

# LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Chairman and Members of the Combined Authority  
Meeting: 13 June 2014  
Authority/Authorities Affected: All  
EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

## REPORT OF THE LEAD OFFICER: SCRUTINY

### SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Constitution - Part 5 Section B (Appendix 1) sets out the Scrutiny arrangements for the Combined Authority.
- 1.2 This report considers the following matters in respect of the scrutiny arrangements that are being put in place to support the Combined Authority and meet the requirements of the LCRCA Constitution :-
  1. To agree the Scrutiny Model for the LCRCA;
  2. To achieve Political Balance on the Scrutiny Panel;
  3. To invite appointments to the Scrutiny Panel by each Constituent Council and Liverpool City Region Opposition Groups;
  4. To agree a Programme of Meetings for future Scrutiny Panel meetings;
  5. To consider Topics for inclusion in the Annual Scrutiny Plan; and
  6. To agree to commission Training for Scrutiny Panel members.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Combined Authority resolve as follows:-
  - a) To adopt the Scrutiny Model and arrangements for political balance set out in this report for the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel;
  - b) Each Constituent Council appoint 2 members to the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel;
  - c) The Liverpool City Region Opposition Groups, acting collectively across the City Region geography, appoint 2 opposition members to the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel;
  - d) That a minimum of 4 LCRCA Scrutiny Panel meetings be held in per annum in:-
    - Sept 2014
    - Jan 2015
    - Apr 2015
    - July 2015

- e) The Scrutiny Panel develop an Annual Scrutiny Plan;
- f) Training be arranged through NWEO for Scrutiny Panel members; and
- g) To approve the Agenda for the inaugural City Region Scrutiny Panel meeting (see Appendix 4).

### 3. ACHIEVING POLITICAL BALANCE ON THE SCRUTINY PANEL

#### 3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to consider the most appropriate scrutiny model for the LCRCA and establish how political balance can be achieved on the Scrutiny Panel for the Combined Authority. The paper is written on the assumption that the makeup of the Scrutiny Panel should reflect, in the main, the combined political makeup of the 6 Liverpool City Region authorities. This requirement is contained in the Constitution of the LCRCA.

#### 3.2 Approach

In order to assess the required political balance for the Scrutiny Panel it is first necessary to look at the combined political makeup of the 6 LCR authorities. This is shown in the Table below following the Local Council Elections on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014.

<b>Council</b>	<b>Total Seats</b>	<b>LAB</b>	<b>LD</b>	<b>CON</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>LIB</b>	<b>IND/Other</b>
<b>Halton</b>	56	51	3	2	0	0	0
<b>Knowsley</b>	63	63	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Liverpool</b>	90	79	3	0	4	3	1
<b>St Helens</b>	48	42	3	3	0	0	0
<b>Sefton</b>	66	40	17	7	0	0	2
<b>Wirral</b>	66	38	6	21	1	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

The respective percentages of seats held by each party being as follows:

Labour	80.46%
Liberal Democrat	8.22%
Conservative	8.44%
Others	2.82%

The principle adopted in this paper is therefore to find a scrutiny arrangement that matches the pattern above.

It should be remembered, however, that the above pattern may change following subsequent elections and the arrangements in this paper may require modification to achieve the necessary political balance.

### **3.3 Recommended Scrutiny Model**

A 14 member Scrutiny Panel with 2 members nominated by each local authority, plus an additional 2 places for opposition parties. (This assumes given the current political control in the City Region that each Council nominate 2 Labour members – this of course is a matter for each Council.)

### **3.4 Reconsideration (call-in) Procedure**

Using the agreed 2/3 threshold for “reconsideration/call-in” the following number of members would be required for a “reconsideration/call-in”

9 members

Attached to this report is a draft pro-forma that could be utilised to trigger a call in if sufficient numbers of members consider this appropriate (see Appendix 2).

## **4. APPOINTMENTS**

4.1 Each constituent Council shall be entitled to appoint TWO members to the Scrutiny Panel, as of right.

4.2 To achieve political balance TWO opposition members will also need to be appointed to the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel.

