

Scrutiny committee

Date: Thursday, 23 March 2017

Time: 16:30

Venue: Mancroft room

City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

All group pre-meeting briefing – 16:00 Mancroft Room

This is for members only and is not part of the formal scrutiny meeting which will follow at 16:30.

The pre-meeting is an opportunity for the committee to make final preparations before the start of the scrutiny committee meeting. The public will not be given access to the Mancroft room before 16:30.

For further information please contact:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Councillors:

Wright (chair)

Maguire (vice chair)

Bogelein

Bradford

Coleshill

Davis

Fullman

Grahame

Haynes

Malik

Manning

Packer

Peek

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Information for members of the public

Members of the public and the media have the right to attend meetings of full council, the cabinet and committees except where confidential information or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private.

For information about attending or speaking at meetings, please contact the committee officer above or refer to the council's website.



If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.

Agenda

1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence

2 Public questions/petitions

To receive questions / petitions from the public (notice to be given to committee officer in advance of the meeting in accordance with appendix 1 of the council's constitution)

3 Declarations of interest

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting)

4 Minutes

7 - 42

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2017

5 Scrutiny committee work Programme 2016-17

43 - 60

Purpose - To note the scrutiny committee work programme 2016 - 17

6 An investigation into food poverty in Norwich

61 - 64

Purpose - To consider the evidence provided at both the February meeting, and this meeting of the scrutiny committee, to identify possible solutions and to consider any recommendations the committee may wish to make.

Date of publication: **Wednesday, 15 March 2017**

- T** is this, the right **TIME** to review the issue and is there sufficient officer time and resource available?
- O** what would be the **OBJECTIVE** of the scrutiny?
- P** can **PERFORMANCE** in this area be improved by scrutiny input?
- I** what would be the public **INTEREST** in placing this topic onto the work programme?
- C** will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the council's activities as agreed to in the **CORPORATE PLAN**?

Once the TOPIC analysis has been undertaken, a joint decision should then be reached as to whether a report to the scrutiny committee is required. If it is decided that a report is not required, the issue will not be pursued any further. However, if there are outstanding issues, these could be picked up by agreeing that a briefing email to members be sent, or other appropriate action by the relevant officer.

If it is agreed that the scrutiny request topic should be explored further by the scrutiny committee a short report should be written for a future meeting of the scrutiny committee, to be taken under the standing work programme item, so that members are able to consider if they should place the item on to the work programme. This report should outline a suggested approach if the committee was minded to take on the topic and outline the purpose using the outcome of the consideration of the topic via the TOPIC analysis. Also the report should provide an overview of the current position with regard to the topic under consideration.

By using the flowchart, it is hoped that members and officers will be aided when giving consideration to whether or not the item should be added to the scrutiny committee work programme. This should help to ensure that the scope and purpose will be covered by any future report. The outcome of this should further assist the committee and the officers working with the committee to be able to produce informed outcomes that are credible, influential with SMART recommendations.

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound

Scrutiny committee and a protocol for those attending scrutiny

- All scrutiny committee meetings will be carried out in a spirit of mutual trust and respect
- Members of the scrutiny committee will not be subject to whipping arrangements by party groups
- Scrutiny committee members will work together and will attempt to achieve evidence based consensus and recommendations
- Members of the committee will take the lead in the selection of topics for scrutiny
- The scrutiny committee operates as a critical friend and offers constructive challenge to decision makers to support improved outcomes
- Invited attendees will be advised of the time, date and location of the meeting to which they are invited to give evidence
- The invited attendee will be made aware of the reasons for the invitation and of any documents and information that the committee wish them to provide
- Reasonable notice will be given to the invited attendee of **all** of the committees requirements so that these can be provided for in full at the earliest opportunity (there should be no nasty surprises at committee)
- Whenever possible it is expected that members of the scrutiny committee will share and plan questioning with the rest of the committee in advance of the meeting
- The invited attendee will be provided with copies of **all relevant** reports, papers and background information
- Practical arrangements, such as facilities for presentations will be in place. The layout of the meeting room will be appropriate
- The chair of the committee will introduce themselves to the invited attendee before evidence is given and; all those attending will be treated with courtesy and respect. The chair of the committee will make sure that all questions put to the witness are made in a clear and orderly manner



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16:30 to 18:20

23 February 2017

Present: Councillors Wright (chair), Maguire (vice chair) Bogelein, Coleshill, Davis, Fullman, Grahame, Herries (substitute for Malik) Manning, Packer and Peek

Also present: Councillor Vaughan Thomas (cabinet member for fairness and equality) Jo Mack (University of Bristol) and Hannah Worsley (Norwich Food Bank)

Apologies: Councillors Bradford, Haynes and Malik

1. Public questions / petitions

No public questions or petitions were received.

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2017

4. Scrutiny committee work programme 2016 -2017

Members were informed that work was being undertaken with the strategy manager on arranging a workshop on Co-operatives and the date for this would be after May 2017.

RESOLVED to note the scrutiny committee work programme 2016 – 2017

5. Food poverty

The vice chair presented the report and referred to slides at appendix A to the minutes. He said that there would be a two part approach to the topic of food poverty; understanding the causes and addressing these with solutions.

Jo Mack (University of Bristol) gave a presentation to members (appendix B to the minutes) outlining the national picture of food poverty. She highlighted that

eating was a social activity as well as a necessity and therefore food poverty was not only a health issue, it was also a social issue.

Councillor Vaughan Thomas (cabinet member for fairness and equality) addressed the committee. He said that the reasons for food poverty were complex. He had represented a wide range of people through his work as a welfare right officer but cuts to such services had meant that support for users had been taken away and not replaced.

The committee listened to some recordings of short interviews with foodbank users (a transcript of these recordings is at appendix C to the minutes). Hannah Worsley (Norwich Food Bank) said that there was no typical food bank user. The food bank saw a wide range of users from those on benefits to those who were in work but were still unable to make ends meet.

In response to a member's question, Hannah Worsley said that there were no GPs in Norwich that gave food vouchers but there were around 300 different agencies that distributed vouchers. The foodbank also received several phone calls a week asking for advice on access to food. She said that the guideline was that only three vouchers were issued to the same person in six months, however, more could be issued if the circumstances called for it. She added that the introduction of Universal Credit may make these circumstances more common.

Hannah Worsley explained that emergency boxes were provided to families for 72 hours before social services could assist. This timeline had been implemented in case a family could not access services over the weekend.

She said that a school holiday programme was being run with low income families invited to activities and a meal at schools during the school holidays. There were around ten centres with a different model being used at each to suit the local families.

The chair thanked Hannah Worsley for her contribution and she left the meeting.

