

## **SCRUTINY TOPIC ASSESSMENT FORM FOR COUNCILLORS 'ONE PAGE STRATEGY'**

### **What is the broad topic area?**

Expansion of local democracy using digital means

### **What is the specific topic area?**

Technology has advanced communication dramatically whilst the democratic input into our democratic institutions have had little change.

Webcasting is a step forward, but is certainly not the end. Expectations from the public have risen to expect to be able to use digital expression as a form of democratic engagement.

To this end the Speaker of the Commons set up a Digital Commission that said the 2020 poll "could be the first election in which people have the opportunity to vote online". Other recommendations in the commission's report include:

- Allowing MPs who are unwell or have childcare responsibilities to be permitted to vote in the Commons electronically, without having to go into the chamber
- Ending restrictions on members of the public using mobile phones in the public galleries in the Commons
- Experimenting with providing live social media coverage of Commons debates

For further information see: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-30976610>

### **Ambitions for the review:**

- Better quality and increased democratic engagement.
  - Setting out possible trials for the council to undertake.
  - Recommending roll out of successful trials to other councils and democratic institutions.
-

*(For completion by the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee)*

Does it have a potential impact on one or more sections of the population?

Yes  No

Is it a corporate priority / concern to the council's partners? Yes  No

Will the review add value? and lead to effective outcomes? Yes  No

Will the review duplicate other work? Yes  No

Is it timely, and do we have the resources? Yes  No

**If the answer is 'Yes' to all of the above questions, then the Committee may decide to proceed with the review. To decide how best to carry out the review, the Committee will need to agree the following:**

**1) Who and how shall we consult?**

*The Speakers' Digital Commission, IT companies, local media, politicians and residents.*

**2) Do we need any experts/specialists? (internal/external)**

*Yes –experts should be called and this should have minimal resource impact.*

**3) What other help do we need? E.g. training/development/resources**

Unknown.

**4) How long should it take?**

*6 – 12 months*