Governance Improvement Working Group – SWOT Analysis

1. Members' involvement in the policy-making / decision-making process (see also Scrutiny below)	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
"Known" system - People with sound grasp of issues - Understanding Herefordshire - Clearly defined chain of command - Speed of decision-making - Forward Plan now more interactive	- Don't feel involved - Understanding roles - Too reactive - Resources: people (limited), and use of - Limited involvement - Appointment to roles (but legal requirement) - Perception of "back room" deals - Concern re. workloads / spread - Lack of clarity on how to feed into decision-making process - Balance between council and executive functions - Members' training not member-focused in design and delivery and timing
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- Understand and build on members' skills and experience - Be more proactive and have closer relationship with scrutiny - Improve communication - Effective use of Groups - Understand and make better use of corporate plan - Use Understanding Herefordshire - Use of resources in different ways - Cross-party executive functions - Support members to make more use of council systems e.g. intranet	- Break in continuity - Poor communication - Resources - Public disengagement and perception / knowledge of issues - Call-in process - hard to track history - Officers' skills gaps re training delivery and design, presentations and report writing

2. How the public / stakeholders are involved	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
- Public meetings and media /web etc. - Very few "exempt" reports - Open meetings - Questions from the public and propose items for future work plan - Earlier release of draft minutes	- Low response-rates - Over-dependence on on-line methods - Lack of public knowledge of politics / council business - Misunderstood open-ness - Limited focus of where questions are directed - Number of clicks to web-site topics
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
- Use IT to increase accessibility (beyond Planning Cttee) – webcasting and use of social media and Modern.gov (for audio webcasting) - Transparency Code	- Perception of level of members' knowledge about specific issues – engagement without undue influence - Ward members spend most of evenings

• Varied ways of involving public • Formats for presentation – creativity • Timing of meetings and locations – consider adjusting some meetings within the day (evening meetings not considered sustainable) at discretion of the chair (only council mtgs are set times) • Webcasting and social media • Transparency statement at start of website • Group leaders to ask members' views on timing of meetings	tending to local matters with public, therefore conflict with meeting timings • Public transport issues and people travelling to meetings in winter time • Members' existing commitments (personal and professional)

3. Having a clear scheme of delegation at member, officer and partnership level	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Timely decisions • It works	• Misunderstood! • Misunderstanding of how partnerships work • How training is provided for Members eg ref constitution • Understanding of the Forward Plan • Fear of asking "silly" questions about how decisions are/were made
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
• Improve understanding of and clear escalation of processes / way of managing flow • Clarify officer decision call-in • Expand call-ins • Format / accessibility of constitution • To develop members' knowledge of the SOD. • Have individual officer mentors for Members (or in groups)/ people who can be cross-referenced • Make more use of Members' handbook • Group leaders to make more use of their meetings by involving officers or relevant cabinet member	

4. How members are involved in performance management and improvement	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Understanding Herefordshire and amount of data	• Poor understanding and use of data
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
• Better use and understanding of data • Improve outcomes in relation to use of resources	• Decreasing resources • Overwhelming data

• Understanding Herefordshire • Linking outcomes to data • Greater role for scrutiny	

5. Scrutiny	
STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
• Can guide, advise and forewarn	• Understanding Herefordshire - lots of data and presentational issues, overwhelming, lack of understanding of significance of data • not understanding what Members' roles are and lack of knowledge of what scrutiny does • isn't reactive to here and now but works to programme of work • has no executive power/ final say • lack of positive challenge • seen as oppositional rather than part of process
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
• to be more forward looking • to be more challenging • to engage Members in scrutiny process • to have a better balance in the process/membership • to focus on performance / outcomes and what is better for the community • to strengthen the role of scrutiny to resolve other weaknesses identified in the SWOTs (pose as question) • more efficient scrutiny to make services more efficient e.g. responding to peer reviews etc.	• potential disengagement of Members • fear of constructive criticism (officer and Members) • over emphasis on policy rather than performance