

# EFFECTIVE APPROACHES TO SCRUTINY

Monday 22 August 2022

| 5.30 - 8.30 pm |

frontlineconsulting

**Barking &  
Dagenham**

# PROGRAMME

- Scrutiny reflections – where are we?
- What makes good scrutiny
- Maximising scrutiny effectiveness
- Common pitfalls
- Scrutiny reflections – where are we going?



# SCRUTINY REFLECTIONS



# STOCK TAKE – WHERE ARE WE?



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# SCRUTINY REFLECTIONS



What has gone well?

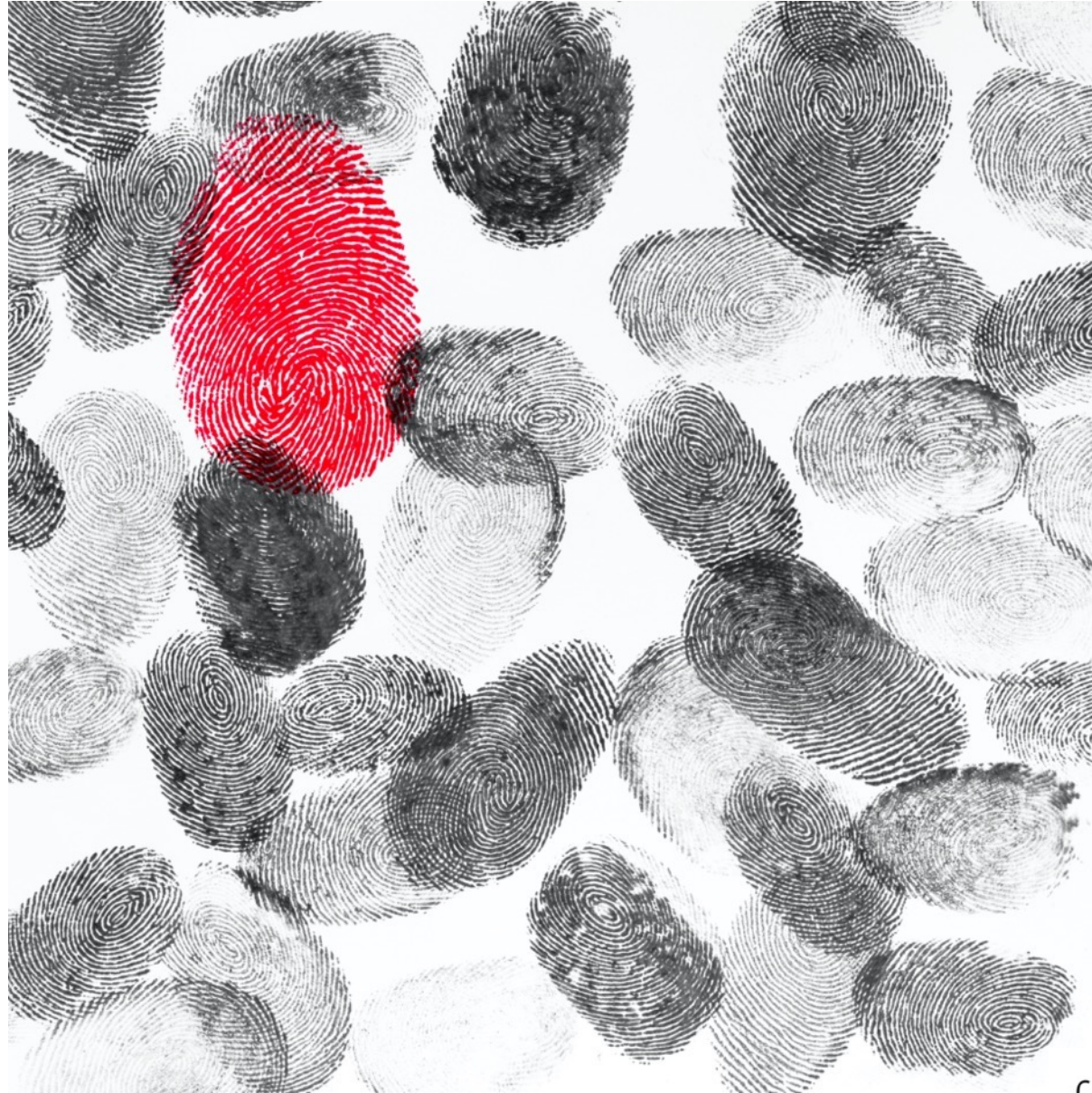


What has been challenging?

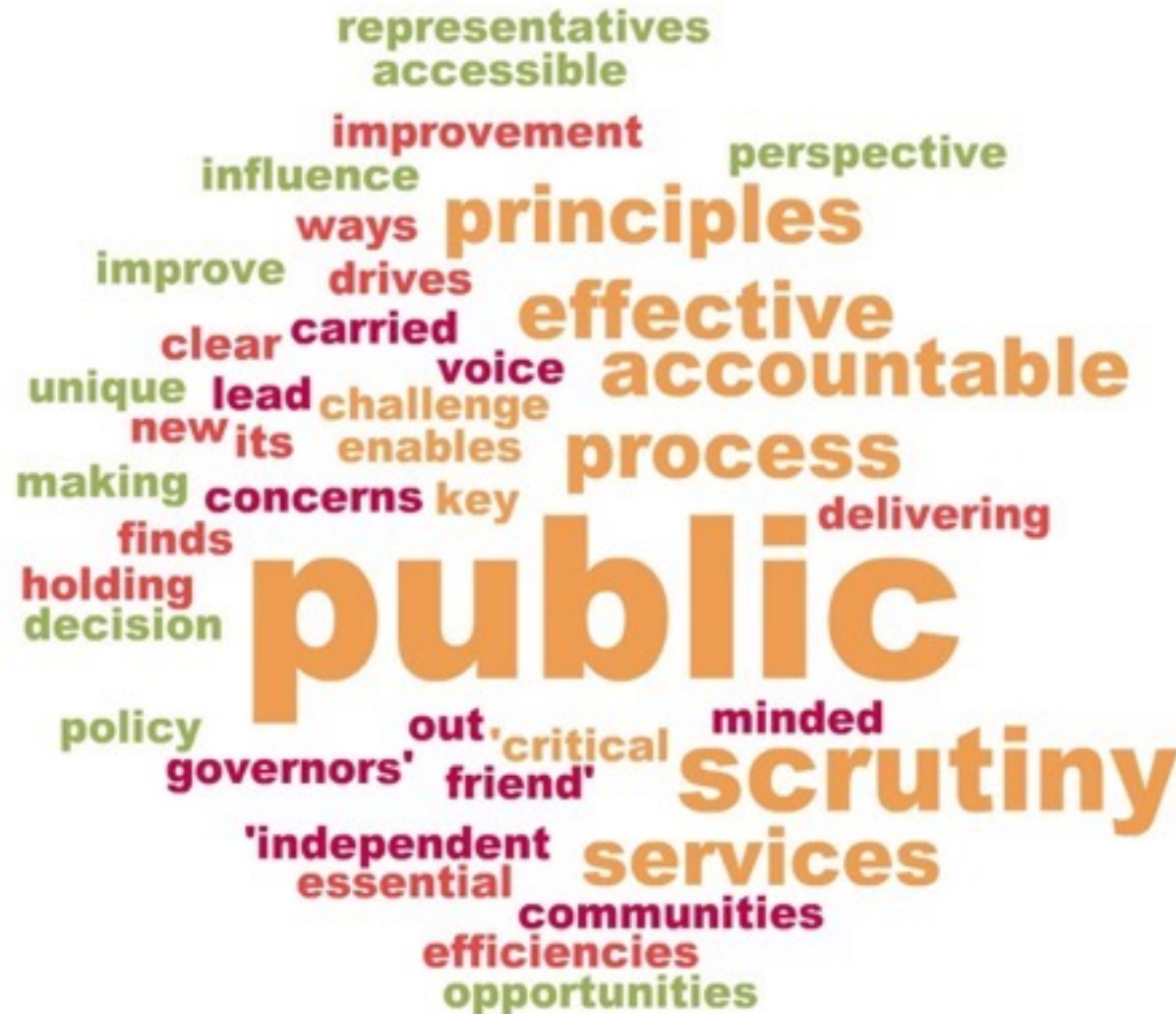


What could be developed?

