



BRIEFING NOTE

Notes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs with the Cabinet/Board

The chairs of the three scrutiny committees attended a meeting of the Cabinet/Board in July to discuss the outcomes of the scrutiny review and how the improvement points could be taken forward. The meeting was very positive and everybody acknowledged the need to strengthen the relationship between Cabinet and scrutiny, a key element of making scrutiny work more effectively in the authority.

With this in mind, the members of Cabinet have agreed to attend the meetings of the scrutiny committees relevant to their portfolio. They will have a regular time-boxed slot on the agenda to give the committee a brief verbal update on their portfolio. This could include for example:

- An update on major projects
- Significant changes to the Forward Plan
- New initiatives
- Current issues and challenges

In the 10 minute slot for each Deputy, it is not intended to go into detail but aims to give the committee a broader understanding of the Cabinet agenda and will highlight issues they may want to look at in more detail. For this to work effectively it is important that scrutiny members respect that Cabinet Deputies cannot be experts on everything in their portfolio. They will be able to ask questions of clarification but Deputies may need to provide more detailed information outside the meeting or be invited to a future meeting to deal with a specific item.

As some committees have several Deputies, members may decide to split them by alternative meetings. It is suggested that all Deputies attend the September meetings and then members decide norms for future meetings.

For information the other items discussed at the July meeting were:

- Officer support for scrutiny – agreed to consider this as part of the budget process
- Group Director support – continue with current arrangements

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