4.3 Arrangements will need to be put in place to identify the opposition members to join the Scrutiny Panel.

4.4 The following protocol is proposed to appoint the opposition group members to the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel:-

- a) The Leaders of the largest opposition party, as calculated by aggregating the number of opposition members across the 6 Constituent Councils of the LCRCA geography, shall nominate ONE elected member from their aggregated elected members to the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel.

(Following the 2014 Elections the largest opposition party is the Conservative Party).

- b) The Leaders of the second largest opposition party, as calculated by aggregating the number of opposition members across the 6 Constituent Councils of the LCRCA geography, shall nominate ONE elect member from their aggregated elected members to the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel.

(Following the 2014 Elections the second largest opposition party is The Liberal Democrats).

## **5. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS**

5.1 The LCRCA is asked to approve the dates for future meetings of the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel.

5.2 The process

- For the LCRCA to agree the preferred Scrutiny Model; and
- The Constituent Councils to appoint members to the Scrutiny Model

will not be concluded until the end of July, due to the cycle of Council meetings for the 6 Constituent Councils. Therefore it is proposed the first meeting of the LCRCA Scrutiny panel takes place early September 2014.

The Scrutiny Panel will meet a minimum of 4 times a year, although it is anticipated additional meetings will take place as the scrutiny process matures.

## **6. TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY PANEL**

6.1 In accordance with the LCRCA Constitution, this is a matter for the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel to determine.

It is anticipated the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel Work Programme will be developed further as part of the training and workshop sessions proposed in Section 7 of this report.

Members are invited to suggest any topics they would wish the Scrutiny Panel to consider as part of their Annual Work Programme.

A draft Agenda for the inaugural meeting of the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel is attached at Appendix 3.

## **7. TRAINING**

7.1 To assist members of the Scrutiny Panel to undertake their duties and responsibilities, it is proposed to offer members training. This training will be available through the NW Employers Organisation (NWEO). The proposed content of this training is set out at Appendix 4.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 Financial**

There are no additional costs associated with the recommendations in this report.

### **8.2 Human Resources**

There are no direct issues as a result of the recommendations set out within this report.

### **8.3 Physical Assets**

The recommendations within this report have no bearing upon any land/buildings/other physical assets owned by the CA or its constituent Councils or have any direct impact upon the use of IT, or need for IT support.

### **8.4 Information Technology**

There are no direct issues as a result of the recommendations set out within this report.

## **9. RISKS AND MITIGATION**

- 9.1 The risks associated with the recommendations in this report are low. Transparent and effective scrutiny is important to the continuing credibility of the CA and will enhance and support the work of the CA. Scrutiny exists to achieve greater public accountability over decision made and services delivered to the whole Liverpool City Region in respect of those functions under the remit of the Combined Authority.

## **10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The policies referred to within this report have equality and diversity implications, these have been considered. Achieving political balance will ensure the CA meets Government guidance.

## **11. COMMUNICATION ISSUES**

- 11.1 There are no direct issues, though this report seeks to clarify the arrangements for scrutinizing the work of the Combined Authority.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

- 12.1 This report sets out the main issues associated with the arrangements for scrutinizing the work of the Combined Authority.

DAVID PARR  
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### Appendices:

- Appendix One - LCRCA Constitution (Scrutiny)
- Appendix Two - Re-consideration - Call In (Draft) Pro-forma
- Appendix Three - Agenda for inaugural LCR Scrutiny Panel Meeting
- Appendix Four - NWEO Training Programme

### Background Documents:

None

## LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY CONSTITUTION

### Part 5 - Section B

#### Scrutiny Arrangements for the Authority, Merseytravel Committee and Merseytravel

##### 1 Introduction

1.1 The Authority is to be supported by a scrutiny model in order to scrutinise decisions made at the sub-regional level.

