

# Scrutiny Annual Report



## Chair's Review

This has been a busy year for Scrutiny, as well as ten reviews undertaken and more than twenty visits to frontline services, we have also held a National Conference with over seventy delegates!

Scrutiny activity over the last year has continued apace with a variety of reviews. Concerns about mental health have been seen in the pieces of work; the Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Task Group and the Gambling Spotlight Review. Three task groups have been held to respond to highways concerns on speed, maintenance and Winter. Health and Adult Care Scrutiny has had a key role influencing the emerging Integrated Care System and the development of a Long-Term Plan for Devon, with specific work on the Rapid Response Spotlight Review.

Many Councillors have also taken part in the comprehensive programme of visits to frontline services, furthering their understanding and improving the quality of critical friend questioning.

Scrutiny Chairs express their thanks to all Scrutiny Committee Members, recognising in particular the valuable contribution through Task Group investigations and Spotlight Reviews. The support of the dedicated team of Scrutiny Officers, coupled with the expertise offered by the two special advisors continues to be highly valued.

**Councillor Alistair Dewhirst, Chair of Corporate Infrastructure & Regulatory Services Scrutiny**

**Councillor Rob Hannaford, Chair of Children's Scrutiny**

**Councillor Sara Randall Johnson, Chair of Health & Adult Care Scrutiny**

## Highlights:

### Committee Meetings

18 Public meetings

104 Reports

2 Call-ins

10 speakers

### Task Groups/Spotlights

10 reviews established

5 reports published

49 recommendations

138 witnesses

SCRUTINY SYPOSIUM

WE ALSO HELD A NATIONAL CONFERENCE

# 2018/19



# SCRUTINY IMPACT

Scrutiny now receives up to date management information on potholes and repairs at every Committee Meeting as part of the service's transparent approach.

Following the Spotlight Review on problem gambling the Council now plays its part in raising awareness of the dangers of problem gambling.

Scrutiny helped SWASFT identify some of the 5,000 Defibrillators in Communities potentially saving lives!

Scrutiny made 13 recommendations in the budget process — Cabinet agreed to take them all on



**The Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee have been working with providers to improve their performance.**

Through the Quality Account process, Scrutiny has reviewed:

- \* The Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
- \* Devon Partnership Trust NHS Trust
- \* South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- \* South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

And has specifically conducted in-depth work with Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust



Scrutiny looked at proposed changes to foster carer fees and allowances (which would see a reduction in allowances for some carers)

Scrutiny said that income protection should be guaranteed for foster carers until all current placements come to an end.

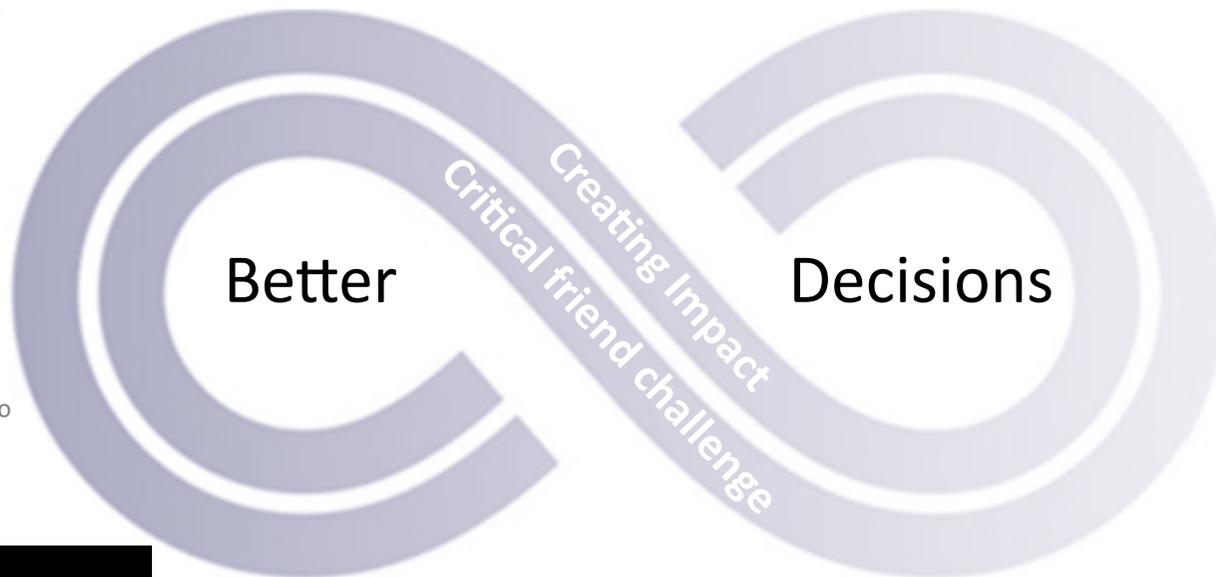
**Cabinet agreed additional £1.2m funding**