In response to a member's question, Jo Mack said that schools had a role to play in ensuring that children were fed but it had to be in a non-stigmatising way.

A member said that studies had shown that with perceptions of food, cheapness was the main criteria but freshness, versatility, fat content and food poisoning concerns were not considered. Jo Mack added that strategies adopted to bring down the cost of food often meant that that cheapness was the only consideration.

In response to a member's question, the strategy manager said that Universal Credit had only been rolled out to a small group in Norwich which allowed the council to look at issues on a much smaller scale. A digital inclusion project was underway and this would help to support online claims and to improve digital skills to help users manage their claims online. Norwich City Council had a proactive approach to rent collection and tenancy support; as soon as the council was informed (as a landlord) by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) that a tenant was claiming Universal Credit, a money advisor would contact the tenant. This gave Norwich City Council tenants a better outcome

regarding Universal Credit. In June 2018 when Universal Credit was fully implemented, there would be significant changes to manage.

Jo Mack explained that Preston council had worked with other institutions in their area regarding procurement plans and identified that many services and products were coming into Preston for outside the area. They worked to bring some of these back into the local economy and had subsequently seen a decrease in poverty indicators. This showed that the effect of bringing more money into the local economy was a decrease in the price of local necessities.

She added that some areas of the country had been very successful with 'grow your own' initiatives but other areas had been less so. The outcome was very dependent on having enough time and ability to invest in the project. She suggested that this perhaps would therefore not be a priority regarding solutions to food poverty.

The director of neighbourhoods reported the following statistics to members for consideration:

- recent child poverty figures for the Eastern Region showed Norwich as the worst local authority area in Norfolk in terms of the levels of child poverty at 29% of all children
- In 2011, some 4,150 Norwich families were reliant on tax credits because they were in part-time employment – this included over 7,130 children
- The 2013 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings show that median resident earnings for full-time workers in Norwich is 21 per cent lower than regional median earnings and 16 per cent lower than national median earnings

The chair thanked the speakers for their contributions to the meeting.

RESOLVED to ask all members of the scrutiny committee to send their initial thoughts on the main drivers of food poverty to the scrutiny liaison officer.

CHAIR

Food Poverty in Norwich

Philosophy underlying our Approach

Two dimensions to our attack:

- Dimension 1. Understanding and Addressing
- Dimension 2. Structural, Organisational, and Individual Aspects

Understanding and addressing food poverty in Norwich

	Understanding the Causes	Sustainable Response
Structural		
Organisational		
Individual		

This Session: Causes

- We need to try to focus on and identify the causes (the real causes): this will inform our responses
- We want to make sure that we understand the problem and then find and design the right solution (rather than have ready-made solutions that are looking for problems that they can solve)

In Summary:

We need to understand how the poverty drivers work if we are to respond to them

The evidence presented today fits with Forsey's ideas:

"The key underlying causes of hunger and food poverty in this country are to be found in the long-term erosion of poorer households' financial buffer, coupled, for some, with a diminished ability to cope on a low income" (Forsey sa page 25)

Ref: Forsey A. *sine anno*, An Evidence Review for the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger in the United Kingdom, London, *sine nomine*

Resource and Capacity are part of a *system*

Resources

Capacity

Outcomes

Norwich City Council

Food Poverty Inquiry

An overview

Joanna Mack

J.Mack@open.ac.uk

www.poverty.ac.uk

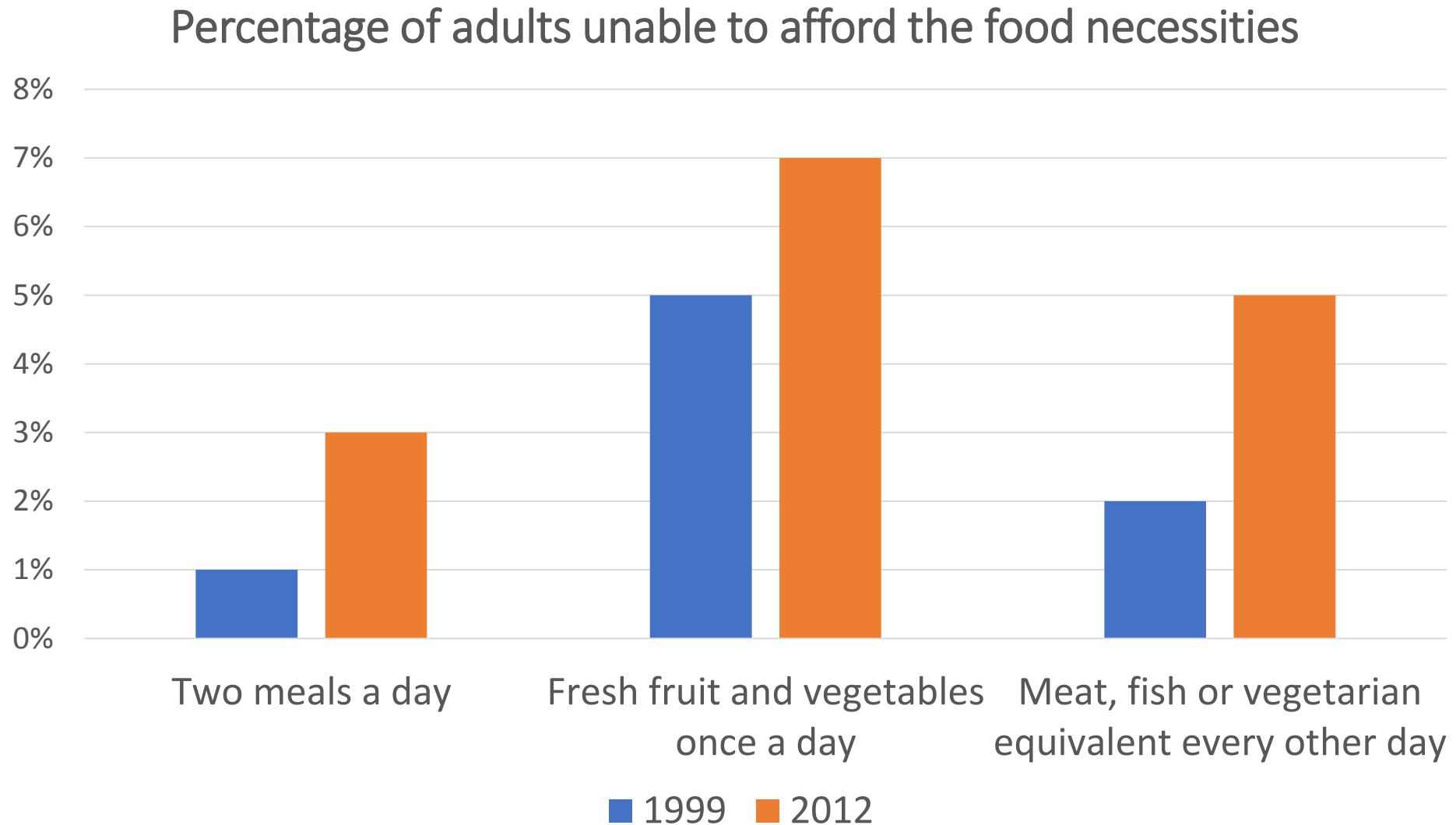
Food poverty is the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.