##### 2 Function of Scrutiny at a City Region Level

2.1 Scrutiny exists to achieve greater public accountability over decisions made and services delivered to the whole Liverpool City Region in respect of those functions under the remit of the Combined Authority.

2.2 The principal ways in which the Combined Authority will be 'held to account' via Scrutiny are:-

- (a) 'Critical Friend' role
- (b) Pre-decision scrutiny
- (c) Monitoring the delivery of the Combined Authority Strategic Plan

2.3 Pre-decision scrutiny would need to be used selectively otherwise the scrutiny system would, by spreading its energies too thinly, be likely to have little impact.

2.4 The role of Scrutiny in these three key function areas will be:-

- (a) To provide a 'critical friend' to policy and strategy development The main priority for scrutiny should be to help the Authority to:-
  - Develop policies to deal with new issues
  - Reviewing existing policies which are felt to be in need of review
  - Contributing to the formulation of the annual budget
  - Reviewing policies or actions of agencies external to the local authorities which may be impacting adversely on the quality of life of local people
- (b) To undertake scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the Liverpool City Region The Authority's Scrutiny Panel should aim to investigate matters of strategic significance for the Liverpool City Region area and review should focus on sub-regional issues that are directly linked to the work of the Combined Authority and its sub-structure. The Panel would take a similar approach to a Parliamentary Select Committee. Panel members will collect evidence through a variety of sources, including –
  - Questioning expert 'witnesses'
  - Receiving reports and other literature
  - Undertaking consultation
  - Communication with stakeholders

The Panel will work with this information to make suggestions for improvement, acknowledge good practice and make recommendations. It will not deal with individual issues or queries that are more suitably dealt with by a local authority or specific organisation. The findings of each review will be submitted to the Authority for consideration. There are two potential sources for identifying in-depth studies to be carried out by scrutiny; the Scrutiny Panel itself and the Authority. The Authority may require scrutiny of a particular policy before agreeing a policy or taking a decision.

- (c) To monitor the delivery of the Authority's Strategic Plan The Scrutiny Panel will review the outcomes of the Authority's Strategic Plans. Any involvement of scrutiny in this activity would need to demonstrate that it could add value and not just replicate what the Authority, its Boards or Committees were doing. Scrutiny would again need to be highly selective acting only when it was concerned about evidence of poor performance and it was not satisfied by the Authority's response to it.

### **3 Operation of Scrutiny Arrangements**

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Panel will comprise of Members from each of the Constituent Councils. Membership will be agreed at the Annual General Meeting. Nominations to the Scrutiny Panel must not be members of the Authority (including substitute members) or the Merseytravel Committee.
- 3.2 Nominations to the Scrutiny Panel by the Constituent Councils will be made in accordance with the principles of political balance set out in Section 15(5) of the LGHA 1989.
- 3.3 Any elected member appointed to the Scrutiny Panel by the Authority under these scrutiny arrangements who is also appointed to any Committee of the Authority, cannot participate in the operation of the scrutiny arrangements on any issues which were taken at any meeting of the Authority or any Committee of the Authority at which they were present.
- 3.4 The term of office for members of the Scrutiny Panel will be one year from the date of the annual council meeting of the Constituent Council that nominates them to the Scrutiny Panel, unless:-
  - (a) they cease to be an elected member of the Constituent Council that appointed them;
  - (b) they wish to no longer participate in these arrangements; or
  - (c) the Head of the Secretariat is advised by any of the Constituent Councils that it wishes to change one or more of its nominees to the Scrutiny Panel.
- 3.5 Non-voting members may be co-opted to participate in these arrangements from other organisations as the Scrutiny Panel members may decide.

