**Appendix 1: Methods of conducting scrutiny and support work**

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| **Advantages** | **Disadvantages** |
| **Review Groups -** Informal, usually small, and time-limited bodies comprised of members of the Committee who investigate a specific area in detail. This often involves meeting with external experts and organisations, as well as council officers, and conducting independent research.  |
| * Allows for in depth research and evidence gathering to take place
* The most thorough approach to scrutiny
* Informal
 | * Often requires extensive time and resource commitments
* Tendency to overrun, tail off or change scope
 |
| **Workshops and public meetings** - Invite the public and relevant experts to provide the Committee with independent views and expert information on a specific area of interest. Usually conducted as an informal session or drop-in event. |
| * Allows anyone to contribute
* Informal
 | * A risk that no one will attend
* People may misunderstand the role of the Committee
 |
| **Site visits -** Visit service users, the launch of a new scheme, or a ‘best practice’ organisation to assess the impact of services. |
| * Interacting with service users and understanding their needs
* The ability to learn from other authorities
* Builds working relationships
 | * May have logistical challenges;
* Evidence is only collected from one source.
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| **Member Champions -** Using an expert within the Committee’s membership to investigate, together with the support of the scrutiny officer, and report back to the Committee. |
| * Harnesses the enthusiasm and expertise of one member
* Allows time for the Committee to investigate other areas.
 | * The potential to provide a narrow view
* Intensive and time consuming for the individual
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| **Joint scrutiny -** Working with other organisations to recommend improved ways of working. |
| * Builds working relationships
* Minimises any duplication of work
 | * Logistically challenging
* The objectives and purpose of work may not align between organisations
 |
| **Desktop research -** Officers or Councillors may conduct research on behalf of the Committee and report back with their findings. This can be used as the basis for further enquiry.  |
| * Often the quickest and most efficient way of collecting data and evidence.
 | * Does not engage with service users
* Requires reading potentially long reports
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