# WHAT MAKES GOOD SCRUTINY?



# WHAT MAKES GOOD SCRUTINY?



# SCRUTINY IN OUTLINE



- Local Government Act 2000
- Localism Act 2011
- etc



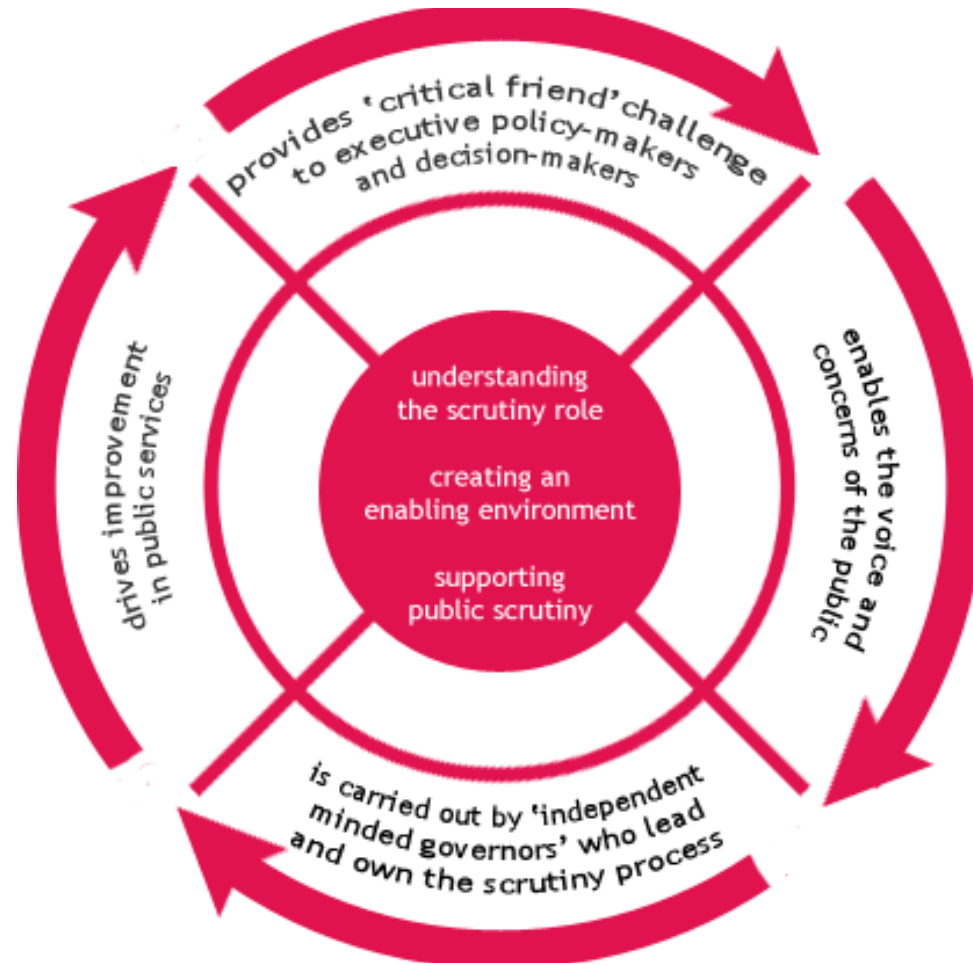
- Powers over some; influence over others
- Information, attendance and reasoned response