## **4 Meetings of Scrutiny Panel**

- 4.1 The members appointed by the Authority to the Scrutiny Panel will hold at least one annual meeting and may convene additional meetings in accordance with these arrangements.
- 4.2 The Scrutiny Panel members will:
- (a) elect a Chair and Vice Chair;
  - (b) determine the areas of review and scrutiny that they wish to pursue during the ensuing 12 months;
  - (c) agree to establish Scrutiny Working Groups from amongst their number in order to carry out agreed areas of review and scrutiny.
- 4.3 The quorum for the annual meeting and any other meetings is 6, and must include representatives of at least 4 of the Constituent Councils.
- 4.4 The principle of decision-making at any such meeting shall be that, wherever possible, decisions will be made by agreement, without the need for a vote. If a vote is necessary it will be a simple majority of those present and the Chair will not have a casting vote.
- 4.5 The venue for each annual meeting and the usual venue for any other meetings will be the offices of Merseytravel, save that the Scrutiny Panel may choose to hold meetings other than the annual meeting in other venues if this is deemed to assist the scrutiny process.
- 4.6 Notice of the annual meeting and any other meetings will be sent to each Scrutiny Panel member in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 4.7 The Chair will approve the agenda for each annual meeting and any other meetings; however, any member of the Scrutiny Panel will be entitled to require an item to be placed on the agenda for the meeting.
- 4.8 Subject to paragraphs 4.1 to 4.7, meetings will proceed in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

## **5 Key Principles for the Operation of the Scrutiny Arrangements**

- 5.1 The Constituent Councils will work together to maximise the exchange of information and views, to minimise bureaucracy and make best use of the time of members and officers of other bodies or agencies.
- 5.2 Members of the Scrutiny Panel will, when considering reviews, determine whether the issue is more appropriately dealt with by one of the Constituent Councils or elsewhere and will not duplicate the work of existing bodies or agencies.



- 5.3 Subject to prior consultation, the Constituent Councils will respond positively to requests for information, or for the attendance of a member or officer at any meetings set up under these arrangements.
- 5.4 While it is ultimately for each Constituent Council to decide who it considers the most appropriate person(s) to speak on its behalf at any meetings set up under these arrangements, consideration will be given to meeting specific requests.
- 5.5 Dates and times for officer and member attendance at any meetings set up under these arrangements should be by agreement.
- 5.6 Members appointed under these arrangements may request the attendance of officers employed by the Constituent Councils to answer questions and give evidence at any meetings set up under these arrangements. All such requests must be made via the Chief Executive of the relevant Constituent Council. If any request is declined by the Chief Executive, he/she must state the reasons for so doing.
- 5.7 The Scrutiny Panel may
- (a) invite members to attend before it to answer questions;
  - (b) invite other persons to attend meetings of the Panel;
  - (c) review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken in connection with the discharge of any functions of the Authority;
  - (d) make reports or recommendations to the Authority with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Authority.
- 5.8 The power to review or scrutinise a decision made, but not implemented under subparagraph 5.7(c), includes the power to recommend that the decision be re-considered, but is subject to the following provisions:
- (a) this shall not apply where, in the view of the decision-making body stated when the decision is made, any delay in implementing the decision would prejudice the interests of the Authority or the interests of the public;
  - (b) (i) in relation to decisions which may be subject to reconsideration, each decision shall be available where possible by electronic means within two working days of being made. Members of the Scrutiny Panel will be provided with a copy of the decision which will bear the date published and indicate it will come into effect on the expiry of three working days after publication;
  - (ii) if two-thirds of the membership of the Scrutiny Panel notify the Head of the Secretariat that they wish the Scrutiny Panel to consider the decision, then the Head of the Secretariat will arrange for a meeting of the Scrutiny Panel to be convened at the first available opportunity and in any event within seven working days of the request being notified to him. No action will be taken in the meantime to implement the decision which is subject to the request;

(iii) the Scrutiny Panel will consider the matter and if it chooses to, may resolve to request that the decision-maker reconsiders the decision. The Scrutiny Panel must set out the basis upon which reconsideration is requested;

(iv) the decision-making body will reconsider the decision and that reconsideration shall take place within seven working days of the Scrutiny Panel's request;

(v) no further requests for reconsideration may be made in cases where decisions have been reconsidered and the decision has been affirmed;

