

## **Update Note – Overview & Scrutiny Workshop**

**5<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

**Aim** – The aim of the second Workshop was to develop an Action Plan for strengthening and improving the Overview & Scrutiny function in Wirral Council and to gain a better understanding of future training and future review topics for the Scrutiny Programme Board.

**Background** – The first workshop explored the current approach to Overview & scrutiny at Wirral Council and came to the conclusion that it would be useful to consider good practice from other Authorities.

### **Workshop Approach**

The Workshop provided an opportunity for the exploration of practice from other Authorities. Information from three Authorities was presented (Blackpool, Hartlepool and Hertfordshire) and thoughts about the approach taken and any interesting practice were discussed.

### **Outcomes – What was achieved at the end of the Session**

1. A suggestion that the Overview and Scrutiny undertaken at Wirral Council should be more widely promoted.
2. A suggestion that a leaflet/booklet detailing success stories could be produced.
3. That future training (to be delivered by Dr Stephanie Snape of Warwick University) include something around how Overview & Scrutiny works within Committees.
4. An agreement that all Chairs of Committees would give serious consideration to future topics for review and what could be included in the Scrutiny Programme Board's Work Programme (and send ideas/suggestions to the Democratic Services Manager by email)
5. That future training for Members around Overview & Scrutiny should include -:
  - Feedback / Challenge skills
  - Assertiveness / impact questions
  - Finance service knowledge
  - How to form and ask the right questions
6. That an internal "Buddying" scheme be considered to support Councillors new to the Overview & Scrutiny role.
7. That Overview & Scrutiny Committees and the Scrutiny Programme Board's agendas should be Member led rather than determined by officers.