Department of Health, England

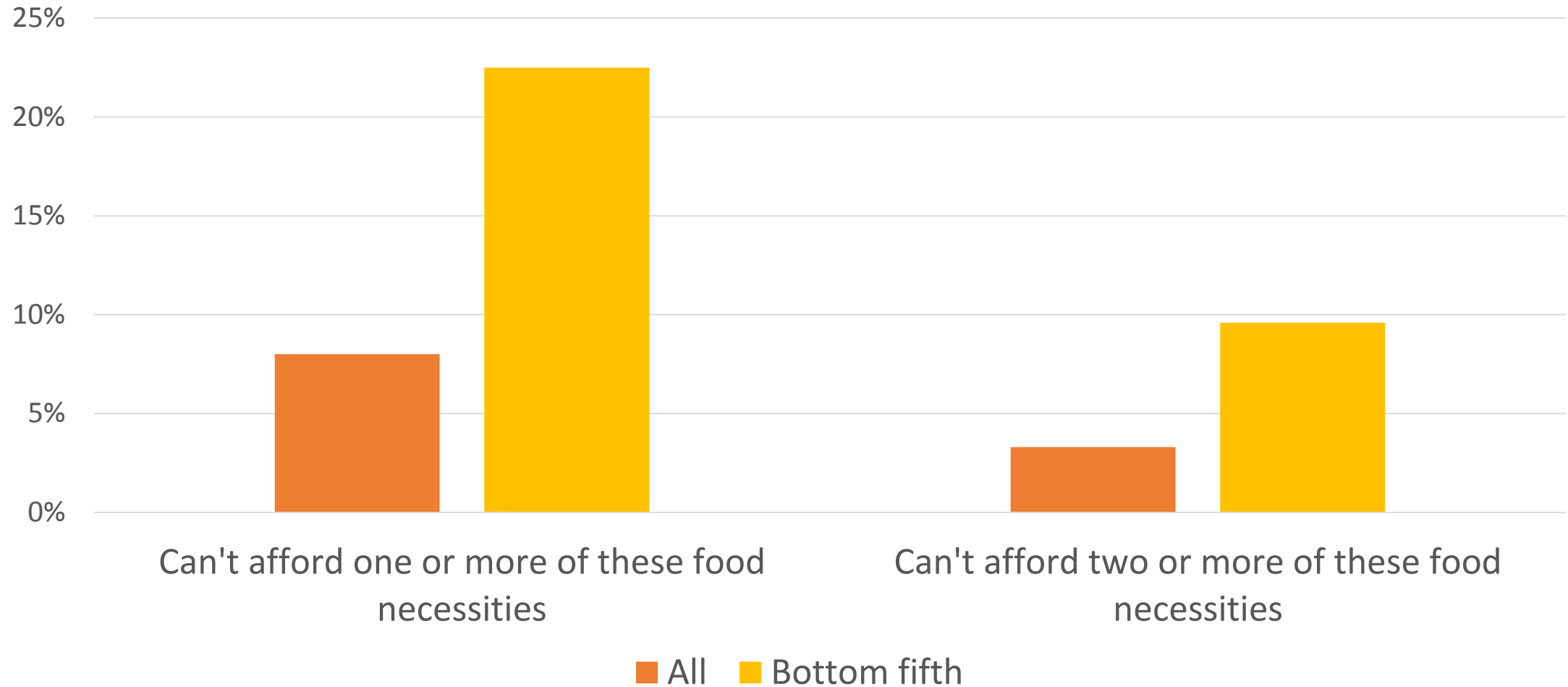
Minimum food standards

	Percentage thinking item is a necessity
Adults	
Two meals a day	91%
Fresh fruit and vegetables every day	83%
Meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent every other day	76%
Children	
Three meals a day	93%
Fresh fruit and vegetables at least once a day	96%
Meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent at least once a day	90%