(c) decisions which have been subject to pre-decision scrutiny cannot be recommended for reconsideration unless the decision taken is, in the view of the Head of the Secretariat, significantly different from the proposal under contemplation at the pre- decision scrutiny stage;

5.9 Where the Scrutiny Panel makes a report or recommendation under 5.7(d), it may:

(a) publish the report or recommendations;

(b) by notice in writing, require the Authority to

(i) consider the report or recommendation;

(ii) provide a response to the Scrutiny Panel indicating what action (if any) it proposes to take;

(iii) where the Scrutiny Panel has published the report or recommendations, publish the response;

5.10 A notice under 5.9(b) will require the Authority to comply with it within two months, beginning with the date on which the Authority receives the report or recommendations or (if later) the notice.

5.11 The Authority will comply with a notice given under 5.9(b).

5.12 The requirements or power to publish contained in 5.9(a) and 5.11, shall not apply where the reports contain exempt or confidential information.

## **6 Scrutiny Working Groups**

6.1 The annual meeting of members of the Scrutiny Panel may establish Scrutiny Working Groups to undertake agreed scrutiny reviews.

6.2 Scrutiny Working Groups shall include representatives from at least 4 of the Constituent Councils.

6.3 Scrutiny Working Groups established under this Protocol must be appointed to carry out specific scrutiny tasks and be time limited. Their continuation will be subject to confirmation at each annual meeting of the Scrutiny Panel members.

- 6.4 The Authority may also, if they choose, request that a Scrutiny Working Group be appointed to examine a specific issue in more detail and report back its findings to the Authority as appropriate.
- 6.5 Scrutiny Working Groups will have no delegated powers and will refer the outcome of their investigations to the Scrutiny Panel for consideration and decision.

## **7 Reviews and Recommendations**

- 7.1 The process of scrutiny will be an open and transparent process designed to engage the Constituent Councils, their residents and other stakeholders.
- 7.2 Meetings will be held in public unless the meeting decides to convene in private in order to discuss confidential or exempt information, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the LGA 1972 or LGA 2000.
- 7.3 The terms of reference, timescale and outline of any review will be agreed by Scrutiny Panel members appointed at their annual meeting.
- 7.4 Different approaches to scrutiny reviews may be taken in each case, but members will seek to act in an inclusive manner and will take evidence from a wide range of opinion.
- 7.5 The primary objective of any Scrutiny Working Group established under these arrangements will be to reach consensus on its recommendations, but where a minimum number of 2 members express an alternative to the majority view, they will be permitted to produce a minority report.

## **8 Budget and Administration**

- 8.1 The scrutiny leads from each Constituent Council will provide guidance to the Scrutiny Panel on its work programme, advice on the scoping of reviews (at different levels) and ensuring the appropriate information and advice is made available during the reviews, where appropriate, through the use of expert witnesses.
- 8.2 The decisions and recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel will be communicated to the Authority and/or Merseytravel as appropriate, as soon as practicable.

## **9 Support and Advice to Scrutiny Arrangements**

- 9.1 The Scrutiny Panel may ask individuals or groups to assist it on a review by review basis and may ask independent professionals for advice during the course of reviews. Such individuals or groups will not be able to vote.
- 9.2 The Scrutiny Officer of each Constituent Council will ensure that the work programmes and minutes relating to the work carried out by the Scrutiny Panel in scrutinising the Authority and the Merseytravel Committee, are circulated appropriately within their own Constituent Council's scrutiny arrangements.
- 9.3 Each Constituent Council will nominate one of the 2 members of that Constituent Council who have been appointed to the Scrutiny Panel to act as that Constituent Council's "Authority Scrutiny Link". The Authority Scrutiny Link will be responsible for

reporting back to their own Constituent Council on the scrutiny work carried out by the Scrutiny Panel and will also be responsible for reporting to the Scrutiny Panel any issues identified locally by their own Constituent Council which may warrant scrutiny at a sub-regional level.

The nomination of an Authority Scrutiny Link and the way in which this role will be performed will be determined by each Constituent Council.

