

By: Paul Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager.

To: Scrutiny Board
24 February 2010

Subject **Kent and Medway Overview and Scrutiny Officers Network Partnership Working**

Summary: Update on the work of the Kent and Medway Overview and Scrutiny Officers network.

(1) Members may be aware that there is a strong overview and scrutiny officers network which includes all the local authorities in geographical Kent. Some Members may have attended the third bi-annual conference that the network held in November 2009 at Oakwood House.

(2) This network come together twice a year to share best practise and also to look at ways that we can avoid duplication of work.

(3) In January 2010 the network held a facilitated afternoon session to discuss ways in which overview and scrutiny across Kent could work more effectively in partnership.

(4) This was a very constructive session and we have a number of outcomes to take forward. These include :-

- A group of officers across the network working on refreshing the Inter Authority Overview and Scrutiny Co-operation protocol, which will include clear guidelines on engaging with partners, for example in relation to Crime and Disorder Scrutiny to ensure that best use is made of their resources
- A workshop or series of events (facilitated by Parliamentary Select Committee officers) and a Parliamentary Select Committee Chairmen.
- The possible of development of an exchange programme with Parliamentary Select Committee officers having the opportunity to come and work in Kent on short placements
- Looking at establishing a pool of experts to help advise Overview and Scrutiny Committees across the County
- Sharing Overview and Scrutiny work programmes across the county including Medway to avoid duplication and to ensure effective use of resources. One way of doing this is via the Communities of Practise forum that the net work has set up on the IDeA website.

(5) This report is presented for Members of the Board information and any comments from Member would be welcome.

Recommendations that the report and any comments made by Members be noted.

Paul Wickenden
Tel No: 01622 694486
e-mail: paul.wickenden@kent.gov.uk