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U Is there a place for a Regional Scrutiny Network? B

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Plenty on our plates already

- Lots to look at in own Authority
- Impact of budget cuts
- Want to do more with Partners
- Coventry is not Stafford, is not Redditch – vive la difference!!
- And, Scrutiny itself is in a harsh climate

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What might a Regional Network offer?

- Cost effective way of learning about National developments
- Sharing experiences of where things have gone well and not so well
- Sounding board for emerging issues
- Contributing to self-regulation
- Providing scope for training and development
- Mutual support and championing of Scrutiny

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Cost effective way of learning about National developments

- Will shortly hear from Ed and stance of CfPS
- CfPS limiting its number of national events
- Encouraging Regional Networks which CfPS will support

- I was involved last week in Yorkshire and Humberside regional network event

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- And, of course, in-house budget reductions will limit scope for attending National events

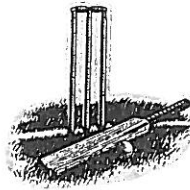


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Localism Bill

Public/Local Scrutiny: good

Local Authority Scrutiny:
lukewarm



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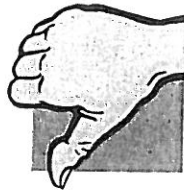
“Because information is power, we are bringing real transparency to Government..... who spends your money, what they spend it on, what the results are, where the waste is, what they spend on themselves and their salaries – we’re putting it in your hands. It’s your money – so you should know how it is being spent.”

*David Cameron,
Birmingham 6th October 2010*

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Message from D.C.L.G.

Senior Ministers not interested in any prescriptive amendments; will only consider permissive ones.



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Bill requires all Authorities to operate their governance arrangements in one of three forms:

- Executive arrangement (either Leader, Cabinet and Scrutiny or Executive Mayor, Cabinet and Scrutiny)

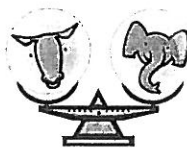
- A Committee System

- Another prescribed arrangement as approved by Secretary of State

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Process for changing governance arrangements is a two stage one:

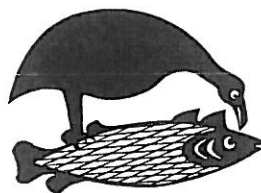
- Resolution of full Council
- Change can then be made following the next relevant election



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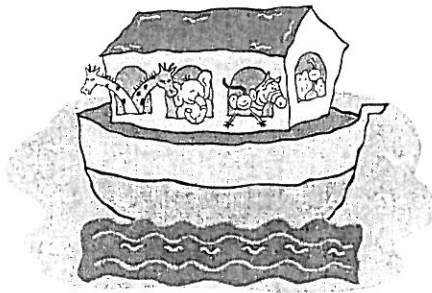
Dichotomy introduced

- If Authority settles on Executive arrangements **MUST** include provision for at least one Scrutiny Committee and retain designated Scrutiny Officer
- If Authority opts for Committee arrangements **MAY** have a Scrutiny Committee



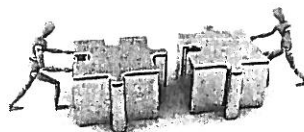
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Retention of Health, Community Safety and
Flood Risk Management scrutiny
responsibilities for all Councils



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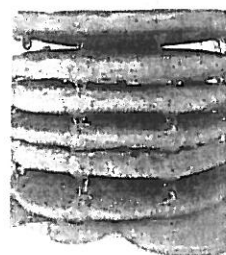
We must make the case for the unique, niche
position of Local Authority Scrutiny in joining
up the various scrutiny expectations.



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Sharing experiences of where things have gone well and not so well

- Intending to look at an issue: has a neighbouring Authority already done so?
- Not sure whether stacks up
- Have you had difficulty in getting information on this?



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Sounding board for emerging issues

- How is your Council responding to this?
- What do you understand it is intended for Local HealthWatch bodies to do?

(There will be a big health agenda irrespective of how the Health and Social Care Bill turns out, with Local Authorities getting public health powers back.)

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- And how are Police and Crime Panels going to impact on us?



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Contributing to Self-Regulation

- Local Gov't Group: "Taking the Lead: Self-Regulation and Improvement in Local Government"
- Sees scrutiny by Elected Members as being a key contribution to driving improvement and accountability to local people
- "Use Scrutiny to challenge and improve Council services and those of their Partners"

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Five Regional events

- Cambridge (7/7)
- Exeter (12/7)
- London (18/7)
- Newcastle (19/7)
- Nottingham (20/7)

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Providing scope for training and development

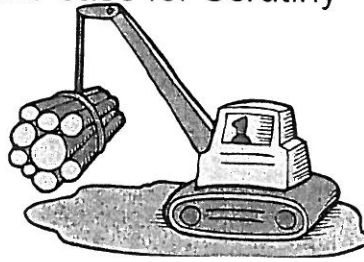
- Network can be a cost effective way of providing training and development
- Also scope to develop local programmes on identified issues



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Mutual support and championing Scrutiny

- Testing times
- Whilst Authorities different, quite often the case that the same kind of issues are faced
- Need to make case for Scrutiny



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So, if we do feel there would be value in a Regional Network:

- Need small core group to sustain
(Build on Wolverhampton's initiative)
- INLOGOV will continue to support
- Frequency and resourcing
- Identify issues where Regional Network is not just an add-on but makes a distinctive contribution

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Thoughts, Ideas



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