered in the guidance, including;

- The tone, which is likely to be permissive
- There is likely to be an emphasis on culture
- The indication is that there will be 6 sections to the guidance
  1. Culture
  2. Resources
  3. Selecting committee members - emphasis that there should be an aptitude to the work, with a value to co-option. There is likely to be little on chairing.
  4. Powers to access Information - this will be a strong area
  5. Public Engagement
  6. Evidence

A discussion followed the presentation, initially focusing on the role of culture within an organisation and how this impacts on scrutiny activity. A discussion followed on managing expectations and where authorities can focus on things that can have the most impact.

A discussions followed on;

- Critical friend role of scrutiny
- Chairs of scrutiny - where chaired by opposition councillors, a discussion took place where there are examples of this
- Officer and member capacity and how this can impact

Cllr Reid thanked John for taking the time to attend the network meeting.

## **Homelessness and Rough Sleepers in Northampton, Review by Northampton Borough Council**

Councillor Cathrine Russell and Tracy Tiff from Northampton Borough Council provided a presentation on the recent and ongoing Homelessness and Rough Sleepers review in Northampton.

The presentation started with a short video clip -

[https://www.ted.com/talks/lloyd\\_pendleton\\_the\\_housing\\_first\\_approach\\_to\\_homelessness?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/lloyd_pendleton_the_housing_first_approach_to_homelessness?language=en)

The presentation included;

- Details of the purpose and objectives of the review
- Key lines of enquiry
- Required outcomes
- Scrutiny panel, involvement of members and use of co-optees, that Councillors put themselves forward to be involved
- Details of the evidence gathering, including use of skype meetings and site visits
- Details of next steps, including the final report and the monitoring process used by Northampton Borough Council to monitor and review recommendations

A detailed discussion took place at the end of the presentation, this covered;

- Reflections on social media and impact on Councillors and officers
- How the item was identified
- Involvement of the public
- How the report will be presented to Full Council and to Cabinet

### **Task and Finish Group Work**

Natasha Taylor from Rutland County Council provided a brief overview of the discussion of task and finish group item. She provided details of a recent review by Rutland County Council that was held in public.

A group discussion on the experiences of task and finish group working took place, including discussion of;

- Scope and objectives, where terms of reference are shaped but change during the review, how this is looked at
- Style of the chair
- Support from senior officers
- The final report
- Measuring impact and outcomes
- Writing the reports, along with discussion of timings of reports and the elections
- Members opinions of task and finish groups
- Levels of additional work for members as much of the work happens outside of the meetings

At the end of the item the network discussed how the East Midlands Scrutiny network could be used to develop and create a template for success/ guidance / best practice for conducting Task and Finish group.

It was agreed that the next meeting in March would focus solely on this item of exploring and developing best practice in task and finish groups.

**Action** - network members to identify templates or information developed within their authority to be shared and explored at the network meeting in March.

### **Sharing Current Scrutiny Work**

#### Gedling Borough Council

- Youth provision, engagement with young people and review of mental health support

#### Charnwood Borough Council

- New scrutiny structures, Michael provided a brief description of the new structures adopted following their recent scrutiny review.

#### Blaby District Council

- Air quality

#### Rutland County council

- Mental Health task and finish group

A discussion took place on where scrutiny reviews could be published centrally. The network discussed how this used to be a feature of the Centre for Public Scrutiny website and the value they found from this. It was indicated during the meeting that there is now a repository on the Knowledge Hub website.

<https://www.khub.net/group/scrutiny-practitioners-group>

#### Lincolnshire County Council

- Transitions between Childrens and Adult Social Care services
- Sponsorship and advertising responsibilities
- High street vitality, impact of online shopping on high street
- Brexit working group

#### **Work programming**

The network members agreed to focus on task and finish group working at the next network meeting.

Kirsty informed the network members that she is looking at the possibility to have a Scrutiny Conference in October. She invited the network members to share any ideas with her to shape the development of the conference programme.

#### **Any Other Business and dates of future meetings**

##### **2019 dates**

- **29 March 2019** – Chesterfield Borough Council, Town Hall, Rose Hill, Chesterfield, S40 1LP
- **28 June 2019** – Erewash Borough Council
- **4 October 2019** – Scrutiny Conference, venue to be confirmed
- **13 December 2019** – to be confirmed, if you are interested in hosting this meeting please let me know.