

**Notes**  
**North East Scrutiny Officers Network**  
Wednesday 4 September 2024

**Attendance:**

Darlington Council	Hannah Miller
Durham CC	Stephen Gwilym
Gateshead Council	Emma Fagan
Hartlepool Council	Gemma Jones
Middlesbrough Council	Susan Lightwing
Middlesbrough Council	Scott Bonner
Newcastle City Council	Jessica Hall
Newcastle City Council	Kate McLoughlin
North East CA	Liz Kerr
North East CA	Gavin Armstrong
Northumberland CC	Sean Nicholson
Northumberland CC	Rebecca Grealley
Redcar & Cleveland Council	Caroline Leng
Redcar & Cleveland Council	Adam Lynch-Brown
South Tyneside Council	Emma Purvis
Stockton-on-Tees Council	Gary Woods
Stockton-on-Tees Council	Michelle Gunn
Sunderland City Council	Nigel Cummings

**Apologies**

Darlington Council	Paul Dalton
Durham CC	Rachel Parker
Hartlepool Council	Joan Stevens
North East CA	Michael Robson
Northumberland CC	Lynsey Denyer
Redcar & Cleveland Council	Alison Pearson
South Tyneside Council	Jonathan Lunness
South Tyneside Council	Susan Clennell
Stockton-on-Tees Council	Judy Trainer
Tees Valley CA	Connor Malone

**1. Welcome**

Attendees were welcomed to the meeting.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Noted above.

**3. Minutes from the Meeting 30 May 2024**

It was noted that the in person meeting in Newcastle would take place on 27 November.

#### **4. CfGS Update**

The CfGS representative was not present to give an update.

#### **5. Health Scrutiny Update**

Discussion took place regarding Memorandum of Understandings between LA's and ICB, with Gemma Jones asking for examples and Gary Woods stating that a region-wide Memorandum of Understanding document might be useful to aid consistency of approach between Local Authorities and health partners. No other LA had progressed this and Stephen Gwilym noted that they had been cautious to introduce a Memorandum of Understanding due to the difficulty in gathering all stakeholders together to agree and sign up to it.

Issues with engagement with CQC was raised. Stephen Gwilym updated on Durham's inspection where it was commented that Scrutiny was NHS centric, and more scrutiny of adult social care should be considered.

The mapping exercise across the North East Scrutiny Committees was highlighted, and the template would be circulated again.

**Action** – Gary Woods to circulate the mapping exercise

#### **6. Draft Agenda for the Joint Scrutiny Network Meeting – 25 September 2024**

The following items were identified for the agenda of the next Joint Scrutiny Network meeting:

- Supporting Young People into Employment (Task & Finish) – Newcastle City Council
- Cumulative list of review work being undertaken / recently completed by scrutiny committees – ALL
- Scrutiny Structures – ALL

**Action** – items to be placed on the Joint Scrutiny Network agenda

#### **7. Discussion – Scrutiny Structures**

The updated scrutiny guidance was discussed. Sean Nicholson noted that Northumberland had done a 'stock take' against the new guidance with their overarching chairs group and while it came out quite well, there was potential to make changes to their scrutiny function for the next local elections.

Stephen Gwilym noted that the number of members for Durham was reducing from 126 to 98 for the next local elections, therefore, would be reviewing their scrutiny structure.

Susan Lightwing noted that Middlesbrough officers had responsibility for all democratic services function, including scrutiny which impacted on the time they had to dedicate to the scrutiny role. They had recently had a radical review of their scrutiny structure and reduced the committees to one overarching OSC board and two panels, People and

Place. They were now looking at more pre-decision scrutiny work for their work programmes.

## **8. Any Other Business**

No nominations had been received for the position of Vice-Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Network and officers were asked to promote to their Members.

**Action** – promote role of Vice-Chair to Members.

Also, no nominations had been received for the position of Vice-Chair of the Officer Network, and officers were asked to give consideration to whether they would be able to take on this role.

## **9. Date and Time of Future Meetings**

The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 27 November 2024, 10am at Civic Centre, Newcastle.