

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP – 27 JUNE 2018**

Title of report	<b>PROVISION OF SCRUTINY TRAINING</b>
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Purpose of report	To consider options for the provision of scrutiny training.
Council priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	As detailed in the report
Link to relevant CAT	No direct link
Risk Management	As detailed in the report
Equalities Impact Screening	None
Human Rights	None
Transformational Government	None
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS); Strategy Group
Background papers	None.

Recommendations	<b>THAT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP RECEIVES AND NOTES THE PROPOSED SCOPE OF SCRUTINY TRAINING AS SET OUT IN THE REPORT.</b>
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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Monitoring Officer was asked by a member of the Policy Development Group if she could look into the potential for the delivery of scrutiny training for members of the Group to give them a better understanding of their role.
- 1.2 The Monitoring Officer made some investigations into the training which has been delivered recently at the county council by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS).
- 1.3 CfPS is the leading national body promoting and supporting excellence in governance and scrutiny. As a charity, their work has a strong track record of influencing policy and practice both nationally and locally. CfPS provides training, consultancy and conferences. Crucially they are respected and trusted to provide independent and impartial advice.
- 1.4 Following conversations with officers from the CfPS, a suggested programme has been drawn up for Members' consideration.
- 1.5 This issue was discussed at a meeting of Strategy Group on 24 April 2018.

## **2.0 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 The purpose of the programme will be to facilitate and deliver a training event on a date to be agreed; to support the role of overview and scrutiny within the council and to support members to increase their understanding and experience as effective and confident scrutiny practitioners.
- 2.2 The objectives of the programme will be to give members of the Policy Development Group an increased understanding of the role and potential impact of scrutiny; to understand how scrutiny can have significant impact in supporting council performance and to explore how scrutiny can better add value to policy shaping and practice in the future.

## **3.0 PROPOSED PROGRAMMES**

- 3.1 It is proposed to have two half-day or evening sessions. Each lasts around 3-4 hours to cover essential skills training and development.
- 3.2 The suggested workshops are as follows

### Workshop 1 - Scrutiny Essentials

- Support members to increase their understanding and experience as effective and confident scrutiny practitioners
- To help improve individual member skills in the basic principles of scrutiny including powers, responsibilities and chairing skills.

- To give scrutiny members an increased understanding of the role and potential impact of scrutiny
- To understand how scrutiny can have significant impact in supporting council performance
- To explore how scrutiny can better add value to policy and practice in the future
- To ensure the focus of overview and scrutiny and its work programme is balanced and effective

## Workshop 2 - Financial Scrutiny Essentials

'We don't need to be finance experts, we just need curious minds'

- To give councillors an understanding of the role scrutiny plays in the development and delivery of the council's medium term financial plans and budget;
- To understand how the medium term financial plans and budget support the Council's strategic objectives and priorities;
- How plans are developed and the various stages of planning;
- Build understanding of the role of scrutiny in the budget cycle;
- Explore how key lines of enquiry can assist and focus scrutiny in its role;
- The role of scrutiny in other areas of the council's financial activities;
- Understand risk and the role of scrutiny in assessing it;
- Scrutinising financial performance and delivery;
- Commercialisation, new models of delivery and the role of scrutiny

### **4.0 COSTS**

4.1 Each workshop costs £950. Therefore to hold both the proposed sessions would cost £1,900 plus reasonable travel costs for the trainer.

### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

5.1 The training being offered by the CfPs would seem to offer value for money and in view of the elections in May 2019, these workshops will be offered as part of the induction programme next year for all members.

5.2 The induction programme will include training on a number of key issues, including planning, licensing, the forward plan, scrutiny and ICT.

5.3 All candidates for the forthcoming elections in May will receive details of the key training dates ahead of the elections in order that these dates can be diarised in good time.