

**Open report on behalf of Richard Wills  
Executive Director responsible for Democratic Services**

Report to:	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee</b>
Date:	<b>28 July 2016</b>
Subject:	<b>Review of Scrutiny Update</b>

**Summary:**

This report updates members on the work of the Review of Scrutiny Working Group and seeks endorsement of the Scrutiny Protocol attached as Appendix A.

**Actions required:**

That the Committee notes the progress of the Review of Scrutiny Working Group and endorses the Scrutiny Protocol, attached as Appendix A to this report, as a means of developing a constructive and positive relationship between the Executive, scrutiny councillors and chief officers.

### 1. Background

- 1.1 In December of last year Council received an independent report from Dr Stuart Young, Chief Executive Officer of East Midlands Councils, on scrutiny arrangements at Lincolnshire County Council.
- 1.2 The report contained 17 recommendations designed to improve the working relationship between the Council's Executive and Scrutiny.
- 1.3 Council endorsed the findings of the report and invited the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to oversee the implementation of the recommendations.
- 1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee subsequently set up a working group to carry out the detailed work required.
- 1.5 At the outset the Review of Scrutiny Working Group agreed to concentrate on three areas:
  - a) Working relationship between the Executive and Scrutiny
  - b) Culture of the organisation
  - c) Governance Structure for Scrutiny

- 1.6 It was recognised at an early stage that there would be mutual benefit in drawing up a scrutiny protocol, setting out the key ingredients for a fruitful partnership, including trust, tolerance, respect and partnership working.
- 1.7 Executive councillors, scrutineers and chief officers have been consulted on the protocol and much of the good practice identified has been accepted and already implemented. Attached to this report is the final draft of the document for this Committee's consideration.

**Next steps**

- 1.8 The Working Group will continue to meet to consider culture and the governance structure for scrutiny, with a view to reporting back to Council with proposals that can be in place for the new council in May 2017.
- 1.9 As part of their work, members of the Working Group have visited councils in Boston and Lincoln, and have highlighted the benefits of lengthy pieces of cross cutting scrutiny work in those areas (task and finish groups lasting up to a year).
- 1.10 It has been suggested by the Working Group that a suitable cross cutting topic for scrutiny could be identified by this Committee for similar treatment. However, there are resource issues to consider before committing to such a project. To fit in a scrutiny review by a task and finish group before the pre-election period next spring would have implications not only for the scrutiny team but for officers in the service area supporting the work. It would also impact on delivery of the work programme of the relevant committee and councillors would need to consider if their own commitments would permit this extra work.

**2. Conclusion**

Much of the good practice identified by the Review of Scrutiny Working Group has already been implemented. The Committee is asked to formalise this by endorsing the scrutiny protocol.

**3. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Scrutiny Protocol

**4. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Nigel West, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer, who can be contacted on 01522 552840 or by e-mail at [nigel.west@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.west@lincolnshire.gov.uk)