

North East Joint Scrutiny Member / Officers' Network

Wednesday 13 December 2023

10.00- 10.45am

MS Teams

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of meeting held on 21 September 2023 (attached)
4. CfGS (standing Items):
 - Publications / best practice
 - Health Scrutiny and Combined Authority Scrutiny – Ed Hammond
5. Local Authority Good Practice (Standing Item):
 - Accessibility of Council Services Investigation – Hartlepool Borough Council
(https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/download/2504/accessibility_of_council_services_in_hartlepool_for_those_with_disabilities_and_long_term_conditions)
6. List of ongoing Scrutiny Investigations
7. Training Programme – dates and topics confirmed
8. Meeting Schedule / Potential Agenda Items for each meeting

Date	Items for inclusion on agenda
Thursday 21 March 2024	Supporting young people into employment – Newcastle City Council The Scrutiny Protocol for Combined Authorities – North of Tyne CA

9. Any Other Business
10. Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 21 March 2024.

Scrutiny Member/Officer Network

Wednesday 13 December 2023, 10am - Teams Meeting

Joining

CfGS	Megan Ingle Ed Hammond
Darlington Council	Cllr Hilary Allen Cllr Mary Layton Cllr James McGill
Durham CC	Cllr Jonathan Elmer Cllr Anne Reed Cllr Veronica Andrews
Gateshead Council	Cllr Brenda Clelland
Hartlepool Council	Joan Stevens Gemma Jones
Middlesbrough Council	Cllr Matthew Storey
Newcastle City Council	Cllr Peter Lovatt Cllr Colin Ferguson Cllr Mehrban Sadiq Kate McLoughlin Jessica Hall
North Tyne CA	Cllr Louise Marshall
Northumberland CC	Cllr Richard Dodd Chris Angus Sean Nicholson
Redcar & Cleveland Council	Cllr Ian Hart Cllr Mary Ovens Sarah Connolly
South Tyneside Council	Cllr Geraldine Kilgour Jonathan Lunness Emma Purvis
Stockton Council	Cllr Sylvia Walmsley Cllr Marc Besford Cllr Carol Clark Judy Trainer Gary Woods Rebecca Saunders-Thompson
Sunderland City Council	Cllr Katherine Mason-Gage Nigel Cummings

Tentative

Darlington Council	Cllr James McGill
Durham CC	Cllr Bev Coult Cllr Angela Surtees Rachel Parker
Gateshead Council	Cllr Maria Hall
Middlesbrough Council	Scott Bonner Susie Blood
Newcastle City Council	Cllr Lara Ellis
Northumberland CC	Cllr Liz Dunn
North of Tyne CA	Cllr Les Bowman Cllr Karen Clark Liz Kerr

Declined

Darlington Council	Hannah Miller
Durham CC	Cllr Rob Crute Cllr Bill Moist Cllr Joyce Charlton
Middlesbrough Council	Cllr Dennis McCabe Cllr Donna Jones Cllr Chris Cooke Cllr Dorothy Davison Cllr Jim Platt
Newcastle City Council	Cllr Steve Fairlie Cllr Alistair Chisholm
North of Tyne CA	Cllr Matt Wilson
North Tyneside Council	Cllr Margaret Hall Cllr Julie Cruddas
Northumberland CC	Cllr Mark Mather Lynsey Denyer
Redcar & Cleveland Council	Cllr Jemma Joy
South Tyneside Council	Susan Clennell
Stockton Council	Cllr Pauline Beall
Tees Valley CA	Nicola Dean

North East Regional Joint Scrutiny Member/Officer Network

Thursday 21 September 2023

Prior to the meeting the Network appointed a Chair and Vice-Chair

- i) Appointment of Chair – Cllr Wendy Taylor was appointed to continue as Chair for 2023/24.
- ii) Appointment of Vice Chair – Cllr Diane Snowdon was appointed to continue as Vice Chair for 2023/24.

1. Joined meeting

Attached.

2. Apologies

Attached.

3. Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 28 June 2023

Decision - Minutes were approved.

4. CfGS:

- i) Guidance Publications; and
- ii) CfGS Policy Issue Update (Standing Item)

An update was provided in relation to:

- CfGS are actively consulting with Local Authorities (Inc. Birmingham, Thurock and Woking) who have issued a Section 114 Notice with the aim of publishing case studies and sharing learning on key issues such as transparency and governance from an overview and scrutiny perspective.

The Network's attention was drawn to the following availability of CfGS publications and events:

- The CfGS publication "Treasure your Assets" will be updated and republished within the next 4 weeks. This paper focuses on budget scrutiny.
- The CfGS publication "Mental Health of Scrutiny Officers" will be republished to raise awareness of offices working in difficult environments.
- There is a close roundtable event coming up focusing on those actively considering Section 114's. This is for governance officers are present buy maybe opened up.
- Members can sign up to the CfGS monthly newsletter to receive notifications of the publications.