- Anything affecting the area
- Demands of pandemic and needs of public



# FOUR PRINCIPLES

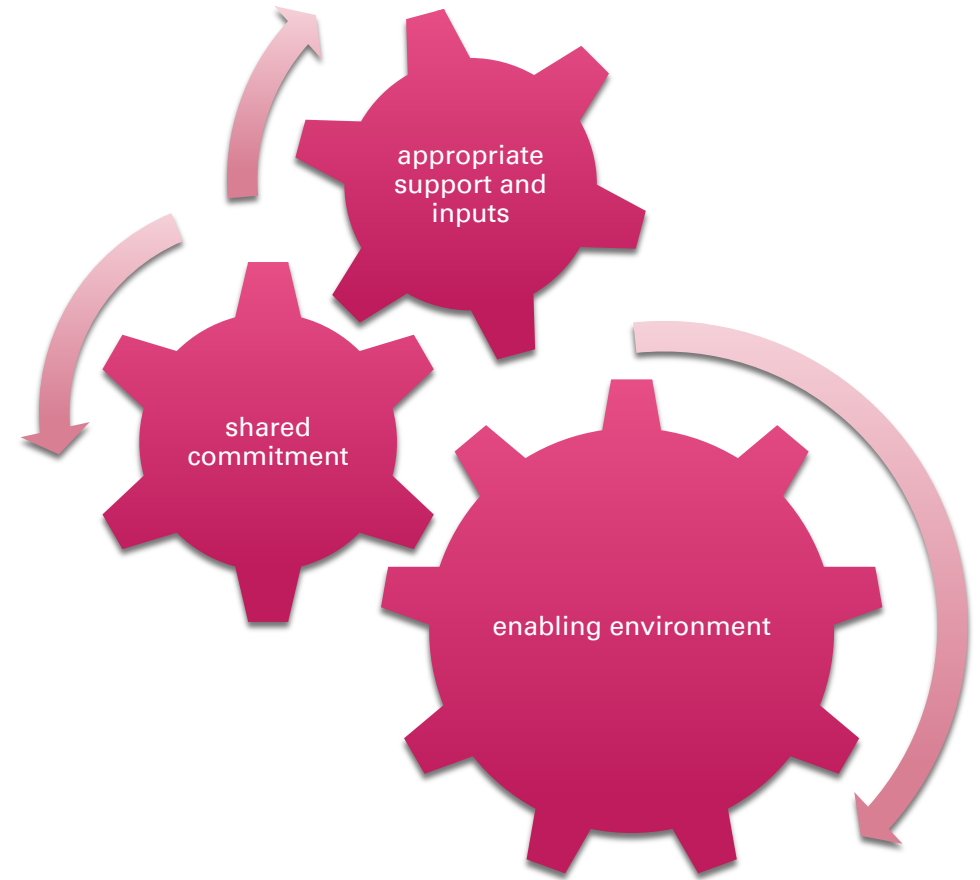


# ROLES

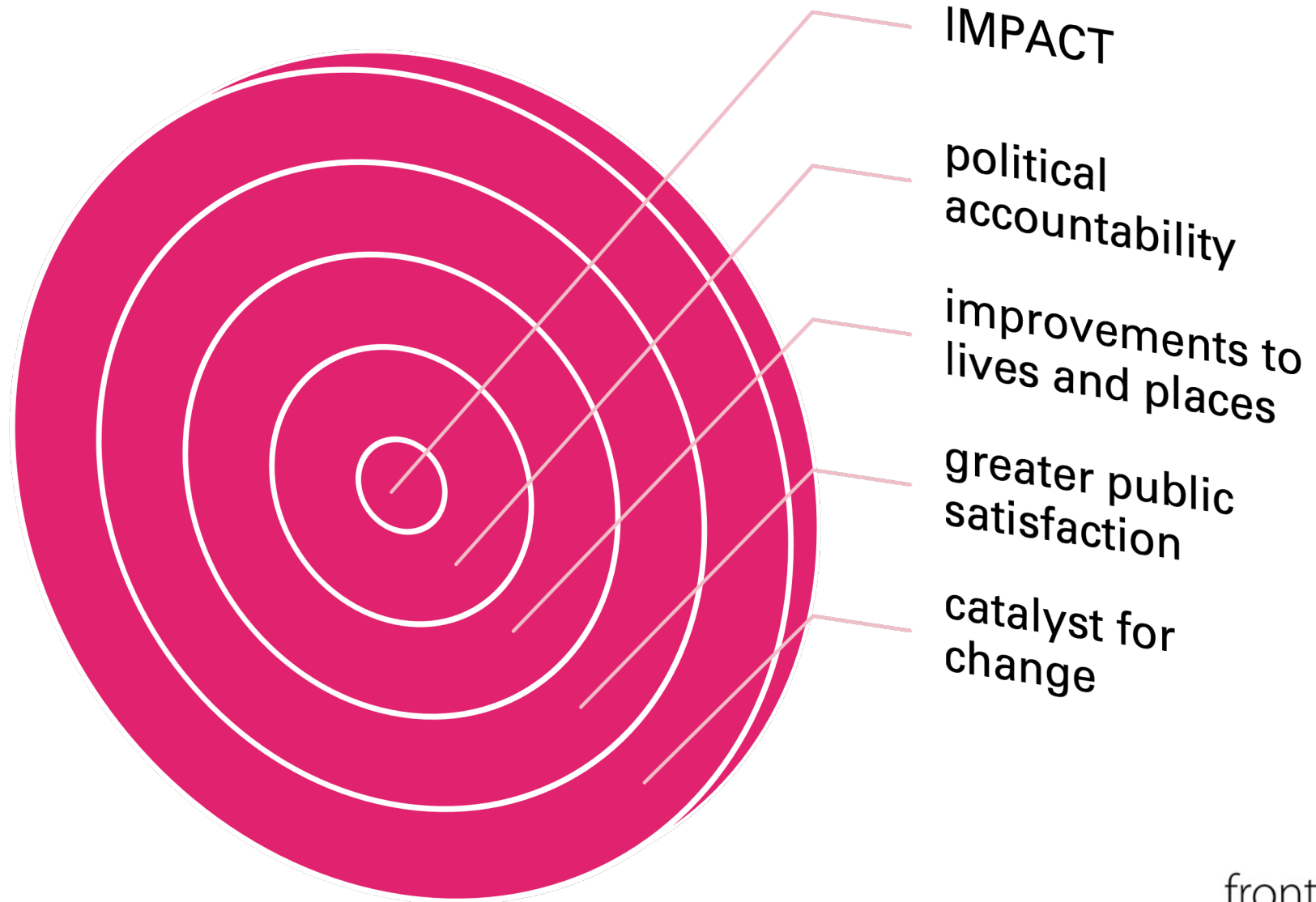
## Critical Friend of Decision Makers:

	advocate for the public
	source of good practice
	developer of policy
	seeker of influence
	enabler of reviews
	driver of savings and improvements

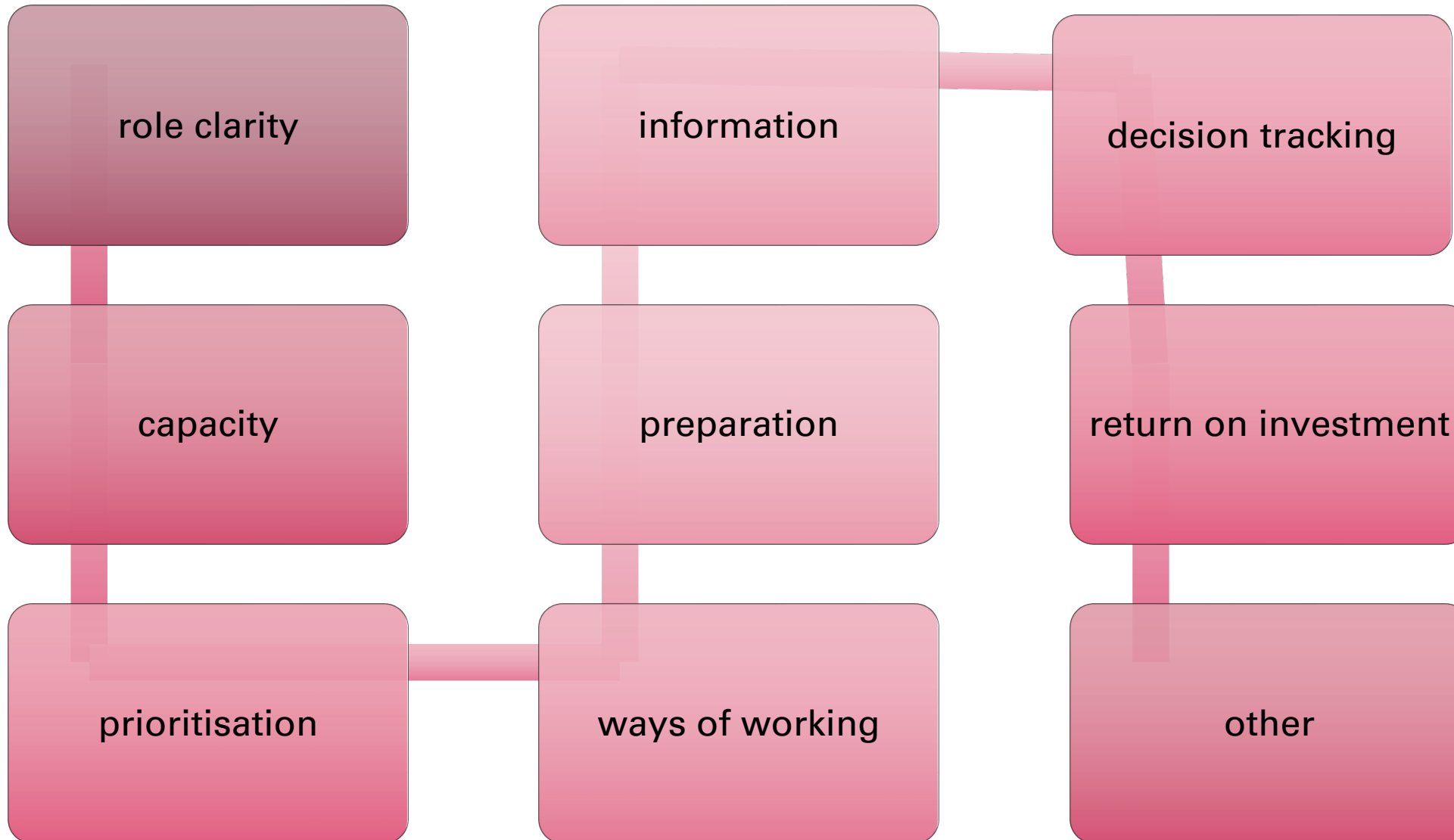
## Requirements:



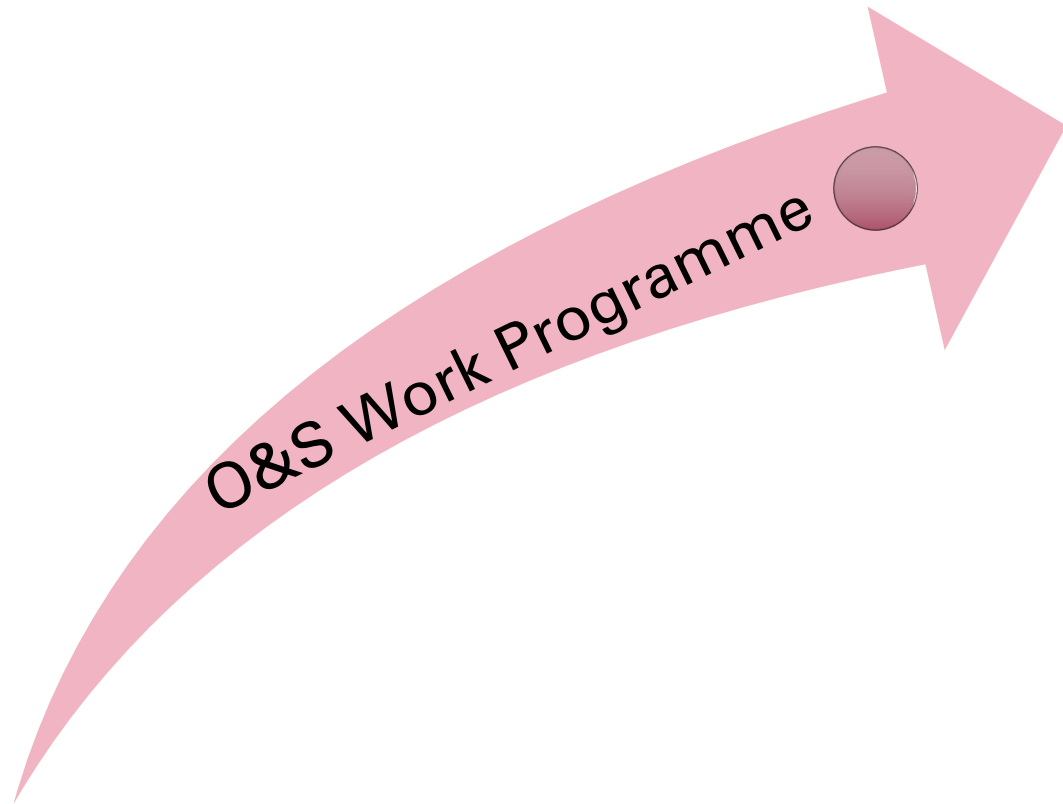
# OUTCOMES



# POTENTIAL CHALLENGES AND RISKS



# SOURCES OF IDEAS



# WORK PROGRAMMING

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corporate fit

---

clear rationale

---

criteria to prioritise

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access to and use of information

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awareness of council activity

---

commissioning cycle

---

capacity

---

sounds timetable

---

less is more



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# WORKING AS A TEAM

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preparation

---

communication

---

constructive

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play to your strengths

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share the load

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efficiency and effectiveness