Rising food poverty



Percentage of adults with an inadequate diet



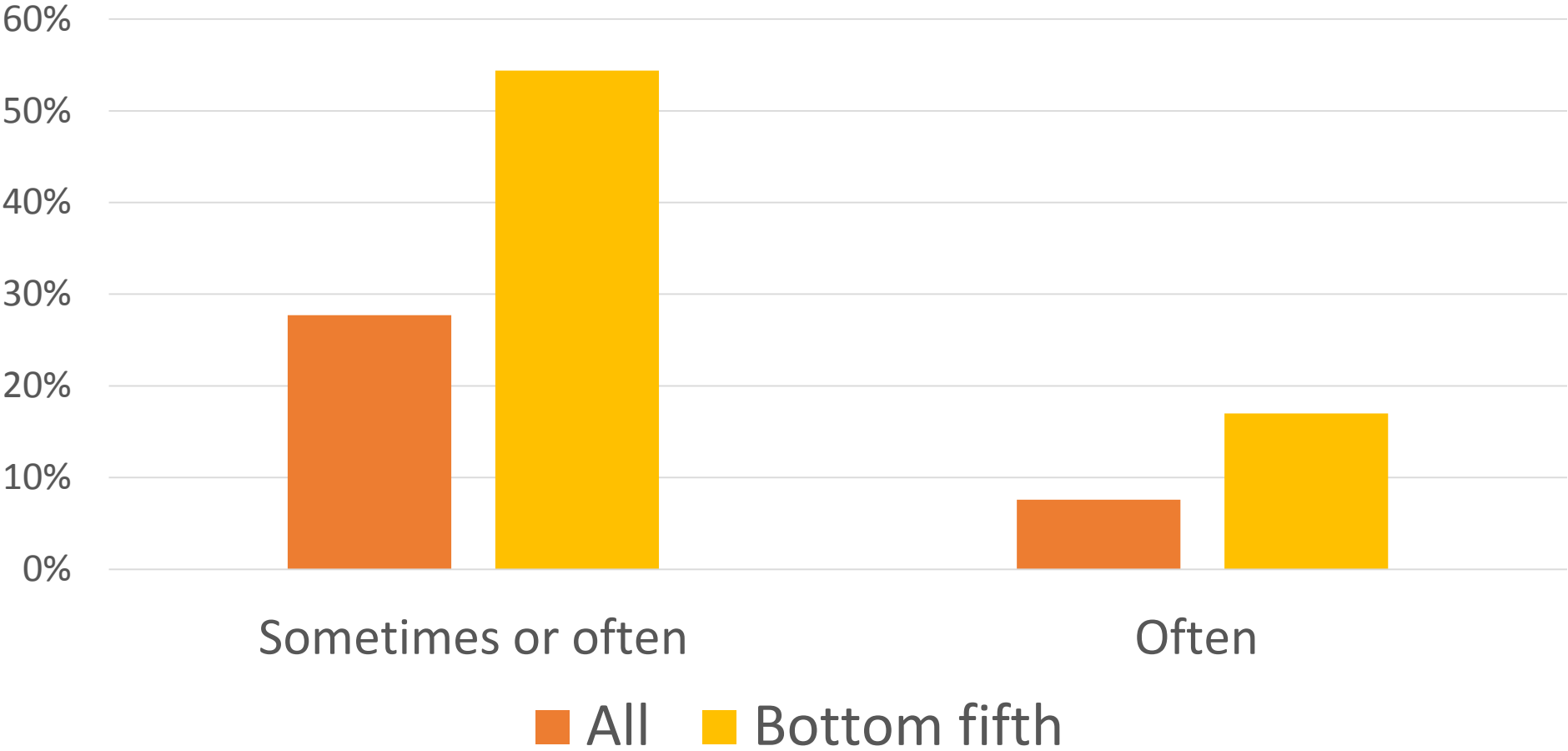
Prioritising the children



I only tend to eat one meal a day and that does me, cos I like to make sure I got for my children.

Jennie, single parent

Skimping on food so that others have enough to eat



Food poverty today

- 3.5 million adults are not properly fed
- 0.5 million children are not properly fed
- Nearly one in five of the poorest have an inadequate diet
- Nearly one in ten have an extremely inadequate diet
- Over half of the poorest skimp on food sometimes or often

Poor diet - poor health

Poor diet contributes to nearly half of coronary heart disease and a third of cancers.

In all age groups, people living on a low income have higher rates of diet-related diseases than other people.

The Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

Unhealthy but cheap

Sometimes we eat the wrong thing – cos you go for what's cheap and that isn't always the healthy option.

Disabled couple

They say you should eat 5 a day, I am lucky if eat two a day I will admit it, because everything is so dear in the shops today.

Unemployed Male

It tends to end up being things I don't want to be eating and things I don't want my kids eating, but we have no choice really because it is cheaper'.

Lone Parent, Female

Cutting back among the poorest

Percentage of adults in bottom fifth of households who:	Often	Often or sometimes
Skimped on food so others would have enough to eat	17%	54%
Postponed visits to the dentist	25%	46%
Continued to wear worn out clothes/shoes	29%	67%
Gone without or cut back on social visits	49%	77%



PSE

I just couldn't deal with all the stress from worrying about money, food on the table, heating, bills, I just couldn't do it.

Marc, young job seeker

Other factors: access to shops

Of those who do 'not always having the kind of food they wanted':

- 38% mention 'poor availability or quality in local shops'
- 33 % mention 'difficulty getting to the shops'

Lack of food = lack of money

Of those who sometimes or often do not have enough to eat:

98 % say this is down to not having enough money

The growth of low paid work



Cartoon: Pinterest

- 21% of employees are in low paid work – up from 13% in 1979
- 5.1 million employees are low paid

Low pay is taken as two-thirds of gross hourly median pay

Rising job insecurity and underemployment

- Over 3 million describe themselves as in insecure employment
- Nearly 1 million workers are on zero hours contracts
- 5 million workers are self-employed - a record high
- 8.5 million are part-time workers - a record high

TODAY

Most people in poverty are in work

Government support for the poor

- Rise in spending on means-tested in-work benefits
- Rise in spending on housing benefit
- Fall in value of out of work benefits from 20% of average earnings in 1979 to 11% in 2013

Overall spending on benefits has remained steady for last 40 years at around 12% of national income.

The 'austerity' cuts

50% of all cuts fall in two areas:

Local government

Benefits

Equality of SACRIFICE



From "PLUS" (the Organ of the N.C.L.C.)

The post-2010 tax/benefit reforms

The incomes of the poorest households with children:

- Dropped 6% between 2010 and 2015
- Will drop by around 10% between 2015 and 2019

Working-age social rented tenants are particularly hard hit.

More and tougher benefit sanctions

1.9 million

decisions to sanction claimants between
October 2012 and the end of 2015

The rise and rise of food banks



I was crying on the phone to them [the DWP] telling them I am pregnant. I don't want my baby coming home to a house with no gas or electric. We have laminated floor and it's so cold.
Gemma, food bank user

Over 1.1 million three-day emergency food supplies from Trussell Trust food banks in 2015/16

What can be done? Some ideas...

Short-term

- Support benefit claimants to maximise and stabilise their incomes
- Map food access problems
- Consult with local communities

Longer-term

- Work with 'anchor' institutions to establish a social value procurement framework
- Work with local employers and unions on an employment charter
- Boost local food production and distribution

Foodbank user number 1

Hello, I'm from Norwich and I've had dealings with future projects since I think it was April this year, who've helped me out immensely and over Christmas they helped me out food wise, because I was financially embarrassed and I was very thankful for the food that helped me get through Christmas.

Foodbank user number 2 – what brings you to the foodbank today?

To get a food voucher because with all my rent that I have to pay out, I don't get enough for food this week.

How do you feel when you have to come to a foodbank?

I'm not bothered – I'd rather come here than go without.

Once you have received your parcel, how does that make you feel?

Happy, relieved.

Foodbank user number 3 – what brings you to the foodbank today?

Benefits basically - after Christmas I had to be sorting it all out.

A few benefit delays?

Yes.

And how do you feel when you have to come to the foodbank to get food for your family?

That's fine; I'd rather come down and get a food bank parcel than starve.

And once you've got your food bank parcel how does that feel?

I feel a lot better about it, I don't feel like we aren't going to eat or nothing like that

Foodbank user number 4 – you have used foodbank in the past, why did you have to use foodbank?

Because my relationship with my ex-partner has ended, and money, and circumstances changes with my benefits.

So you had no money coming in for a while?

No, I had to wait several weeks for my circumstances to update.

You've got two children haven't you?

Yes.

How did it feel to have to come and ask for a foodbank voucher?

Pretty nerve-racking to be fair. But if there weren't really a foodbank I'd have to try even harder to get family to come to me.

And that would have been difficult?

