



# ‘You scratch my back and I’ll watch yours’ – symbiotic relationships and cultural change through scrutiny



# CfPS approach to scrutiny

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Fundamentally, we believe that:

scrutiny is based on the principle that someone who makes a decision...

...should not be the only one to review or challenge it...

...and decisions are better when decision-makers listen to and involve the people they affect

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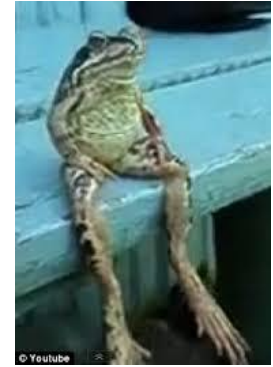
- Creeping normality and the myth of the boiling frog
- Scrutiny as a reflexive system
- Scrutiny in the age of austerity



# Creeping normality and the myth of the boiling frog

Non-Executive Members have a range of different power bases which enable them provide effective challenge and accountability

- *Democratic legitimacy*
- *Community intelligence / representational power*
- *Lay perspective*
- *Positional power as a Chair or member of a scrutiny committee*
- *Expert power from personal skills, experience and knowledge*
- *Referent power from being trusted and respected*



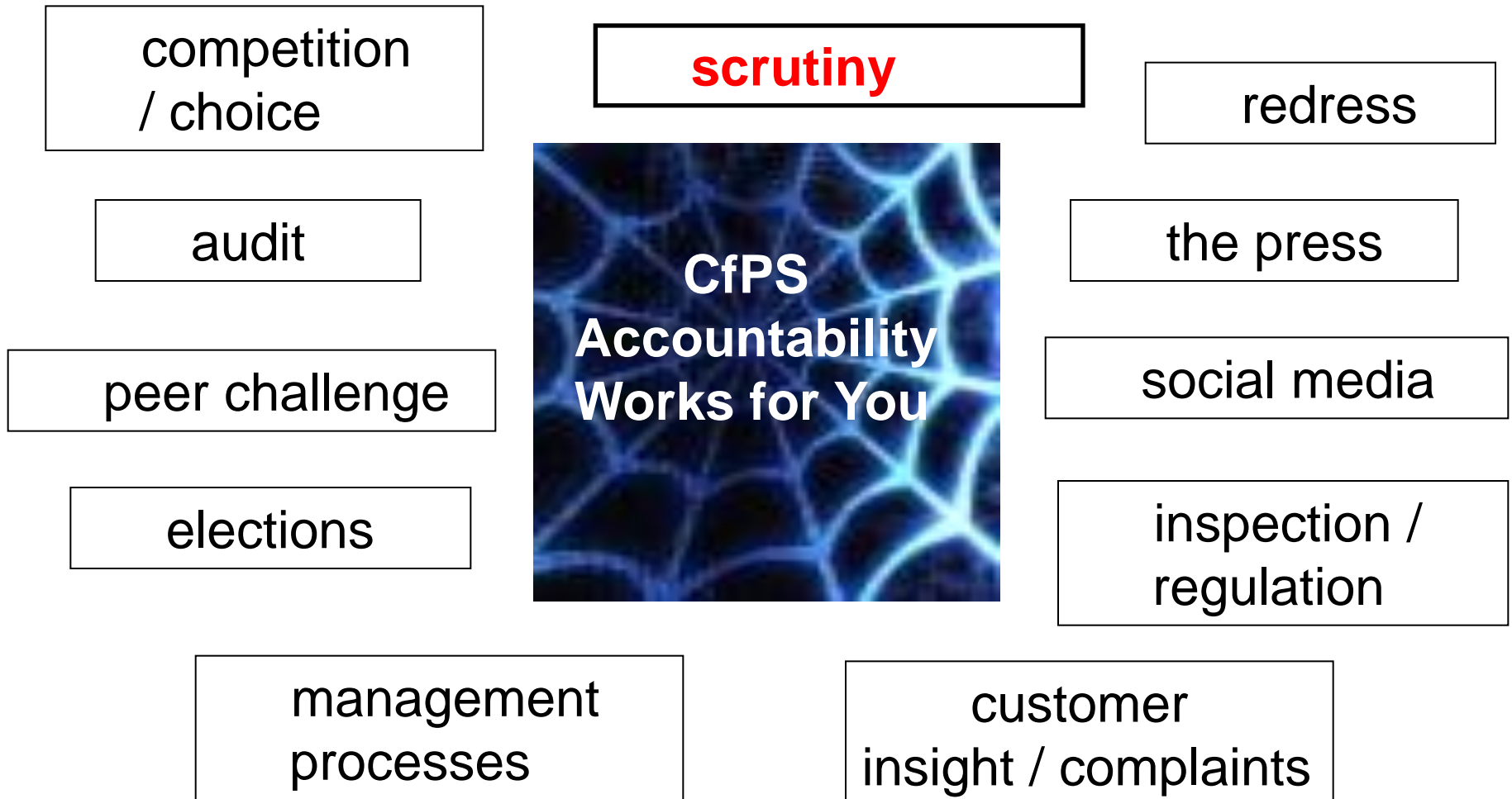
Its having the confidence and ability to question 'established truths' from a position of clarity