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provide support

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work on consensus

---

evidence based conclusions



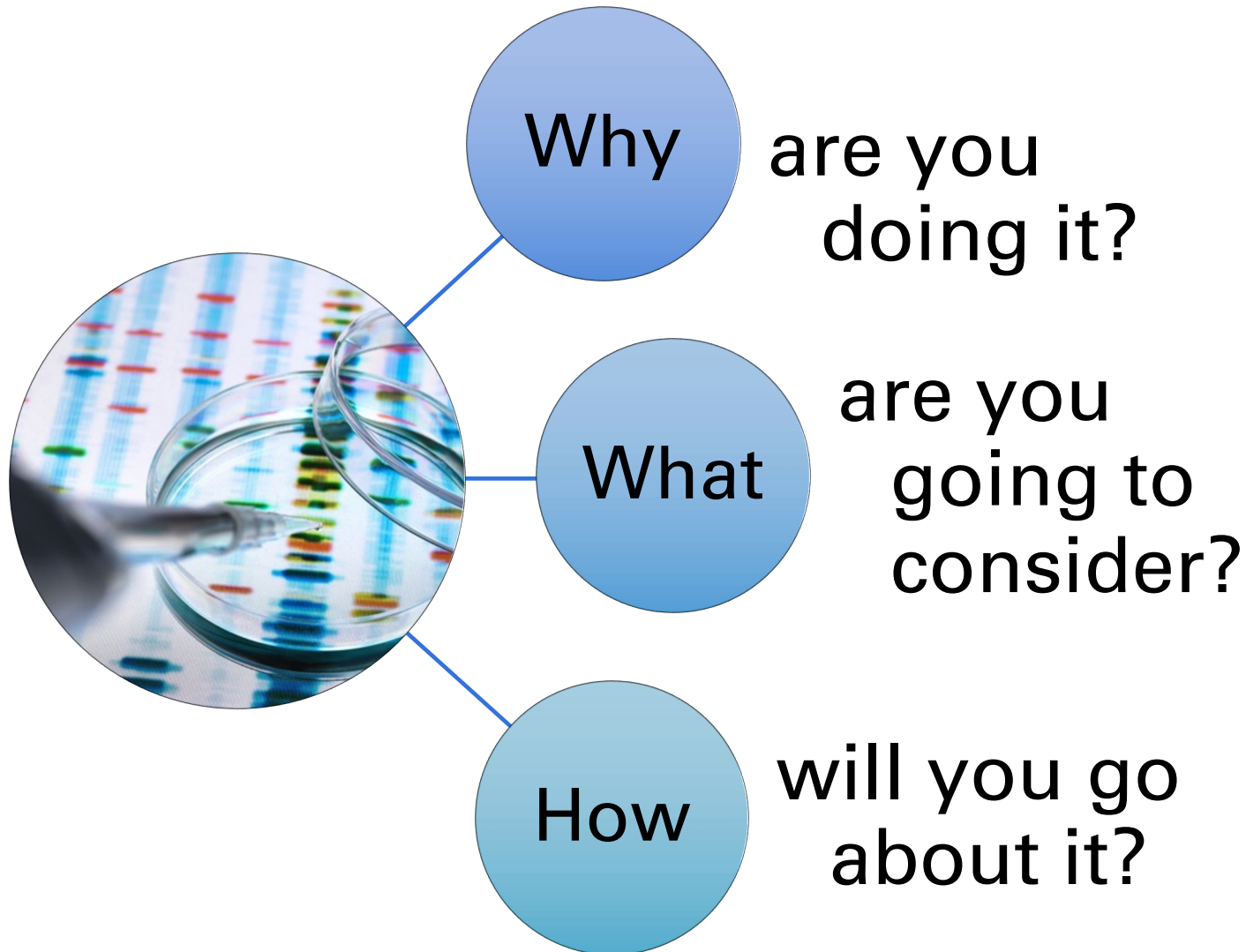
# MAXIMISING SCRUTINY EFFECTIVENESS



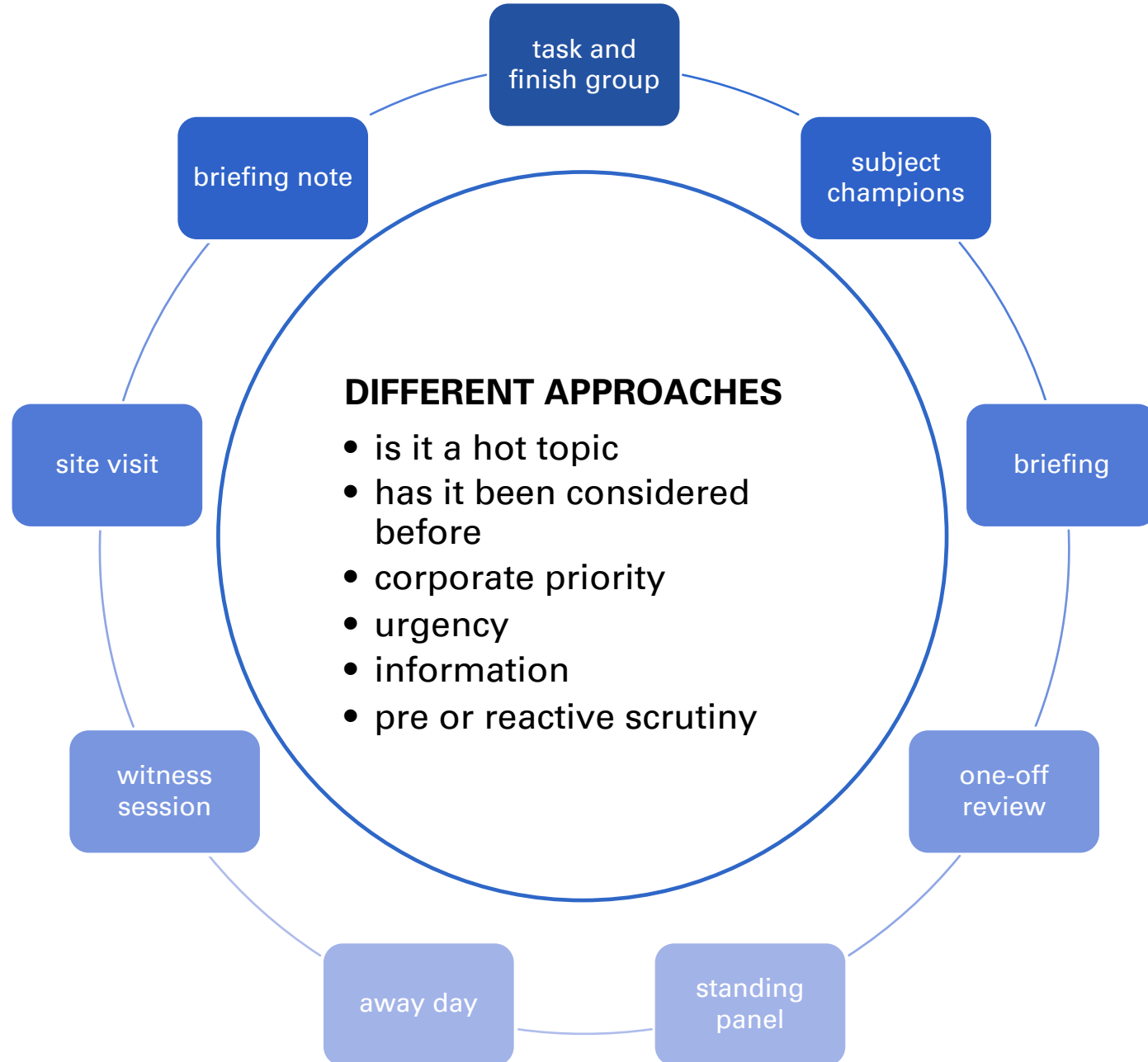


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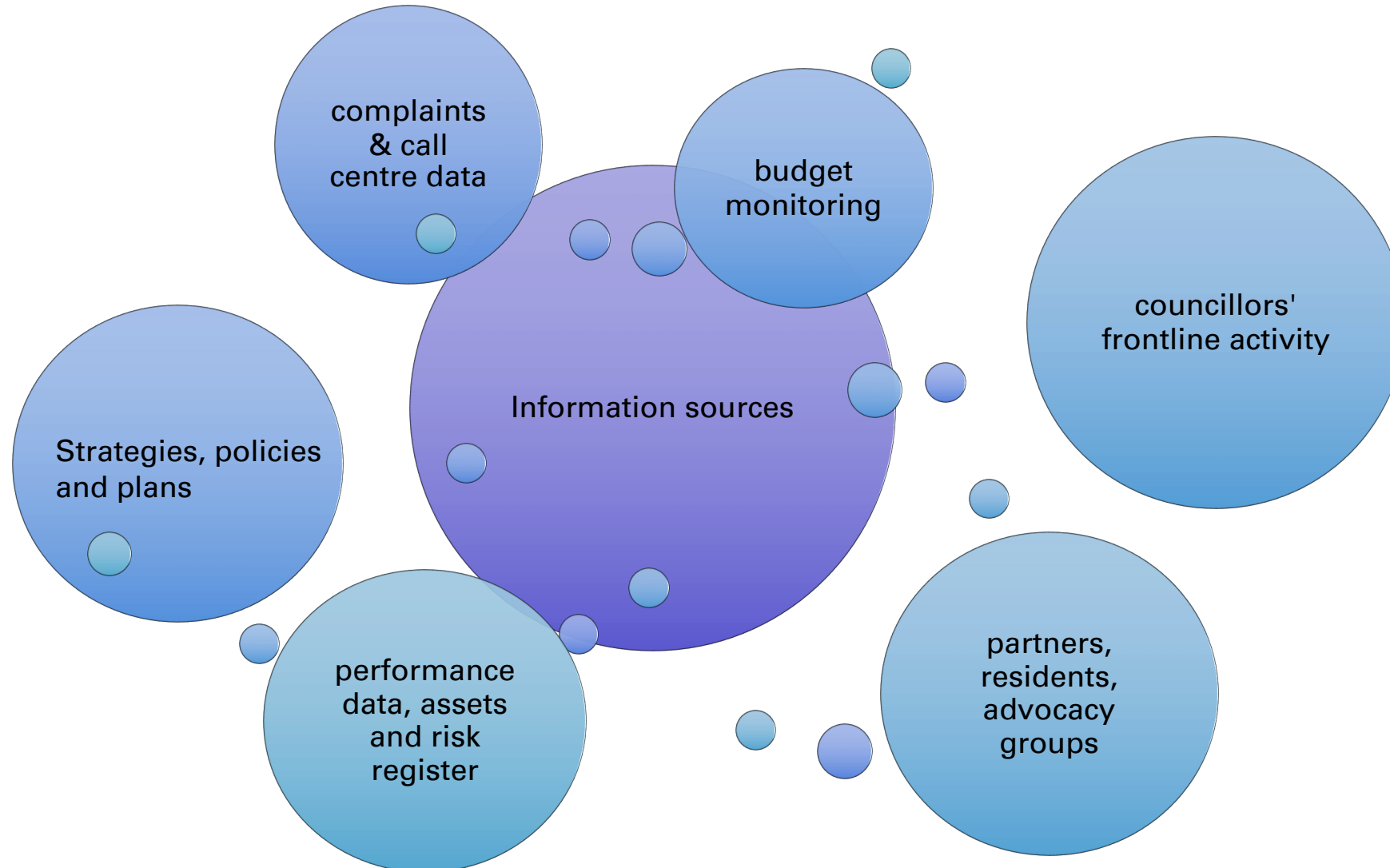
# WHY, WHAT, HOW



# MORE ABOUT THE HOW?



# DATA TO INFORM SCRUTINY OF PERFORMANCE



# ... AND USING IT!



evaluate the indicators chosen



monitor key performance indicators



look at KPIs by exception in formal meetings



select items of concern for more in-depth scrutiny



undertake benchmarking



gather evidence and test findings



draw conclusions and prepare a report/feedback

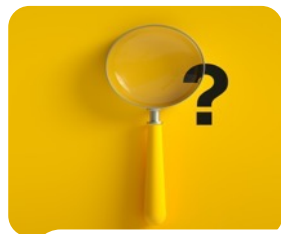


make recommendations to decision makers

# EVIDENCE AND REPORTS



where from?



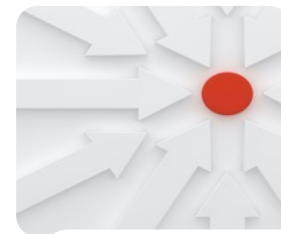
why, what and how?



use a questioning strategy (key lines of enquiry)



