

Scrutiny...

... what does it look like now?

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Four principles ...

Provides a 'critical friend' challenge

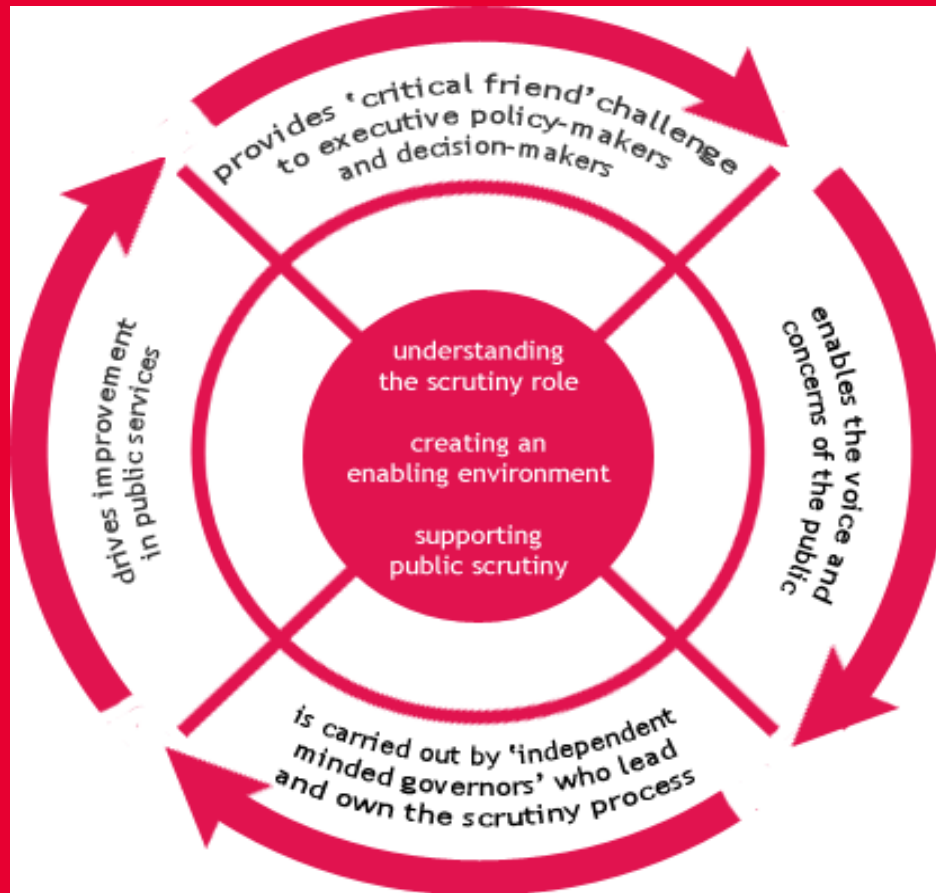
Enables the voice and concerns of the public to be heard

Is carried out by independent minded governors who lead and own the scrutiny role

Drives improvement in public services



The four principles of effective scrutiny



Roles and relationships

Process and practice

Skills and support

Scrutiny has developed over time

- 2000 Local Government Act = executive/scrutiny
- 2001 Health & Social Care Act = health scrutiny
- 2003-06 further Acts = incremental change
- 2006 White Paper Strong & Prosperous Communities
- 2006 Police & Justice Act = CDRP scrutiny
- 2007 LG & PIH Act = LAA/partnership scrutiny & CCfA
- 2008 White Paper Communities in Control
- 2009 Regulations and further Bill in Parliament

New agenda:

2006 Police and Justice Act ...

Makes provision for CDRP scrutiny

- powers to request attendance and information from community safety partners
- scrutinise these partners insofar as their work relates to the partnership
- powers to co-opt partners onto a crime and disorder scrutiny committee

New agenda:

2007 Local Government Act...

Scrutiny of partners in the LAA

- scrutiny powers relating to those under a duty to agree targets for the Local Area Agreement
- power to require information, not attendance, currently in relation to a Local Area Agreement target
- partners must 'have regard' to recommendations about LAA targets
- Councillor call for action

Where next?

- 2007 Act regulations and guidance
- CAA – first reports later this year

Issues/opportunities:

- Joint scrutiny
- Scrutiny capacity
- Scrutiny reaching beyond council services
- Getting closer to community

What we are talking about:

From scrutiny of service to scrutiny of place...

Services

- Professionals are king
- Reports dominate
- Tendency to be backward looking
- What happened or what should have happened as the question

Places

- People are king
- Stories inform
- Tendency to be forward looking
- What will happen or what should happen as the question

Places and people

A people perspective

- What is my experience
- What is my aspiration
- What is my fear
- What's the role of public services in meeting those
- How should we better configure services to improve experience, meet aspiration and address fear

A place perspective

- What do we want our place to be like in ten years time
- How does our place compare to other places
- What do we want to be unique about our place
- And in what way do we want our place to be more like other places

10 top skills for scrutiny of place

- Steering not rowing
- Commissioning and co-commissioning
- Influence not command and control
- Convening (and being convened)
- Thinking and acting long term
- Coping with complexity
- Listening and engaging
- Community mediation
- Storytelling
- Strategic and community leadership

(courtesy of the Leadership Centre 2008)

Scrutiny can help...

- Brokering major health reconfiguration compromise
- Joint scrutiny by 4 authorities to develop policy on a joint waste & recycling strategic partnership
- Recruiting older people as researchers to investigate patient experience of hospital discharge
- Challenging LAA to set more ambitious targets on climate change
- Media summit held with youth parliament to challenge portrayal of young people in press

Opportunities to ...

- Improve the perception of scrutiny
- Clarify the different roles and expectations
- Avoid overloading partners or scrutineers
- Emphasise the benefits for external partners
- Build sound working relationships

Evidence of change

- Demonstrate scrutiny outcomes
- Use partners' expertise
- Enable increasing public influence
- Benefit from new duties and powers

Conclusion

Partnership working - a presumption that scrutiny will need to start “mainstreaming” its investigations of partnership issues.

Thinking about scrutiny “adding value” – particularly important given scrutiny’s role in CAA, and financial constraints in local government.

A more performance-led approach – based on analysis of performance data, to make both of the above more effective.

Questions...

- should we move from scrutiny of services to scrutiny of place? If so, how? If not, why not?
- what skills are needed to scrutinise place?
- does scrutiny of place affect topic selection? How are reviews carried out?
- how do we get partners and the public 'on board'?