Yes.

Foodbank user number 5 – you’ve had to use foodbank in the past haven’t you – do you mind telling me why you had to?

I had to use foodbank because I was starting my new job at the time and I had to wait for the wages to go into my bank account after a long time, and it had to be set up, so I had to have a food parcel in between because I didn’t have enough food in the house and I had no money to buy what I needed.

Do you mind telling me how did that feel for you?

It felt demeaning, it was embarrassing, and I really didn’t like it.

What would you have done if food bank wasn’t there for you?

If foodbank wasn’t available to me, I’d have had either no food at all to last me enough until I get paid, or I’d have to relied on my family giving me hand-outs and I’d have been even more embarrassed about that.

Foodbank user number 6 – you’ve had to use foodbank before, can you tell me why?

Due to loss of employment, then having to go from JSA to ESA, delay in benefits therefore didn’t have no money to support myself on.

How did that feel having to ask for a food voucher?

Very embarrassing – because I’ve always worked and I’ve always earnt money, so I don’t really do hand-outs.

And what would you have done if foodbank hadn’t been around?

I don’t really know, I don’t really have no idea.

Foodbank user number 7 – you’ve had to use foodbank recently, would you mind telling me why you had to do that?

To help support the family really because I needed to use it to obviously survive, for me and my family.

What had happened?

Well I was getting low on money, and changes to circumstances with my job, change in benefits, just was unable to survive on the bare minimum, and was making myself into debt because of it.

And you’ve got children haven’t you?

Yes I’ve got two children, and that’s the most important thing.

How did it feel for you having to come and ask for a food parcel?

Well I've got to think of my family first, they've got to come first so I had to ask, I had no problems asking.

And what would you have done if foodbank wasn't available to you?

I'd have to borrow more money to get myself worse into debt in a situation like I'd been first put in.

Foodbank user number 8 – just recently you had to use foodbank, would you mind telling me why you had to?

We had to pay an unexpected bill, which basically put us out of pocket for food for my wife, me, and the children.

How many children have you got?

Three

So how did it feel to you to have to come and ask for a food parcel?

Kind of embarrassing, considering we sort of tried to resort ourselves onto our own money and equal it out between bills, and obviously food.

And what would you have done if foodbank hadn't been available to you?

If I had to, I suppose I'd have to go down a criminal background and probably start stealing and thieving to put food in my kids bellies, because that's basically what it's really all about, it's not about me and the wife it's about putting food in my kids bellies, and keeping a roof and their beds occupied with them.

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 5

REPORT for meeting to be held on 23 March 2017

Work Programme for 2016-17

Summary: To provide information to members on the state of the scrutiny work programme.

The work programme has been updated to reflect:
Suggestion for the committee to look at the Portfolio Disposal Transition Strategy at 6 April meeting
City Accessibility item moved to 22 June meeting

Conclusions: The work programme is accompanied by the forward agenda and tracker to provide additional information for members.

Recommendation: For the committee to note the work programme.

Contact Officer: Adam Clark, Interim strategy manager,
01603 212273
adamclark@norwich.gov.uk

Beth Clark, Scrutiny liaison officer
01603 212153
BethanyClark@norwich.gov.uk

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER, CABINET, PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR, or ORGNISATION	SCOPE – REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST and OUTCOME SOUGHT
30 June 2016	Market Consultation	Adrian Akester (Head of Citywide Services)	To update members on the outcomes of the consultation on Norwich Market.
30 June 2016	Grounds Maintenance Contract	Adrian Akester (Head of Citywide Services)	To gain clarification on whether efficiencies can be found in the budget regarding the Grounds Maintenance Contract.
30 June 2016	Publication of Traffic Regulation Orders	Phil Shreeve (Strategy manager)	To understand how the council will publicise information about Traffic Regulation Orders
30 June 2016	Quarter 4 Performance Review	Phil Shreeve (Strategy manager)	Identification of any causes for concern and note successes arising from this 6 monthly review of performance monitoring data
14 July 2016 MEETING CANCELLED	Communications and Consultation	Nikki Rotsos and portfolio holder (Cllr Waters)	The strategy manager circulated a briefing paper and the committee will look at this document at the meeting on 20 October.
14 July 2016 MEETING CANCELLED	Devolution	Phil Shreeve and Cllr Wright	To discuss the council's position on the proposed East Anglian devolution plan.
14 July 2016 Evidence gathering meeting	City Accessibility Tour	Andy Watt and Cllr Wright	This scrutiny committee meeting was cancelled and instead some members took part in a tour of the city looking at accessibility around the city. Access groups were also invited to attend, including RNIB and NNAB.

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER, CABINET, PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR, or ORGNISATION	SCOPE – REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST and OUTCOME SOUGHT
22 September 2016	Update from 21st July meeting of the Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Maguire, NHOSC councillor rep	For the committee to note the work of NHOSC and comment on any implications for Norwich residents for the rep to take back to the next NHOSC meeting.
22 September 2016	Update from 8th September meeting of the Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Maguire, NHOSC councillor rep	For the committee to note the work of NHOSC and comment on any implications for Norwich residents for the rep to take back to the next NHOSC meeting.
22 September 2016	Academies and education attainment	Cllr Wright, chair of scrutiny	To consider the current state of educational outcomes in Norwich with reference to changing school structures such as academies and free schools.
20 October 2016	Update from 13th October meeting of the Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Maguire, NHOSC councillor rep	For the committee to note the work of NHOSC and comment on any implications for Norwich residents for the rep to take back to the next NHOSC meeting.
20 October 2016	Educational outcomes for the young people of Norwich	Cllr Wright, chair of scrutiny	To consider the current state of educational outcomes in Norwich with reference to changing school structures such as academies and free schools.
20 October 2016	Consultation method	Nikki Rotsos (Director of customers and culture)	That the scrutiny committee notes the consultation process of the council and considers specific ways of enhancing this.