triangulate (test) evidence



draw evidence-based conclusions



SMART recommendations



submit to decision makers

# NURTURING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS



with each other



residents



cabinet



officers



partners



networks

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# MORE ABOUT THE WHO

Information gathering with those who can inform the scrutiny process

witnesses

partners

leads

cabinet

peers

policy makers

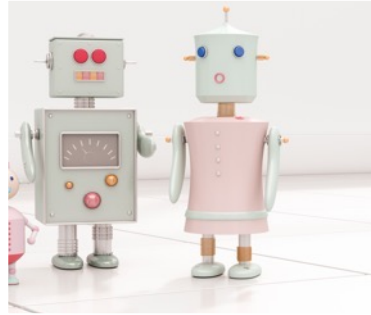
residents

service users

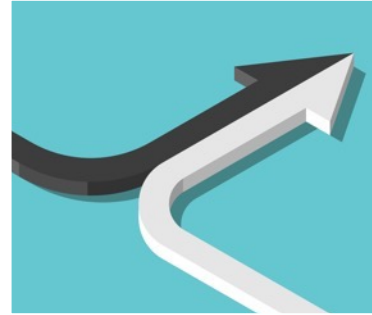
# WHO ARE YOU SCRUTINISING



external/internal



familiarity



relationship



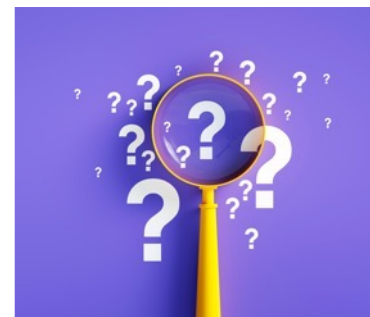
information  
gathering



issue



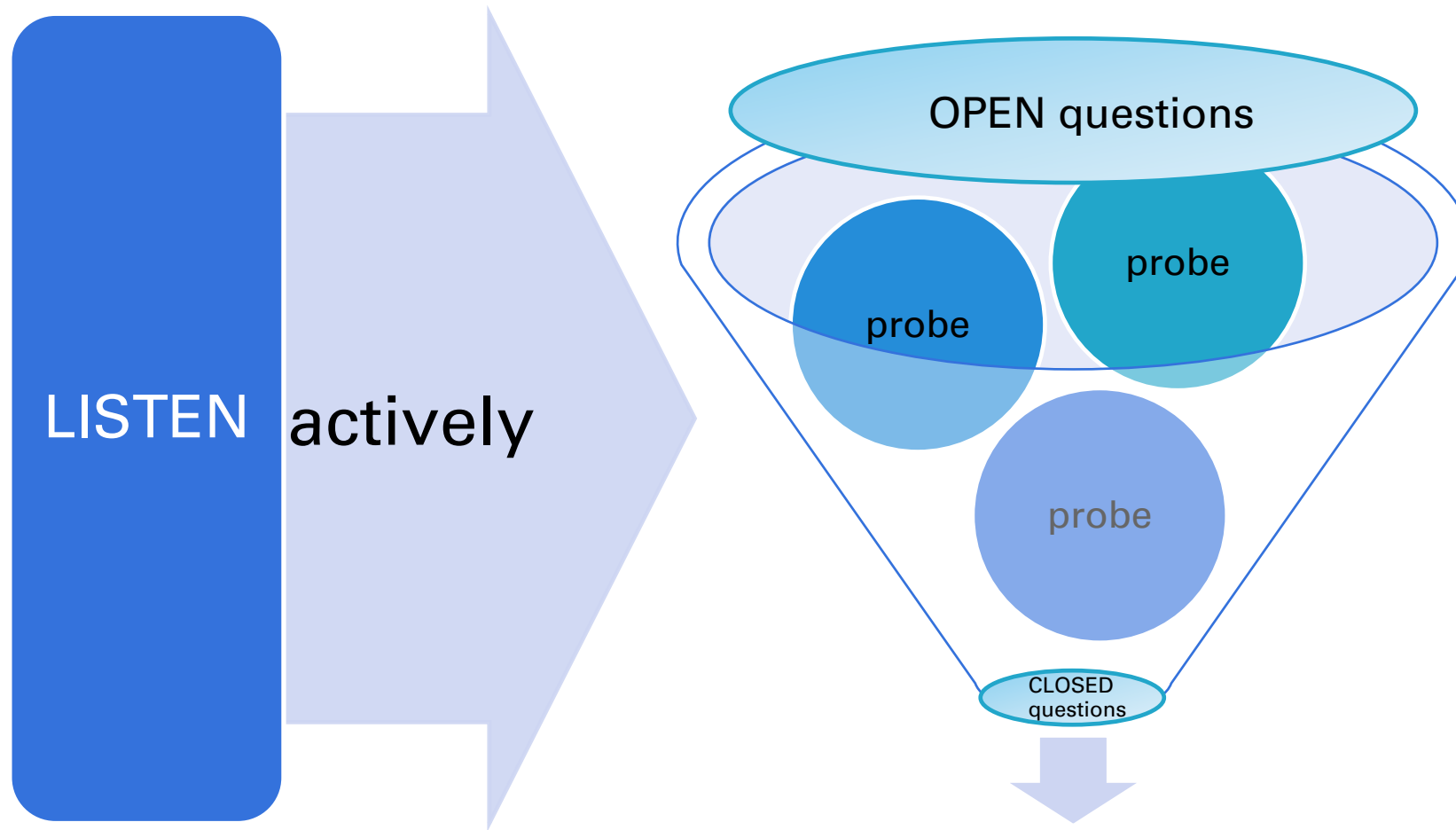
witness



where?



# QUESTIONING AND LISTENING



**CHECK YOU HAVE UNDERSTOOD**

# QUESTIONING AND LISTENING



plan a question strategy



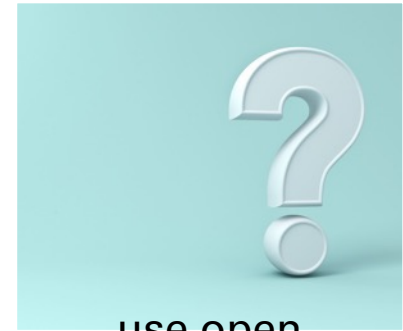
set the objectives



create the right environment



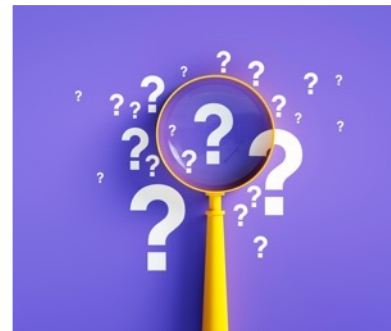
select and be sensitive to your witness



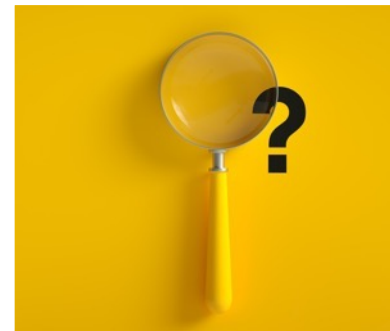
use open questions at first to get the broad picture



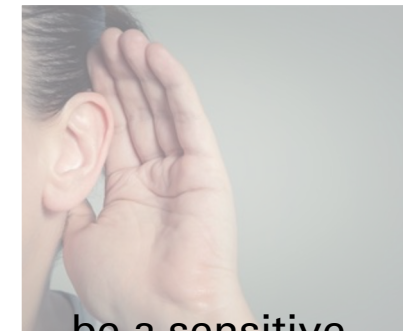
build questions on the preceding answers



use probing questions to elicit more information



used closed questions for clarification



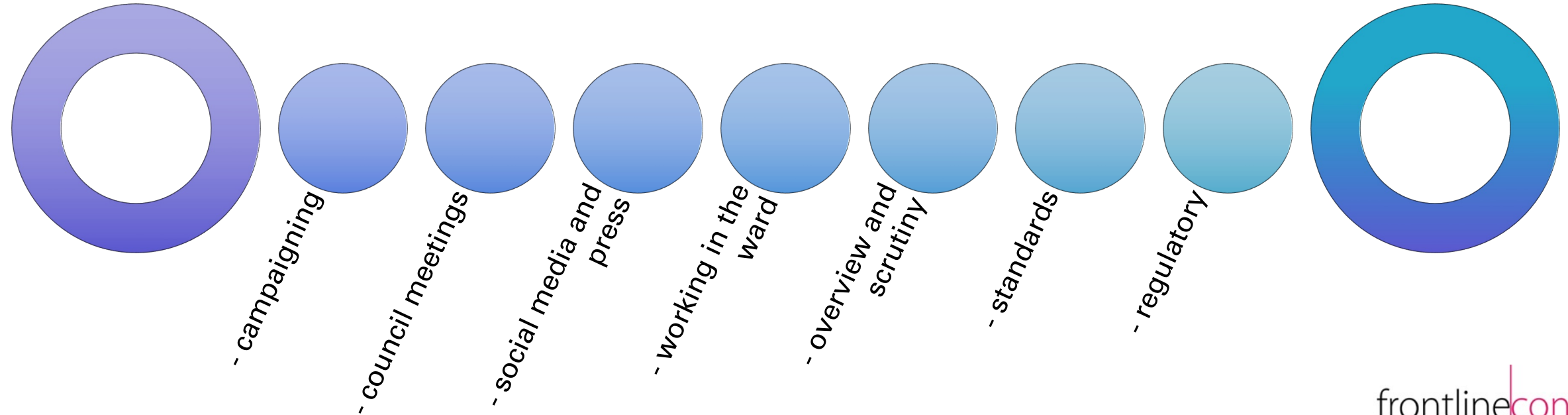
be a sensitive, active listener with empathy yet challenge

