

HEALTH & WELL-BEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 September 2010

CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY 8TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE - FEEDBACK

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with feedback from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) 8th Annual Conference that was held on 30 June and 1 July 2010.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Handbook contains a protocol for use of the Scrutiny Committees budget by Members to attend training and conferences (Protocol 5 refers). This allows Members to gain specialist knowledge and expertise within a particular area of scrutiny and is in addition to the list of standing conferences and corporate development programme.
- 2.2 At the start of the municipal year it was agreed to send delegates from the 7 scrutiny committees to the CfPS Annual Scrutiny Conference held on Wednesday 30 June and Thursday 1 July 2010 at The Brewery, London. The Conference was attended by a number of members from the various committees including Councillor Peter Walker, Chair of Health & Well-Being Scrutiny Committee.

3. Conference Summary

- 3.1 The title of the conference was 'Accountability works - Sustaining Outcomes in Changing Times'. The theme was future accountability and transparency in public services. The theme covered issues such as regaining public trust, tackling inequalities and addressing how to sustain outcomes from accountability in hard financial times. Delegates debated how accountability can create opportunities for the public to shape the delivery of local services, for example, through the Total Place initiative.

Speakers

- 3.2 Keynote opening session - Accountability Works
Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive, RSA
A combination of more demanding public attitudes and the expectations of greater availability of public data mean that the demands of public accountability will grow, whether public agencies like it or not. The question is how to develop new, more creative forms of accountability.
- 3.3 Accountability for people and places – what does it mean in practice?
Darren Johnson, Former Chair, London Assembly, Chair, London Assembly Environment Committee

Real examples of impact at a local level and a sharing of views on how accountability through scrutiny can reconnect people to those with power.

- 3.4 Getting to the heart of the matter: tackling social inequality
Lord Victor Adebawale CBE, Chief Executive, Turning Point
This session considered how services can be restructured so they are effective and easily accessible for those most in need of them.

Discussions and Workshops

- 3.5 'Total Place Total Accountability' Panel
Chair: Nick Raynsford MP
Maurice Frankel, Director, Campaign for Freedom of Information
Professor George Jones, Emeritus Professor of Government, LSE
Lord Michael Bichard, Executive Director, Institute for Government

The programme formerly known as Total Place was the former government's initiative to seek to "deliver better services at less cost, through effective collaboration between local organisations and leadership". How will decision-makers be held to account for the shared decisions they make, particularly around service change and efficiencies? What role do elected councillors have in setting the strategic direction and scrutinising the outcomes of Total Place programmes?

Workshops

- 3.6 Winning back public trust: contributing to local democratic renewal
Jonathan Birdwell, Researcher, Demos
Lessons learned from a two year investigation into the factors affecting trust in local councils.
- 3.7 National pledges, local outcomes: making the NHS Constitution a reality
James Doughty, Policy Manager, Appointments Commission
Gareth Hadley, East of England and East Midlands Appointments Commissioner
Exploring what the NHS Constitution really means for organisations and how NHS non-executives and other 'scrutineers' can support the implementation of the principles, values, rights and pledges contained in the Constitution and obtain assurance that they are being translated into real outcomes on the front line.
- 3.8 Scrutiny in a cold climate: influencing tough choices about efficiency savings and shared services
Catherine Staite, Director, Organisational Development, Office for Public Management
We are entering a period of significant change, driven partly by the new political environment and partly a major cut in resources for local government. These changes will see a radical shift from the current reality, in which councils are mainly providers delivering a wide range of services to one in which they have two key roles; as community leaders and as

commissioners of services. This workshop will explore how scrutiny can respond to these changes.

3.9 Citizen Power: what enhanced public transparency means for formal accountability

Simon Burall - Director, Involve

The citizen - government relationship has changed profoundly in the last 20 years as citizens have come to expect a greater say in what is done in their name. This change has accelerated over the last 3-5 years as technological changes put increasing amounts of government data directly into citizen's hands. At the same time, citizens have ever increasing ways to meet and talk together.

3.10 Scrutiny – where professional evidence and public opinion collide?

Emma Maier, Editor, Local Government Chronicle Richard Jeavons, Chief Executive, Independent Reconfiguration Panel

Exploring the role that scrutiny committees play as a public forum for gathering evidence, which can take the form of expert, professional advice or views, opinions and experiences from the public and service users.

3.11 Member Development Day

Coming challenges for scrutiny: the next year

Jessica Crowe, Executive Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny

Highlighting the challenges that scrutiny will face in the next year, and suggesting some opportunities for scrutineers to influence the agenda locally.

3.12 Scrutiny Café

Knowledge and Skills Sessions

Joint scrutiny: your powers

Crime and disorder: what are CDRPs and how do they operate?

The local accountability picture - who else does scrutiny at a local level?

Health scrutiny: working more closely with your LINK

Performance management and improvement

Working with officers to get the outcomes you're looking for

Negotiating, questioning and leadership skills for scrutineers

Taking control of your scrutiny reviews: understanding planning

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Committee is asked to receive the feedback from the conference .

5. Background Papers

Seminar Programme

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