

REVIEW OF SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS IN SUNDERLAND – ACTION PLAN

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY, MAYORAL AND MEMBER SUPPORT COORDINATOR

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report provides the action plan derived from the formal response and findings of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny in relation to their independent review of scrutiny in Sunderland.

2. Background

- 2.1 The review was commissioned to develop a clear and shared understanding on the role, purpose and objectives of the council's scrutiny arrangements.
- 2.2 The Independent Review was conducted by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CFGs), engaging with all political parties and key officers before finalising their report with recommendations. A member led steering group will oversee the process and establish any necessary improvement activity or formal recommendations to strengthen the scrutiny function in Sunderland.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 The review was completed using a prescribed CFGs framework for discussion and debate on those issues and areas most important to Sunderland. These were:
- Organisational commitment and clarity of purpose
 - Members leading and fostering good relationships
 - Prioritising work and using evidence well
 - Having an impact.
- 3.2 The review was undertaken by Ed Hammond, Deputy Chief Executive CFGs, and Kate Grigg, Senior Research Officer CFGs, and conducted during the latter part of 2021 and completed in early 2022.
- 3.3 The full CfGS report has been circulated previously.

4. Moving Forward – Action Plan

- 4.1 The review has provided a number of recommendations which vary in complexity, time required, and involvement by scrutiny members. The development of an action plan that can monitor the progress of the recommendations is an important aspect of moving the review forward. It would also be for the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee to monitor this action plan as part of the ongoing development of the scrutiny function in Sunderland.
- 4.2 A draft action plan has been developed for this purpose and is attached at appendix 1 of this report.

- 4.3 The action plan itemises all the recommendations from the review report and provides a framework for moving this forward and monitoring progress on all recommendations.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 That the action plan is presented to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on a regular basis to report on progress against the various recommendations.
- 5.2 That further involvement will be sought from the Committee in developing a number of the recommendations.

6. Recommendations

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note and agree the content of this report.
- (b) Agree to the adoption of the Action Plan as outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.
- (c) That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee continues as the steering group for the development of the actions in terms of the scrutiny review.