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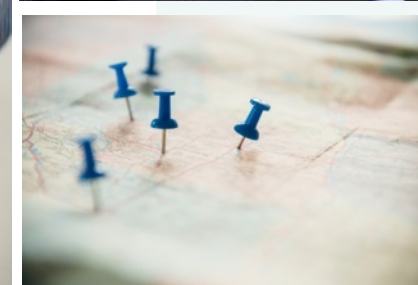
# KEEPING THE POLITICS OUT OF SCRUTINY

**Political**

**Non-Political**



# IT IS NOT ALL ABOUT THE MEETING ROOM



# A DIFFERENT APPROACH



A mindset or process rather than a function or committee

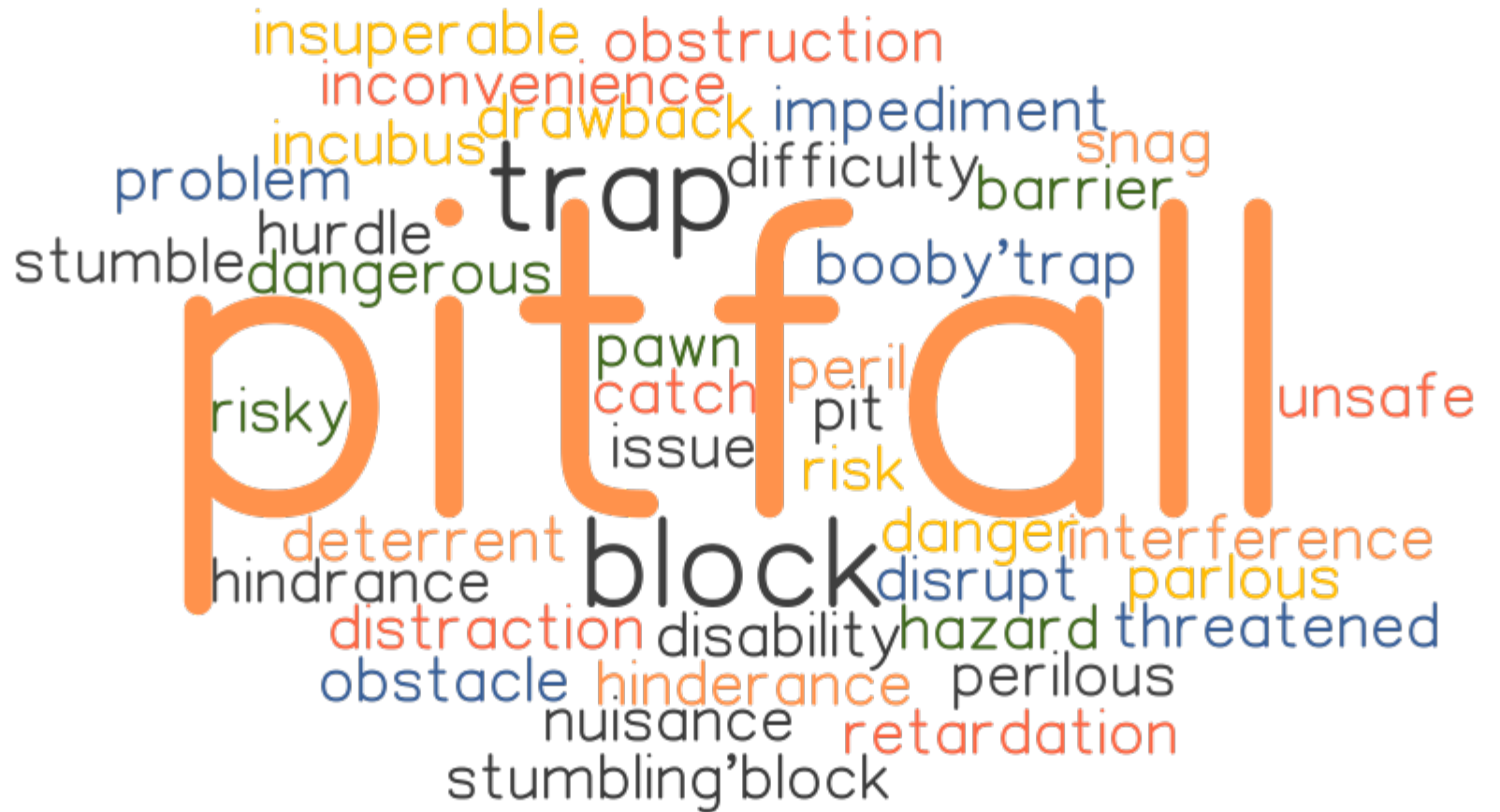
A way for non-executive councillors to have an active input on policy and performance issues affecting local people (council and partners)

A way to bring an extra independent perspective

A way for councillors to reflect and consider major future challenges outside normal decision-making

A way to engage with the community

# COMMON PITFALLS



# COMMON PITFALLS

Organisational  
culture

Demands

Lack of focus –  
why, what how?

Poor planning

Parochial  
considerations

Lack of  
support/ownership

Lack of  
prioritisation

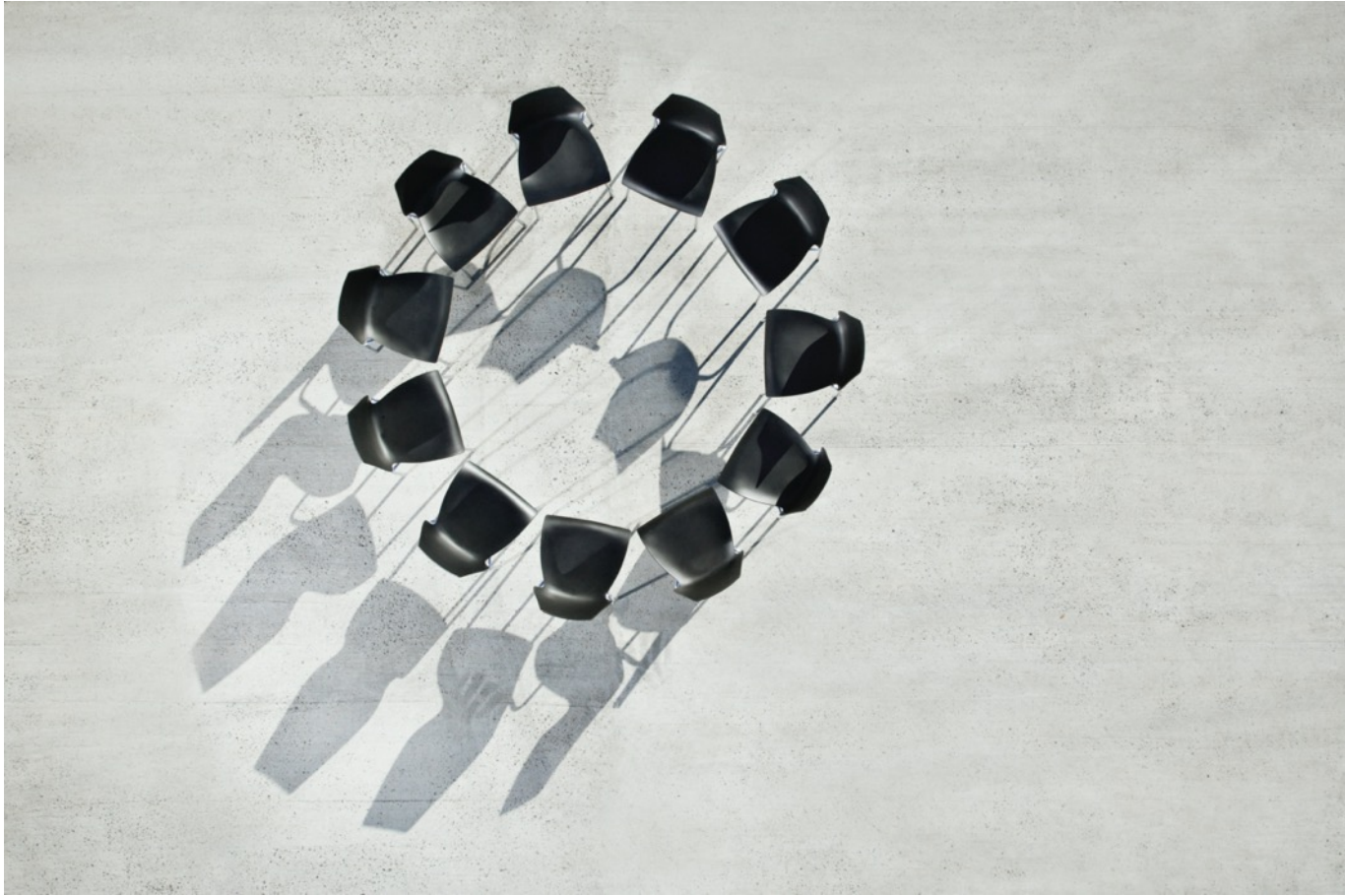
Reliance on one or  
two Members

Not working as a  
team

Inability to say 'no'

