Item 1

31st August 2022

Glasgow City Council
Scrutiny Workshop
August 2022

Working Together

- Respect
- Responsibility - making our time worthwhile
- Openness and honesty
- Confidentiality
- Challenge - within the principles above

Outline

- Scrutiny fundamentals (conditions necessary for scrutiny to work, critical success factors, roles and responsibilities)
- Scrutinising in complexity (perverse targets, control from the centre)
- Evidence (not all evidence is equal, different types of evidence, triangulation of evidence, using LGBF data)

Starting Points: ‘Scrutiny Myths’

- x You need to know everything about everything
- x You micro manage the services i.e. there is a difference between governance & management
- x You are individually empowered to instruct officers
- x It all takes place at the scrutiny committee
- x It’s your way of getting what you want

What are you doing?

- Examining
- Questioning
- Challenging
- Ensuring decisions are implemented
- Seeking an explanation
- Making clear….transparent
- Getting assurance that corrective action is happening

Evidence

- High quality research evidence can and should be used as part of the scrutiny process
- Not all evidence is equal - some is more robust and valuable than others
- Independent officer advice is important
- There is a range of information sources for councillors to use; corroboration is powerful
- Scrutiny itself can act as a change agent, enhancing the way that the council uses evidence for decision-making
- Elected councillors are well placed to enable active engagement with the public and other stakeholders in scrutiny

Key points

- Your questioning and scrutiny should be about you receiving the assurance you need on key risks and issues – are you content with the way information is presented to you; and do you need further assurance from officers on the reports being presented.

- You should constructively challenge officers where materials are presented in a way which does not permit you to perform your role effectively

Strategic documents

- The Council Strategic Plan
- Council budget plans
- Internal and External Audit Plans and Reports
- Corporate Risk Registers
- Corporate policies
- Business transformation plans
- Service-specific strategic plans
- Local outcomes improvement plan (LOIP)

Tactical and operational information - performance, finance and risk

- Budget monitoring reports
- Service, departmental and team plans and strategies
- Business cases and options appraisals
- Performance information
- Detailed demographic and socioeconomic data
- Locality plans
- Thematic reports
- Risk registers
- Agendas, reports and minutes of formal and informal council
- Meetings
- Internal audit reports, reviews and action plans
- Complaints information
- Front-line staff / service providers

External sources

- Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)
- External agencies/Regulatory bodies (Audit Scotland, Care Inspectorate, Scottish Housing Regulator etc.)
- External experts (academics, Subject Matter Experts, Unions, Businesses, Visit Scotland, What Works Scotland, legal bodies, commissions etc.)

Continuous Development

Members:

- What are the different types of evidence you have been scrutinising?
- Is it the right mix of information, resources and support?

Officers:

- Are there ways you would like to develop the evidence you provide to committees?
- What do you need to know in order to present information that may better suit the needs of members?

Scrutiny in practice – FASC examples (Audit)

- Internal Audit:
  - Was the scope of the audit clear and appropriate?
  - Does the overall conclusion reflect the matters identified?
  - How will this impact the annual opinion and future work?
  - Are you happy management have accepted actions and taking significant matters seriously?

Scrutiny in practice – FASC examples (Finance)

- Finance reports:
  - Is the information clearly presented?
  - Are variances presented in an understandable way?
  - Is the information provided focussed on the more significant variances and issues?
  - Are you satisfied that management's plans for corrective action are sufficient and appropriate?