# This is what good scrutiny can do

- **A stronger focus on outcomes for people:** shifting the perspective from inputs to delivering results – the input of a wider range of ‘community leaders’ is vital in helping services be responsive to local need and aspirations;
- **Enhanced democratic accountability and improved transparency:** clarifying different contributions to delivery and improving services from the citizen’s perspective - the closer ‘accountability’ gets to the public, the more credibility and legitimacy it has to seek account from those with power.
- **Innovation and engagement:** a strong culture of accountability can support transformational change and improvement.- scrutiny promotes wider dialogue from which creative solutions may be found. Embracing different points of view enables shifts in perspective and identification of new assets and resources.
- **Greater ‘networked accountability’:** Promotion of more efficient methods of working between regulators, inspectorates and internal scrutiny systems - Non-Executives have an important role in providing a whole-system response to improvement. Helpful to think of a ‘web’ of accountability rather than a ‘hierarchy’.

# Scrutiny is part of a web of accountability



# Scrutiny as a **reflexive** system

- The **methods** by which scrutiny operates are as much a **'means'** as they are an **'end'**.
- Its **less about process** and more about demonstrating high quality **listening, engaging and investigative behaviours**.
- Good scrutiny is **independent, cohesive** and committed to the **use** of a wide range of **evidence**.
- What it **focuses** on becomes **important** to the organisation.
- **Scrutiny can refocus where the balance of power lies** e.g. between service providers and citizens, between Execs and Non-Executives, front line staff and senior managers