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER, CABINET, PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR, or ORGNISATION	SCOPE – REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST and OUTCOME SOUGHT
24 November 2016	Greater Norwich Growth Board and Local Enterprise Partnership	Dave Moorcroft (Director of regeneration and development)	A briefing paper about the 'current state of play' in regard to GNGB and LEP.
24 November 2016	Education and Social Mobility	James Wright, chair of scrutiny	To provide members the opportunity to form recommendations following the evidence gathering meetings around academies at the September and October scrutiny committee meetings.
15 December 2016	Update from 8th December meeting of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Maguire, NHOSC councillor rep	For the committee to note the work of NHOSC and comment on any implications for Norwich residents for the rep to take back to the next NHOSC meeting.
15 December 2016	Corporate Plan Review	Adam Clark (Strategy manager)	To consider amendments to corporate performance KPIs
15 December 2016	Equality Information Report	Adam Clark (Strategy manager)	Pre scrutiny of the report before it goes to cabinet.
15 December 2016	Neighbourhood Model and ward councillors	Bob Cronk (Director of neighbourhoods)	Scrutinise the Neighbourhood Model to see how the public is engaged, how councillors are involved and how resources will be allocated

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER, CABINET, PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR, or ORGNISATION	SCOPE – REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST and OUTCOME SOUGHT
26 January 2017	Pre scrutiny of the proposed budget	Justine Hartley (Chief finance officer)	To make suggestions to cabinet regarding the proposed budget's ability to deliver the council's overarching policy.
26 January 2017	Environmental Strategy – Yearly update on the progress statement	Richard Willson (Environmental strategy manager)	Identification of any issues to consider and note successes and progress reported in the progress statement.
26 January 2017	Update from 12th January meeting of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Maguire, NHOSC councillor rep	For the committee to note the work of NHOSC and comment on any implications for Norwich residents for the rep to take back to the next NHOSC meeting.
23 February 2017	Food Poverty	Adam Clark (Strategy manager) and Cllr Maguire	For the committee to identify and address the cause and effects around food poverty in Norwich.
23 March 2017	Summary of Food Poverty meeting	Adam Clark (Strategy manager) and Cllr Maguire	Following the first food poverty meeting, this committee meeting will aim to identify solutions and resolutions to recommend to cabinet for consideration
6 April 2017	Annual Review of the Scrutiny Committee	Beth Clark and Cllr Wright	To agree the annual review of the scrutiny committee's work 2016 to 2017 and recommend it for adoption of the council

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER, CABINET, PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR, or ORGNISATION	SCOPE – REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST and OUTCOME SOUGHT
6 April 2017	Portfolio Disposal Transition Strategy	Andy Watt (Head of city development services) Justine Hartley (Chief finance officer)	Pre scrutiny of the strategy before it goes to cabinet.

Items brought forward to next civic year

June 22 2017	City Accessibility	Andy Watt (Head of city development services)	To make appropriate recommendations on how the council could ensure that people with visual impairments/disabilities can access the city safely and with confidence.
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Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Scrutiny Request	Outcomes or current position
11 June 2015	The council's consultation process	Nikki Rotsos	For a briefing paper to be circulated, for scrutiny members to gain an overview and understanding of the council's current work in this area.	This item is provisionally allocated to be reviewed by the committee on 14 July 2016
15 October 2015	Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2015 – 2016	James Wright	Discussion of income generation led to the suggestion of involving cooperatives in this work. Idea to hold a half-day seminar for senior staff and officers to provide clarification around the way in which they work	The cooperatives item is being progressed by the strategy manager and Cllr Herries for a future scrutiny committee meeting – date tbc. It was also agreed that workshops would be held to update members.
12 November 2015	Community Space Review	Bob Cronk	It was agreed a website containing a centralised tool for room bookings across all community centres would worthwhile	A central online booking system is something that has previously been explored with the volunteer management committees/community associations that operate the council's community centres. A centralised tool would provide some positive benefits but not all of the centres use IT regularly. The new community centres website could be used as a basis for this and further development work with the centres has been proposed linking this proposal with the council's digital inclusion activity. The majority of the centres still work with a paper booking system and taking forward a web based system would require endorsement from the centres but something the council can encourage and will continue to do so, building on those centres that do use web tools.
17 December 2015	*Transformation Update	Bob Cronk	Discuss with the communications team about publishing the changes to the Housing and Planning Bill	Members can find an update on the Housing and Planning Act on the Local Government Information Unit website: http://www.lgiu.org.uk/briefing/housing-and-planning-bill-update/

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Scrutiny Request	Outcomes or current position
17 December 2015	Quarter 2 performance monitoring 2015 – 2016	Andy Watt	The homelessness strategy shows that Norwich is way below the average with regards to preventing homelessness by keeping people in their own homes. How does this relate to the target of preventing homelessness? Would it be worth having a new target to help increase the number of people staying in their own home?	Members can find an update on e-councillor
28 January 2016	Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2015 – 2016	James Wright	Ask the chair to provide members with an update on the cooperatives briefing	The cooperatives item is being progressed by the strategy manager and Cllr Herries for a future scrutiny committee meeting – date tbc. It was also agreed that workshops would be held to update members.
25 February 2016	Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Phil Shreeve	Ask the strategy manager to contact the chair of the CCG to see which consultations on planned changes to commissioning intentions may be able to be made available via e-councillor	A discussion has been held and further options looked at once the CCG have looked again at their consultation and engagement processes
	Council policies for the control of verge parking and A boards	Andy Watt	Contact all schools in the Norwich City Council area for a copy of their travel plan to collect data on how children travel to school	Members can find information here: <u>\\Sfil2\Shared Folders\Transport and infrastructure\Transport planning\School Travel\School Travel Plans\School Travel Plans (2016)</u>
		Andy Watt	Liaise with the communications team and place an article in Citizen magazine to promote best practise around verge parking	The communications team have confirmed that the article has been written, signed off and filed ready for the summer issue (which is circulated from June 6 th)

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Scrutiny Request	Outcomes or current position
17 March 2016	Push the Pedalways	Jo Deverick	Percentage of roads that are 20mph on the pink pedalway	<p>West area (around The Avenues), including North Park Avenue. 10763 metres (10.8 kilometres)</p> <p>- Britannia Road (includes part of Gurney Road and Vincent Road). 1284 metres (1.3 kilometres)</p> <p>- East area (Heartsease). 12401 metres (12.4 kilometres)</p> <p>Areas that have been approved and designed as part of the CCAG1 but will be installed as part of the CCAG2</p> <p>- City centre - the new areas of 20mph. This includes all new areas within the old city walls and a small area north of Barrack Street. 23738 metres (23.8 kilometres)</p> <p>More information about the benefits of 20 mph areas please look on Norwich City Council website under the Cabinet Committee papers section from March 9th meeting.</p>
		Jo Deverick	Members asked for verification of the width of the contraflow cycle path of Essex Street	Ongoing
		Phil Shreeve	Understand the health benefits of the pedalway scheme and benefits for 20mph zones	<p>Benefits of 20mph zones - http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/health_inequalities.cfm</p>