Letting the politics  
take control

Mission creep

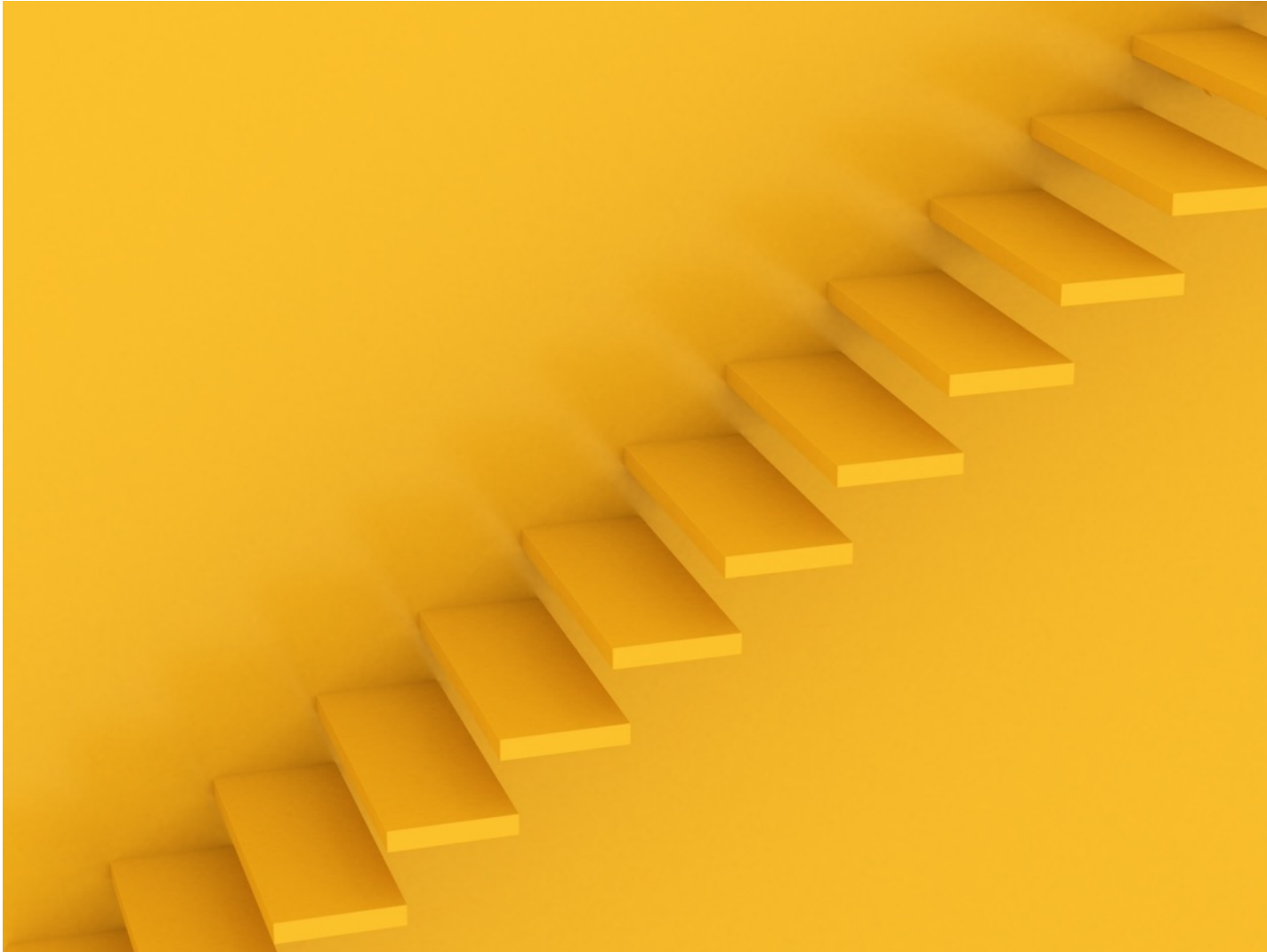


# SCRUTINY REFLECTIONS



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# STOCK TAKE – WHERE ARE WE GOING?



# SCRUTINY REFLECTIONS



How might scrutiny develop its role in the Council?

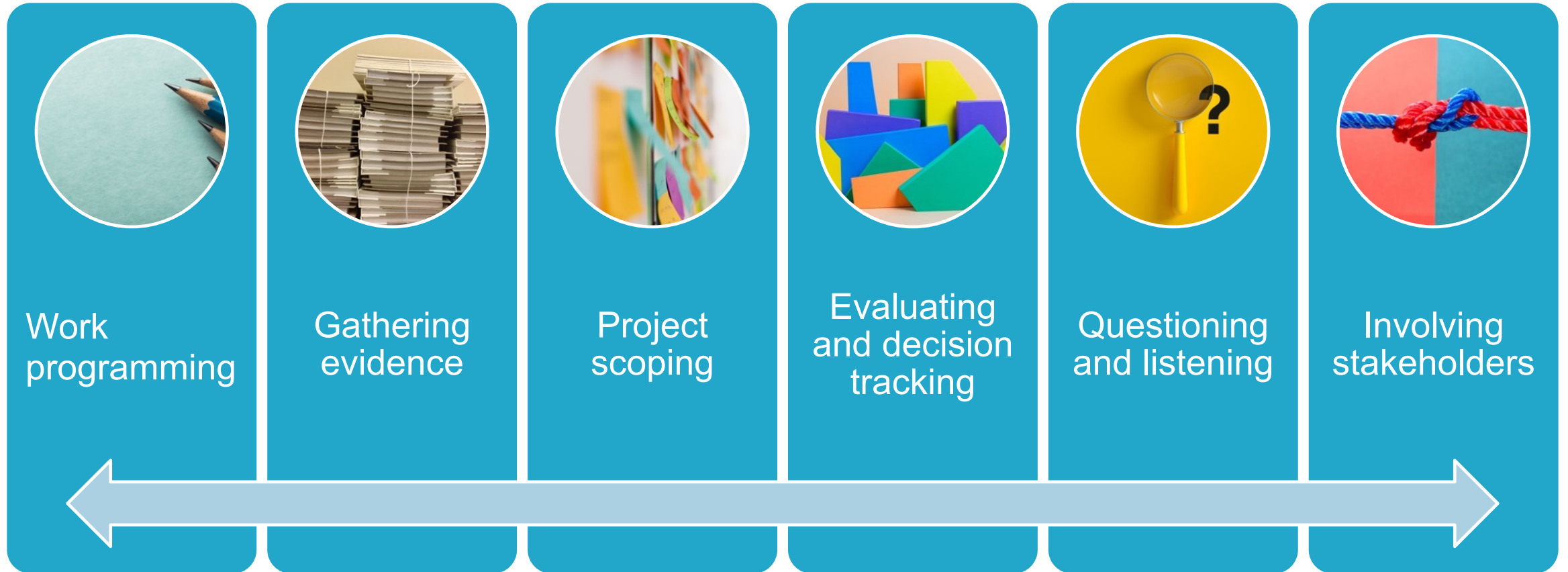


Which actions do we need to take to maximise our impact?



Which outcomes might we help to deliver for the Council and its residents?

# REFRESHING SCRUTINY: APPROACH



# CONTACT

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