

Additional clarifications following Members Briefing.

1. Clarification on responsibilities around access to information for any Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There would be an obligation to ensure that all nominated members on a Joint Committee were in receipt of agenda papers at the same time (in hard copy and/or electronic form). In practical terms, the responsibility for ensuring this would probably fall to the Lead Authority. However, there would need to be some officer level co-ordination of this in each of the participating authorities. For those lead authorities that use the modern.gov software for committee administration, this should not be a problem. The software allows “users” external to the particular authority to be given access and notification rights to published agendas.

2. Clarification on the control and distribution of information that may be restricted under exemption.

This would be dependent on the flexibility of the software packages being used. However, there would have to be strong reasons for exemption to outweigh the public interest in such transparency.

3. Clarification on the attendance at meetings of other Local Health Scrutiny Members in an observation capacity?

As ‘members of the public’ there would be a right for anyone to attend the Committee meetings, including councillors not on the Committee.

4. The use of deputies generally.

The use of deputies is not broached directly in the protocol. However, paragraph 6.8.1 does provide a way to settle the question on a case by case basis by agreeing procedure rules particular to each Joint Committee. Obviously the alternative would be to enshrine it in the protocol itself. This question also links to 6.5.2 and the issue of quorum. There is a stronger argument to provide for substitutes where each authority is only represented by one member rather than where there are two or more representatives per authority.