**COMBINED AUTHORITY “RECONSIDERATION PROCEDURE”**

DECISION TO BE “RECONSIDERED ” FROM THE COMBINED AUTHORITY

Date of meeting	
Minute No.	
Subject	

REASONS FOR MATTER TO BE “RECONSIDERED”


“CALLED IN” BY COUNCILLORS  
 (Signatures of each Councillor to be inserted)

1		Proposer
2		Secunder
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
etc		

This form must be received by the Proper Officer or the Committee Section on their behalf, by 5pm on the latest “Reconsideration” date specified in the Minutes.

## LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

### Scrutiny Panel

To: The Chairman and Members of the Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel

Meeting: September 2014 (Date to be confirmed)

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

### DRAFT AGENDA

- . Appointment of Chair
- . Appointment of Vice Chair
- . Dates of Future meetings
- . Role of the LCRCA
- . Role of the LCRCA Scrutiny Panel
- . Training and Development Days – Proposal
  - a) to support scrutiny members in their new roles
  - b) to help inform and develop the Annual Plan

## Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Development Support Proposal



### Background to the proposal

The following proposal is based on a conversation between Carole Hudson, Chief Executive of St Helens Council and Liz McQue from North West Employers on 22 April 2014. This is an initial outline of the support that North West Employers could offer to the new Combined Authority as it develops its scrutiny arrangements.

### About North West Employers

North West Employers is a not for profit organisation and exists to help organisations deliver better outcomes *with* and *for* local people. All the Merseyside local authorities and joint boards are members of North West Employers.

North West Employers provides a network of support and advice on all people matters, including leadership development, governance arrangements, human resources policy and practice, change management, and organisational design and performance. As a result of our regional role in sharing good practice, we spend most of our time working with officers and politicians, which gives us a deeper understanding of the issues local authorities and their partners face.

To reflect the changing shape of public services we have reviewed our core priorities. Our three core areas of work are:

- 1. Supporting effective public services**  
(Focus on Workforce, Governance, Leadership and Public Sector Reform)
- 2. Building growth through capacity and skills**  
(Focus on Coaching and Mentoring, Apprenticeships, Volunteering)
- 3. Sharing and making connections**  
(Focus on connecting people, ideas and practice across the public sector)

Our work with councillors is at the heart of what we do, supporting and connecting councillors locally and across the North West to think through the changing environment and what this means for their work with communities and constituents.

Whilst we design and deliver a whole range of region wide programmes for both councillors and officers, a great deal of our work is co-produced with authorities and takes account of the local circumstances and needs. We always work to develop long term sustainable relationships and take a collaborative approach to the delivery of our programmes.

### Scrutiny Support Proposal for Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

We are keen to support the Combined Authority as it shapes its new governance arrangement and we believe our experience of assisting councils to develop individual and joint scrutiny arrangements will provide a valuable external perspective.

As part of our commitment to support to all the Merseyside authorities we can offer the following package as part of the core support at no additional cost. We believe that the

existing relationships we have with the Merseyside authorities would provide depth to the work and this would enhance the advice and support we continue to provide to the individual authorities.

The initial proposals include the five elements below as part of the core support, and we would be happy to amend the design to meet your specific needs.

### **1. Diagnostic assessment – baseline survey**

We could conduct a diagnostic survey to establish a baseline to assess officers and councillors' knowledge, skills and attitudes at the beginning of the process. An anonymous and confidential survey would be co-designed with the Combined Authority and responses collated and analysed by North West Employers to create a picture of key skills and strengths and identify areas where further development may be required.

The survey could be repeated after 6 or 12 months to review progress and to compare responses against the initial baseline survey. The report back from the second survey could be supported by a half day away day to identify key lessons and plan further improvements.

