

## **Got some questions about this scrutiny offer?**

As detailed in your covering letter, we are offering the opportunity to discuss this proposal via a virtual discussion using MSTeams. If you would prefer to discuss by phone, that can also be arranged. In the meantime, here are a few Questions & Answers (Q&A) that might help answer some of your queries:

### ***Q1. I would like to participate in virtual meetings, but I do not have the required equipment, how can this be resolved?***

A1. All scrutiny members will be issued with the same equipment to be used for scrutiny work. A laptop, preloaded with relevant software, will be provided to all members to aid access to meetings, emails, documents and for project research purposes.

### ***Q2. But I already have a pc or laptop at home so do I have to have a new laptop?***

A2. For a few reasons we would prefer you to use the laptop we provide:

- It will make remote problem solving a lot easier if all members have the same equipment.
- It means we can share one version of a document, for example, at the moment not all members can open the latest pdf format so we have to convert to different formats for different members.
- It also means you can keep all your scrutiny work separate to your personal files or shared home computer.
- However we can discuss individual preferences on a case by case basis

### ***Q3. I find it difficult to read documents you send on my phone/tablet, how can this be resolved?***

A3. As above, all members will receive an identical laptop to access and read papers.

### ***Q4. I am an SCG member but do not wish to participate in virtual meetings, can I still be an SCG member?***

A4. Yes of course, as set out in the proposal if you do not wish to participate in a virtual meeting then you will have the opportunity to comment beforehand (just like you would have done previously if you were unable to attend a physical meeting)

A Scrutiny Advisor or the SCG Chair will ensure these comments are fed into the discussions at the meeting on your behalf. Any decisions made at that meeting will

also take those comments into account and agreed democratically by the members present.

***Q5. I want to be part of scrutiny projects but do not wish to meet virtually, can I still do project work?***

A5. Yes of course, as per the above answer. There will be opportunity to undertake research and to comment on various documents relating to that project. As long as your comments and thoughts are received 48 hours before the virtual meeting, they will be included in discussions at that meeting.

***Q6. If I choose not to meet virtually, will I see all the same information as those who do meet that way.***

A6. Wherever possible yes, but there will be rare occasions when, due to compliance with GDPR, we can only share some information by sharing a screen during a meeting (just as we did when we used to meet face to face). Discussions and any decisions made on that information at that meeting will be made democratically by the members present.

***Q7. What about those members who are not digitally connected?***

A7. We currently only have 1 member not digitally connected but they are willing to give meeting virtually a go once they have the equipment.

***Q8. What about any new members who cannot access scrutiny this way, are we excluding them?***

A8. We will work with anyone who is interested to try and find a relevant solution but sometimes it might not be possible. Unfortunately, the way we used to deliver scrutiny meant that we were excluding some potential members, for example those who worked in the day, those that were housebound, those who only had a small amount of free time, or those who did not want to or couldn't travel. This new proposal may mean that we can open this opportunity to a wider group of our customer base.

There are encouraging results from the perceptions survey, showing a lot of digital interest for becoming more involved with assessing and developing Together Housing services.

***Q9. Will we return to doing scrutiny how it was before when we are no longer restricted by Covid?***

A9. As set out in the offer, it is very important to note that due to the instability of the CV-19 risk to the UK and the ever-changing landscape (local lockdown's for example) this plan is subject to continuous review and dependent on the effectiveness of the plan and any relevant changes to THG, Local Authority or Government safety measures or working practices. If and when restrictions are lifted fully, before we revert back to our previous normal, an assessment of the pros and cons will be undertaken. Any reviews and changes will be made in consultation with the SCG chair and Scrutiny Panel members.

***Q10. Is MS Teams Secure***

A10. Yes, MS Teams provides a safe and secure working environment and is now part of THG's approved applications, all of which have been through a stringent process including areas such as quality, flexibility, security and GDPR regulations.

***Q11. Can I be considered for SCG Co-ordinator/Chair if I am not involved in the virtual meetings?***

A11. During this period given the way that we are having to conduct meetings, only those members who are regularly and actively involved in MS Team meetings, will be able to be nominated for the role of SCG Co-ordinator/Chair. We will review this position in the future once any restrictions on holding face to face meetings have ended.