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Scrutiny Request	Outcomes or current position
17 March 2016	Push the Pedalways	Phil Shreeve		Benefits of physical activity - http://www.ukactive.com/turningthetide/ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/everybody-active-every-day-a-framework-to-embed-physical-activity-into-daily-life
26 May 2016	Setting of the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme	Phil Shreeve	Members asked for information about the publication of Traffic Regulation Orders	The service is looking at getting TROs online as soon as resource enables it to happen.
30 June 2016	Quarterly performance report	Phil Shreeve	With reference to measure PVC4 (number of new business start-ups) members requested further information, in particular what would happen if a new business were to close?	The Economic development officer – ‘The figure was gross, it measures new businesses which have started with support from local business support agencies. It is not a measure of active businesses which is a net figure i.e .new businesses + existing businesses – business closures. This measure is available from official statistics but is subject to a 2 year time lag which is why it is not used as a performance measure, it is not timely enough. The measure does not include business closures’
30 June 2016	Update on the Norwich Market Consultation	Adrian Akester	The scrutiny committee to explore the possibility of 1. for a bus route to take in the market place via Saint Peters Street; and, 2. to improve sign posting from existing bus stops to the market (particularly on Castle Meadow)	The head of city development responded, ‘1) is a matter for the county council as they are the passenger transport authority. From the knowledge I do have it is very unlikely to be viable and also a single bus route is only going to be of use for a small proportion of the population. As Scrutiny Committee notes the nearest main bus stops are at Castle Meadow. The market is already signed from Castle Meadow (at the junction with Davey Place). To

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Scrutiny Request	Outcomes or current position
				provide more signs as requested under 2) would be costly, however there is no budget for this, nor for future maintenance. Such provision could only therefore be justified based on well researched marketing advice of which I am unaware. Additional signs would also add to street clutter.
22 September 2016	Switch and Save		For members to better understand the Switch and Save process	It was agreed that the best way to implement this would for the scrutiny committee to attend an all member briefing on this topic
24 November 2016	Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) update	James Wright	RESOLVED that the chair would write to: a) The GNGB to request as a part of their meetings the inclusion of public questions and the publication of papers in advance of any meeting; and, b) The NALEP to request as a part of their meetings the inclusion of public questions and the publication of papers in advance of any meeting and to encourage trade union representation as a part of the group.	Ongoing
	Education and Social Mobility	Cabinet member for fairness and equality, Vaughan Thomas	Ask the cabinet member for fairness and equality to complete the government consultation entitled 'Schools that work for everyone';	Due to time constraints, the cabinet member was unable to complete the consultation before the deadline.

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Scrutiny Request	Outcomes or current position
24 November 2016	Education and social mobility	James Wright	Recommend to cabinet the establishment of a cooperative academy chain	Ongoing
		James Wright	Recommend to Norfolk County Council children's services that they encourage academies to engage more fully with the work of the Early Help Hub	Ongoing
		James Wright	The chair to write to the new head of children's services at Norfolk County Council, welcoming them to the role and asking that – given the state of educational outcomes in the city – what work was being planned around: i) Vulnerable families; and, ii) Lack of alternative provision	Ongoing
15 December 2016	Neighbourhood model and the role of the ward councillor	Bob Cronk	A workshop on the Neighbourhood model to answer the questions: How are councillors currently engaged and supporting local community activity? - What do members think is the role of the ward councillor in the enabling programme? - What support or training do members need to help communities do more for themselves?	This workshop took place on 10 January 2017

Date	Topic	Responsible Officer	Scrutiny Request	Outcomes or current position
26 January 2017	Pre scrutiny of the proposed budget	Justine Hartley	To ask Justine to find out what the decrease in community safety and environment relates to and circulate to member.	A response was circulated to members regarding this by email.
23 February 2017	Causes of food poverty in Norwich	Bethany Clark and Adam Clark	To ask all members of the scrutiny committee to send their initial thoughts on the main drivers of food poverty to the scrutiny liaison officer.	Members emailed suggestions and these have been collated in the food poverty report for the 23 March 2017 scrutiny committee agenda

FORWARD AGENDA: CABINET and COUNCIL MEETINGS 2016 – 2017

ALLOCATED ITEMS						
Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder + Senior Officer + Report author	Date report signed off by	Management clearance	Exempt?
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Revenue budget monitoring 2016/17 period 10	To provide an update on the provisional financial position as at 31 January 2017, the forecast outturn for the year 2016-17, and the consequent forecast of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account balances.	Cllr Mike Stonard Justine Hartley	1 MAR	Justine Hartley	NO
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Quarter 3 2016/17 quarterly performance report	To report progress against the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and key performance measures for quarter 3 of 2016/17	Councillor Waters Ben Foster	1 MAR	Adam Clark	NO
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Proposed right off of bad debt	To provide an update with regard to the write off of non- recoverable national non domestic rate (NNDR) debt and request approval for the write off of debts which are deemed irrecoverable.	Cllr Mike Stonard Justine Hartley	1 MAR	Justine Hartley	NO
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Greater Norwich Development Partnership Sustainability Appraisal Scoping report	To seek approval to finalise the Greater Norwich Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.	Cllr. Bremner Mike Burrell Judith Davison	1 MAR	Dave Moorcroft	NO
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Anglia Square policy guidance note – KEY DECISION	To seek approval to adopt the policy guidance note	Judith Davison	1 MAR	Dave Moorcroft	NO
CABINET	Pay Policy Statement	To consider and recommend to full	Cllr Waters	1 MAR	Anton Bull	NO

ALLOCATED ITEMS						
Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder + Senior Officer + Report author	Date report signed off by	Management clearance	Exempt?
15 MAR 2017	2018-19	council the pay policy statement for 2018-19.	Dawn Bradshaw			
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Treasury management strategy 2017-18	To outline the council's prudential indicators for 2017-18 through to 2019-20 and set out the expected treasury operations for this period.	Cllr Mike Stonard Justine Hartley	1 MAR	Justine Hartley	NO
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Greater Norwich Investment Plan KEY DECISION	To agree on the inclusion of projects in the 2017-18 Greater Norwich Investment Plan	Cllr Waters Dave Moorcroft	1 MAR	Dave Moorcroft	NO
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Procurement of access control systems in housing flats	To seek approval to award contact for the replacement of the access control systems in housing flats and to ask for delegated approval to place the orders	Cllr Gail Harris		Bob Cronk	NO
CABINET 15 MAR 2017	Purchase of new build housing for social rent – KEY DECISION	To seek approval for the purchase of new build properties, which will be owned and managed by the council and let at social rent levels and to ask council to make the appropriate budget provision				YES (para 3)
COUNCIL 21 MAR 2017	Appointment of the section 151 officer (chief finance officer)	To consider the appointment of the section 151 officer (chief finance officer)	Dawn Bradshaw	13 MAR	Laura McGillivray	NO
COUNCIL 21 MAR 2017	Pay Policy Statement 2018-19	To consider and agree the pay policy statement for 2018-19.	Cllr Waters Dawn Bradshaw	13 MAR	Anton Bull	NO
COUNCIL 21 MAR 2017	Appointment of Independent Person	To agree the appointment of Independent Person in accordance with the code of conduct outlined in the Localism Act 2011 which was unanimously adopted by Council on 19 June 2012.	Cllr Waters Anton Bull	13 MAR	Anton Bull	NO

