

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17 September 2012

Briefing Note: Update from the Overview and Scrutiny Training Champion

1 Background

- 1.1 Councillor Elizabeth Gowen was elected the Overview and Scrutiny Training Champion by the Committee.
- 1.2 Training is vital for Scrutiny to continue to be effective and the Overview and Scrutiny Training Champion provides a valued role having a necessary input into the training requirements of Overview and Scrutiny.

2 Information

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny four year rolling training programme is now in year two. A copy of this document is attached as a reminder to the Committee.
- 2.2 At its meeting in November 2011, the Committee agreed that there was not the need to hold a Councillor development session on the Call In procedure but a session on presentation skills for all Councillors should be programmed in instead.
- 2.3 A Councillor development session on presentation skills has been scheduled for 9th January 2013 at the Guildhall. Two sessions will be offered, one commencing at 2pm to 5pm and a later session from 6pm to 9pm. The external facilitator confirmed that he could provide two sessions on the same day for the same cost as one evening session. By holding two sessions it is anticipated that more Councillors will be able to attend.
- 2.4 The external facilitator advises that the aim of the course is:
 - How to focus the audience, both the Committee and the public present when giving presentations, in particular presenting reports
 - Techniques for structuring and remembering the presentation

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny

- How to make presentations run to time
- Identifying strategies for managing common fears – key tips for handling nerves and feeling confident
- Voice techniques
- Handling questions effectively

2.5 The session is designed to help Councillors:

- Plan and prepare a short speech or presentation
- Identify the key ingredients of a poor, a good, and a great speech or presentation
- Highlight how they can use their key skills to project a confident, competent image
- 'Manage' nerves and tension effectively
- Identify 'objectives' in a speech
- Tailoring the content and delivery to your audience
- Use their voices to the maximum effect
- Structure the content logically and concisely
- Know how to make their presentations run to time
- Use techniques for structuring and remembering the presentation
- 'Sell' ideas to the audience in a presentation or speech
- Use appropriate stories, anecdotes, examples and imagery to make their speech more user-friendly
- Make their speeches lively, user-friendly and participative
- Handle, interruptions, questions, negativity and heckling

2.6 Development sessions for year 2 of the Overview and Scrutiny Training Programme include:

Chairing Skills
Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny
Evidence and Questioning Skills

2.7 It is felt that as Councillors attended the sessions on the introduction to Overview and Scrutiny and chairing skills in the summer of 2011, there is not the need to re run these sessions. It is acknowledged that the Committee has gained experience in evidence and questioning skills and it is suggested that there is not the need to hold a session on this topic either.

3 Recommendation

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny

- 3.1 That the update be noted.
- 3.2 That the Committee informs the [Councillor Connect Team](#) which of the two sessions of Presentation Skills Councillors will attend on 9th January 2013.
- 3.3 That Overview and Scrutiny development sessions on the introduction to Overview and Scrutiny, Chairing Skills and evidence and questioning skills are not scheduled for year 2 of the Overview and Scrutiny training programme.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Overview and Scrutiny Officer, on behalf of Councillor Elizabeth Gowen, Overview and Scrutiny Training Champion

10th August 2012