**Impact – Better placement stability for children living with foster carers who would be affected**

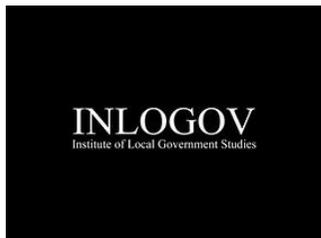


# Scrutiny Symposium

- ⇒ Hosted by Devon
- ⇒ 70+ Scrutineers
- ⇒ MP Chair of the Select Committee Chairs
- ⇒ 30 Local Authorities
- ⇒ 8 Ideas Exchange Workshops
- ⇒ 1 Panel Q&A



With thanks to the following sponsors



Association of Democratic Services Officers



## CREATING IMPACT: FINDINGS

The message from the day was that the environment for Scrutiny is paramount to enable meaningful impact.

Delegates were clear that the determinants of this began with lead decision makers welcoming the views and evidence based challenge that Scrutiny can bring.

Factors to support effective Scrutiny then include independent Scrutiny staff, the right training and development for Members and a strong chair. Then Scrutiny can meet the challenge of balancing the voice of the public with evidence in order to challenge the Executive and ultimately ensure the best decisions are made.

## How has Scrutiny listened this year?

- \* Heard from **138** witnesses from industry, the NHS, charities, employees, universities and members of the public in Task Group/Spotlight Reviews
- \* Visited community hospitals, care homes, social work offices, schools and charities speaking to more than **40** staff and service users.
- \* **10** public speakers at Committee under the public participation scheme, speaking on:
  - Foster Care Allowances
  - Air quality and congestion
  - Promoting Independence for Carers
  - Modernising Health and Wellbeing Services
- \* Numerous correspondence on Foster Care allowances, libraries, broadband and many other issues.
- \* Engaging on social media—with 881 Twitter followers  Follow us or get in touch @devon\_democracy

## LEP Scrutiny

This year Devon County Council became the host authority for the newly established Heart of the South West Joint Local Enterprise Partnership Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is set up to hold the LEP to account and comprises representatives from District, Unitaries and County Councils across Devon and Somerset. The Committee has met twice and is due to review it's progress at the end of the year.

## Influencing the National Agenda

- ◆ Devon Scrutiny has been recognised in the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual [Scrutiny Frontiers Publication](#)
- ◆ Task Group recommendations were specifically directed at lobbying MPs and changing National Policy, Including the Better Care Fund TG which wrote to the Secretary of State for Health and received positive recognition of the work in Devon.
- ◆ The [Scrutiny Symposium](#) took place in September 2018, which was in perfect time for the findings to be submitted to Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government in their preparation of the Statutory Scrutiny Guidance, which we hope to see published later this year, watch this space...

For task group reports, briefings & more [click here](#)

For any comments or to suggest topics for Scrutiny contact Camilla de Bernhardt Lane  
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