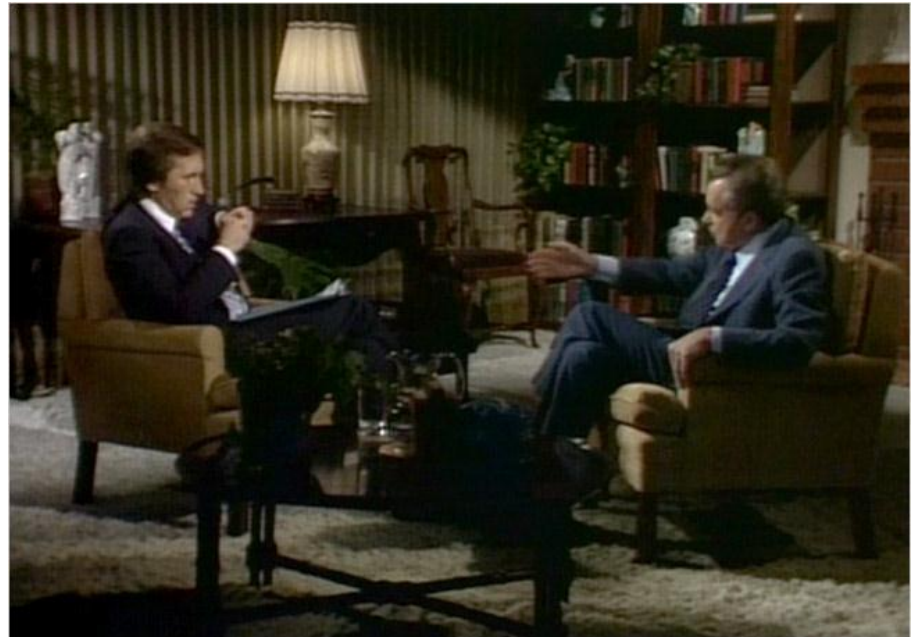




# What's the difference?



**OR**





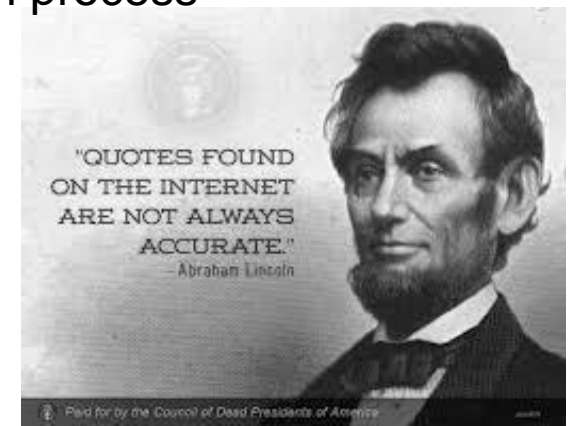
## *Why good quality evidence is essential to good quality scrutiny*

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### **Gathering, analysing and using 'evidence' underpins all scrutiny practice**

- Is there a justification for scrutinizing a particular issue in the first place?
- Crucial in forming hypotheses and defining scope of review / lines of enquiry
- Essential in enabling Member's support and challenge role
- Fundamental to credibility of process – impartial, transparent and logical
- Helps build trusting relationships with those involved in process
- Recommendations more likely to be implemented
- Impact of scrutiny made more visible

**EVIDENCE = IMPACT**



# Learning from the Betsi Cadwaladr Report

In their joint Overview of Governance arrangements (2013), Healthcare Inspectorate Wales and WAO identified following as key factors in compromising the effectiveness of Board arrangements:

1. A breakdown in working **relationships** between senior leaders in the Health Board.
2. Lack of **cohesion** and **consensus** amongst the Executive.
3. The way **information** is presented to the Board.
4. A need for greater **mutual appreciation** of the **respective roles** of executive and independent Board members.
5. A need for **better planning** of the agenda for Board meetings.



# Barriers or symptoms of mutualistic relationship?

## Non-Executive Levers for change



- Strength/style of leadership
- Defined functions
- Priority within forward work programme / commitment
- Co-ordination
- Methodology
- Quality of analysis / outputs
- Quality of communication
- Quality of reporting

## Culture and practice



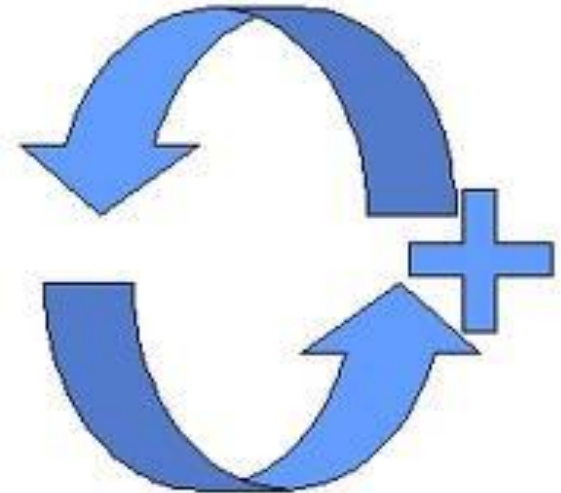
- Executive support
- Approach to financial planning
- Support of senior management
- Quality of information
- Attitude to risk and performance
- Level of training provided
- Resource allocated to scrutiny
- Political 'tone' of council

# Starting a chain reaction...



Change in one area will  
bring about change in  
another but...

If you don't ask then  
the answer will always  
be no



# Scrutiny in the age of austerity

*“The main lesson I take from the problems experienced in Mid-Staffs – that in future, we must never separate quality and financial data. They are always two sides of the same coin”*

Former Secretary of State for Health, Andy Burnham MP



WLGA  
@WelshLGA

Auditor General for Wales: 'cold wind of recession' means effective scrutiny of public spending is more important than ever. #scrutiny13

11:03 AM - 28 Nov 2013

2 RETWEETS

# 5 good reasons to strengthen financial scrutiny in the age of austerity

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1. It enables councillors to **widen the evidence base** upon which spending decisions and programmes of transformational change are predicated.
2. It provides a **check and balance** to decision making by testing assumptions, examining risks and challenging how resources are prioritised.
3. It can help ensure that a **strategic, long term approach** is taken when major service reconfiguration is being considered.
4. It can help **avoid political fragmentation** by taking some of the heat out of contentious issues such as decommissioning of services by acting as the focal point for discussions of major changes.
5. It provides a '**whole council leadership**' response in managing anticipated cuts to services.





Thank you for listening

*Any questions?*



## ***Contact details...***

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