ALLOCATED ITEMS						
Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder + Senior Officer + Report author	Date report signed off by	Management clearance	Exempt?
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Award of contract for provision of loft and cavity wall insulation – KEY DECISION	To award a contract to provide loft and cavity wall insulation to council owned housing assets	Cllr Gail Harris Gary Atkins Lee Robson		Bob Cronk	NO
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Municipal Bonds Agency borrowing framework	To seek approval for the use of the Municipal Bonds Agency for future borrowing needs.	Cllr Mike Stonard Justine Hartley		Justine Hartley	NO
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Warden call replacement in Sheltered Housing – KEY DECISION	To inform Cabinet of the procurement process for the replacement of the warden call systems in sheltered housing and to ask for delegated approval to place the orders	Cllr. Harris Carol Marney Brad Greeves		Bob Cronk	NO
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Self and custom build housing	To seek approval for introduction of an annual fee and a local connection test for the council's self-build register	Cllr Bremner Graham Nelson Lara Emerson		Dave Moorcroft	NO
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Managing Assets (Housing) – KEY DECISION	To award a contract to provide loft and cavity wall insulation to council owned housing assets.	Cllr Gail Harris Gary Atkins Lee Robson		Bob Cronk	NO
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Grant of right to buy one for one receipts KEY DECISION	To consider the granting of right to buy one for one receipts to support the provision of new homes by registered providers.	Cllr Mike Stonard Justine Hartley		Justine Hartley	YES (Para 3)
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Procurement for income generation for Norwich City Council by advertising in its three multi storey car parks – KEY DECISION	To consider the award of a contract for income generation for the city council by advertising in its three multi storey car parks.	Cllr Waters Justine Hartley Kyle Jameson		Anton Bull	NO
CABINET	Managing assets	To consider the future of the land and				YES

ALLOCATED ITEMS						
Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder + Senior Officer + Report author	Date report signed off by	Management clearance	Exempt?
12 APR 2017		property described in the report				(Para 3)
CABINET 12 APR 2017	Private sector housing enforcement policy	To agree a refreshed private sector housing enforcement policy including enforcement charges and the council's statement of principles on the use of fixed penalty notices	Cllr Bremner Andy Watt Paul Swanborough		Dave Moorcroft	NO

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 6

REPORT for meeting to be held on 23 March 2017

An investigation into food poverty in Norwich

Summary:

The enclosed report collates the responses received from committee members on their thoughts of the main drivers of food poverty in Norwich, based on the evidence given at the February scrutiny meeting.

The members agreed at the February meeting that there were three levels apparent when looking at food poverty; structural, organisational, and individual. Therefore, the report categorises the main drivers at these levels.

Conclusions:

This report provides members with suggestions on the main drivers of food poverty.

Recommendation:

That the scrutiny committee considers the evidence provided at both the February meeting, and this meeting, to identify possible solutions and to consider any recommendations the committee may wish to make.

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Background

1. On 23 February 2017, the scrutiny committee held the first of two meetings to investigate the issue of food poverty in Norwich. At the February meeting, the committee heard from three key speakers who provided evidence and answered questions asked by the scrutiny members. Further details on the discussion at the February meeting can be found in the minutes with presentations from this meeting also appended.
2. At this meeting, the scrutiny committee will hear from three more speakers, who will discuss a range of topics, from food literacy, to what impact their organisation has had on tackling food poverty. The speakers at this meeting are:
 - Rosie Ogleby – National Director at Feeding Britain. Feeding Britain is a charitable organisation, and was founded out of the all-party parliamentary inquiry into hunger in 2014.
 - Donna Chappell – Head of Children’s Centre at Earlham Early Years. The Children’s Centre offers the local community early year’s education and childcare practice.
 - Caroline Seaman – Founder of Joy of Food. This is a Norfolk County Council funded project to deliver food skills in the community.
3. In this report, members will find a collated list of what was identified by the committee as the main drivers of food poverty in Norwich.

In trying to unpick the drivers of food poverty at the structural, organisational and individual level, it is worth noting that there is no clear distinction to be drawn between these consistently. There is a fundamental interconnectedness between the individual factors and behaviours and the structural and organisational context in which they occur. However, there are some key themes that came out of the discussion and subsequent feedback from committee members that can be broadly ascribed to one of those three levels.

There is also a distinction to be drawn between the drivers of food crises in which people are left without any means of feeding themselves in the short-term, and the drivers of longer-term lack of access to nutritious food. There may sometimes be an overlap between these, with longer-term drivers leaving individuals and families more vulnerable to falling into crisis because of a fluctuation in circumstances.

In terms of **structural** drivers of food poverty, there appears to be a consensus that these are:

- An economic system that causes poverty through insecure work, low pay and income insufficiency
- A welfare system that is not a genuine safety net and does not prevent crises
- The means of distribution, cost and accessibility of nutritious food
- Lack of provision of adequate social welfare advice

Some of the key **organisational** causes of food poverty include:

- The way in which the welfare system is administered through the DWP:
 - Delays to benefit claims (particularly under Universal Credit)
 - Inconsistency and volatility of benefit sanction decisions causing crises
- The advent of the full Universal Credit system (June 2018 in Norwich) seems to increase risks owing to the increased scope and scale of claimants and the issues faced in managing claims online
- The way in which debts are recovered by landlords and others leaving some households with severe short-term income shortfalls

Finally, there are a series of **individual** factors that cause or exacerbate food poverty:

- Low awareness of how to navigate the benefit system (exacerbated by a dearth of social welfare advice)
- Low financial capability and inclusion including:
 - Ability to manage inconsistent budgeting cycles between income and outgoings
 - Lack of savings and access to affordable credit
 - Rational decisions to de-prioritise food over other necessities
- Low food literacy and skills:
 - Choosing food that is affordable but not necessarily nutritious
 - Rational decisions to avoid buying fresh food to minimise waste
 - Approaches to food sourcing e.g. Growing your own, allotments

	Understanding the Causes	Sustainable Response
Structural	Insecure work Low wage Welfare system that does not always prevent crises Distribution/accessibility of nutritious food	
Organisational	Benefit delays Benefit sanctions Universal credit Debt recovery by landlords and others	
Individual	Food literacy/skills Knowledge of navigating benefit system Low financial capability	