### **2. Introductory away day for councillors and lead officers - one day**

The key focus for the away day will be to ensure that all councillors are clear about the new roles and how scrutiny at the Combined Authority level can add value given the multiple challenges facing local government, the wider public sector and communities. This first session would be tailored to reflect the experience, knowledge and understanding of those appointed but may include:

- Understanding the new system and the role of scrutiny
- Working together as a Scrutiny Team (utilising tools such as Myers Briggs)
- Developing a work programme to make a difference, establishing and agreeing criteria for selection of issues
- Connecting with other scrutiny arrangements at different levels - local, sub regional, regional scrutiny arrangements to avoid duplication
- Feedback and co-ordination arrangements
- Communicating the role of scrutiny
- Examples of successful scrutiny and lessons learnt from cross-authority scrutiny and Combined Authorities

### **3. Skills development programme – two half days**

Two half day sessions would be included in the support programme which could cover some of the specific skills outlined below. If additional sessions are requested these would fall outside the funded programme of support and can be discussed separately.

Skills development workshops - options include:

- Comparative analysis
- Research skills
- Interviewing skills
- Appreciative inquiry
- Influencing skills
- Effective scrutiny behaviours



#### **4. Real time scrutiny support - up to three half days**

From our experience we believe that a solid introduction to a new scrutiny role is essential but we also understand that much of the learning will happen through real life practice and experience. We have developed a 'real time' approach to provide external support during a live scrutiny review to provide timely interventions supporting an effective process and outcomes.

Our approach would be to provide coaching support which could include attending meetings as a critical friend to reflect on how the committee works together and the focus would be on skills development and scrutiny processes such as:

- guided support throughout a scrutiny review
- defining, structuring and undertaking a scrutiny review
- shaping powerful recommendations
- ensuring scrutiny has an impact

#### **5. Northern Scrutiny Event with Combined Authorities – one day**

As part of our connector role we would set up a Northern Scrutiny Learning Event to bring together scrutiny members and lead officers in October 2014 or March 2015 to share practice/experiences, progress and lessons learnt. In addition we would produce a conference report to outline key messages and learning from the event.

#### **Additional options of support**

Additional support can be provided outside the programme of funded support and could include:

- Individual support/coaching for the Chair and/or Deputy Chair or those with specific roles to focus on key challenges and leadership behaviours in developing a more effective approach and leadership of scrutiny.
- The Scrutiny Development: Peer Learning Group brings 'scrutineers' together to focus on key challenges and opportunities for scrutiny functions.

#### **Our experience of Scrutiny**

We have been extensively involved in supporting scrutiny functions since the Local Government Act 2000. Our early work focused on supporting councillors and officers in defining the role, scope, structures and working practices of scrutiny committees. Our work has included providing support and advice for scrutiny chairs and officers, workshops and seminars and the sharing of good practice from across the North West and beyond.

- **Skills workshop**

We frequently run workshops designed to focus on key skills and behaviours of scrutiny councillors ensuring that scrutiny practices and processes are 'fit for purpose'. The majority of programmes are delivered bespoke to the authority and councillor needs to ensure tailored and specific content. Examples of the programmes we run include:

- Shaping Overview and Scrutiny
- Scrutiny and Questioning
- Formulating Recommendations
- Chairing and Managing Scrutiny

- Scrutiny in Action
- Scrutinising External Partners
- Performance and Financial Scrutiny
- Appreciative Inquiry in Scrutiny

- **Real Time Scrutiny**

We are frequently asked to work with scrutiny committees on 'live' issues and enquiries and supporting the committee through facilitation and coaching. Three recent examples of 'focussed' interventions include: support for a County Council in undertaking a review of children's services; support for a District Council in scrutinising partnerships; a focused intervention for a public sector partner in developing a scrutiny work programme.

- **Topic Specific Seminars and Workshops**

We have provided focused events that support scrutiny reviews of specific issues such as 'Scrutiny of Worklessness Services'. These have been provided on local themes or regionally to highlight key challenges, needs and opportunities for scrutiny functions.

- **Scrutiny Toolkit**

Production of '**Scrutiny of Worklessness: A Toolkit for Scrutineers**' aimed at supporting frontline councillors in their role of improving the quality of life of their residents; in particular, it looks at the opportunities offered to councillors in the scrutiny and review of worklessness.