Decision:

- That links to the blogs and publications mentioned would be circulated amongst the network.
- Budget scrutiny to be discussed at the next network meeting.

The CfGS was thanked for its update.

5. Local Authority Best Practice (discussion):

Overview and Scrutiny end of term reports – Stockton Borough Council. The process of providing end of term reports and annual infographics was presented to the Network by Stockton Borough Council.

Decision - Noted, link to the full report will be circulated to members.

Child and Family Poverty - Hartlepool Borough Council. The recently completed Poverty report was presented to the network.

https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/downloads/download/2469/child_and_family_poverty_scrutiny_investigation_-_final_report

South Tyneside Council also discussed their completed poverty report “Commission on tackling poverty”.

Decision - Noted, link to both full reports will be circulated to members.

6. List of on-going scrutiny investigations.

- Derelict Land and Building – Hartlepool Borough Council
- Tackling Graffiti – South Tyneside Council
- Post-25 Provision for education/employment for certain groups - South Tyneside Council
- School Places – Newcastle City Council
- Access to GP / Narrowing gaps in educational attainment / Safety of staff in night time economy / Vaping / Cost of living response / Domestic waste collections – Stockton Borough Council

7. **Training Programme Update**

The continuation of last year's CfGS training offer was welcomed. From a list of potential training sessions shared by the CfGS each authority identified their preferred 4 topics in priority order. The following topics were highlighted as a priority amongst Local Authorities:

1. Leading and Chairing Scrutiny
2. Scoping and Managing Scrutiny Reviews Content
3. Scrutiny Essentials
4. Health and Social Care Scrutiny

The Network requested that, should there be any further available training sessions above the 4 allocated that they focus on:

- i) Developing Effective Member/Officer Relationships
- ii) Finance Scrutiny

Decision – The training programme topics were approved and the finalised programme including dates and timings will be shared with the network.

8. **Meeting Schedule/ Potential agenda items for each meeting**

Wednesday 13 December
Thursday 21 March 2024

9. **Any Other Business**

A request was made for any further items to be discussed in December or March.

10. **Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 13 December 2023, 10am, MS Teams

Scrutiny Member/Officer Network

Thursday 21 September 2023, 10am - Teams Meeting

Joined

CfGS	Helen Mitchell
Darlington Council	Cllr James McGill Cllr Mary Layton Hannah Miller
Durham CC	Cllr Veronica Andrews Cllr Jonathan Elmer Cllr Anne Reed Cllr Chris Lines Rachel Parker Stephen Gwilym
Hartlepool Council	Joan Stevens Gemma Jones Penny Thompson
Newcastle City Council	Cllr Wendy Taylor Cllr Peter Lovatt Cllr Alistair Chisholm Cllr Marion Williams Kate McLoughlin Jessica Hall
North Tyne CA	Cllr Louise Marshall Cllr Matt Wilson Cllr Les Bowman Michael Robson
Northumberland CC	Cllr Mark Mather Chris Angus Sean Nicholson
Redcar & Cleveland Council	Cllr Mary Ovens Cllr Karen King Alison Pearson Sarah Connolly David Boville
South Tyneside Council	Cllr Geraldine Kilgour Jonathan Lunness
Stockton Council	Cllr Sylvia Walmsley Judy Trainer Gary Woods Jonathan Nertney
Sunderland City Council	Nigel Cummings

Apologies

CfGS	Megan Ingle Ed Hammond
Cleveland Fire Authority	Cllr Mick Stoker
Darlington Council	Cllr Hilary Allen
Durham CC	Cllr Joyce Charlton Cllr Bev Coult Cllr Philip Heaviside Cllr Bill Moist Cllr Matt Johnson
Gateshead Council	Cllr Brenda Clelland Cllr Maria Hall Tim Britton
Hartlepool Council	Cllr Chris Cooke
Middlesbrough Council	Cllr Janet Thompson Cllr Dorothy Davison Cllr Jim Platt Cllr Dennis McCabe
Newcastle City Council	Cllr Steven Fairlie Cllr Colin Ferguson Linda Scott
North East CA	Gavin Armstrong
North of Tyne CA	Cllr Linda Wright Cllr Caroline Ball Cllr Karen Clark
North Tyneside Council	Yvonne Harrison
Northumberland CC	Cllr Liz Dunn Cllr Richard Dodd Cllr Wayne Daley Lynsey Denyer
Stockton Council	Cllr Pauline Beall Rebecca Saunders-Thompson