- **Co-ordinating the NW Strategic Scrutiny Network**

Aimed at councillors actively involved in scrutiny within their authority, the network provides a platform to debate and explore the real challenges. The network focuses on key topics to support the advancement of strategic scrutiny amongst councillors. The network is chaired by an active scrutiny councillor and is supported by a steering group. The network meets 3 times a year and has a long history within the North West.

- **Case studies and sharing**

We believe that the greatest learning and resources to support the advancement of scrutiny are based within our member organisations and we seek opportunities to share good practice across the region. Our most recent example includes our publication **Post-Regulation Scrutiny: North West Pioneers**, first edition published January 2014.

- **Consultation, support and advice**

As part of our support to member organisations, we often act as 'critical friend' and support councillors and officers in thinking through approaches, processes and skills required of scrutiny committees and functions. This support is bespoke and supports the effectiveness of scrutiny within and across its locality.

## **Our Team**

The programme would be delivered by North West Employers' associate team who all have extensive experience of supporting scrutiny functions and developing the skills and understanding. We may also work with other key facilitators /organisations to help deliver this programme and we would discuss with you your requirements to agree a team that meets your needs.

### **Dr Stephanie Snape**

Stephanie has worked in the world of local government for twenty-five years as a local government officer, academic and latterly consultant. She has been working on local

government scrutiny issues for many years and led the first national evaluation of overview and scrutiny; has undertaken many evaluations of scrutiny functions; and designed and delivered national, regional and local scrutiny development programmes. She is a Director of the New Leadership Foundation, which provides two modules of the Local Government Association's Leadership Academy for councillors. She has a long history of working with North West Employers.

### **Councillor John Lamb**

John is an elected member of Trafford Council and has been a councillor for 16 years. Currently, he is Chair of the all party member development group and Vice Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee. A former Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health, John is currently a Board Member at the Trafford Housing Trust and Chairs the Development and New Business Committee. John is also an appointed Governor at the University Hospital of South Manchester and Chair of a local primary school. He also Chairs the North West Strategic Scrutiny Network.

John's consultancy work is in the private and public sectors and is varied. An accredited peer member with the LGA, he has worked with a number of Councils across the country on projects ranging from Adult Social Care Peer review, development of Cabinets, development of councillor ward working, development of Overview and Scrutiny to delivery of specific training courses for councillors. John is also an Advisor with Local Government Leadership and recent assignments have been working with councillors to improve community engagement. An Associate with North West Employers, John also tutors on the prestigious LGA Leadership Academy and is an associate with the University of Birmingham Institute for Local Government Studies.

### **Sir Steven Houghton CBE**

Sir Steve has been an elected member of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council for 25 years and Leader of the Council for 17 years. He has a Masters Degree in Local Governance from the University of Birmingham. Previously, Sir Steve led a Government Review into the role of local authorities and partnerships in tackling long term unemployment and worklessness, which was published in 2009.

Sir Steve holds a number of positions including Chair of the Barnsley Local Strategic Partnership; Chair of SIGOMA; Regional Peer of the LGA; and Non Executive Director, Barnsley Hospital Foundation Trust. He was awarded the CBE for services to Local Government in the 2004 New Year's Honours List and a Knighthood in 2013 in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

### **Collaborative Working**

We would work with a range of partner organisations including the Centre for Public Scrutiny and other Combined Authorities to ensure that Liverpool City Region Combined Authority have access to learning from other scrutiny systems.

### **Costs:**

The package of support in this proposal would be provided at no cost to the Combined Authority including design and preparation. (Venue costs to be covered by the Combined Authority).

We would be happy to provide costs for any additional support requested outside this proposal.

## Contact

To progress this proposal please contact:

Liz McQue

Chief Executive, North West Employers .

[lizm@nwemployers.org.uk](mailto:lizm@nwemployers.org.uk) 0161 214 7123

References can be made available on request.