

**Norwich City Council**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **Item No 8**

**REPORT for meeting to be held on Thursday 13 July 2017**

### **Setting of the scrutiny committee work programme for 2017/18**

**Summary:**

The purpose of the report is to assist committee members in setting the work programme for 2017/18. A series of potential items have been listed in this report, which have been raised by the committee throughout the last year.

**Conclusions:**

Along with this report, the accompanying annual standing items taken to the scrutiny committee (appendix A) and items suggested by members for consideration for the work programme (appendix B), the committee will be able to select future items that assist with the delivery of the council's priorities.

It is proposed that any discussion is as a whole committee using the TOPIC criteria. This will assist members in achieving the goal of an agreed work programme that is met by consensus.

**Recommendation:**

To consider the options and agree a realistic and deliverable scrutiny committee work programme for 2017/18. The programme is a standing item at each committee meeting and can be adjusted as necessary

**Contact Officers:**

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## **1. Developing a work programme for the scrutiny committee**

- 1.1 When the scrutiny committee considers which items to include on its work programme, it is useful to do so in the context of what the focus is for the council over the coming year and to look at how activity aligns to the council's corporate plan.
- 1.2 This is so that the scrutiny committee will be able to consider where and how it can add value to the work being carried out towards achievement of the council's priorities and ensure that resources are being focussed effectively.
- 1.3 The scrutiny committee has previously adopted the TOPIC flow chart as an aid to selection of scrutiny topics for its work programme. This is attached to the agenda for reference and members are encouraged to pay regard to this in ensuring that any topic that makes it onto the work programme has an agreed scope and may benefit from the scrutiny process.

## **2. Recurring items**

- 2.1 There are certain areas of work identified for the scrutiny committee that are of a recurring nature. Presently, these are pre-scrutiny of the council's draft policy framework (corporate plan) and budget and the performance monitoring reports, as well as a yearly update on the environmental strategy. The scrutiny committee has also requested that it receives the draft equality information report on an annual basis. This latter item is usually in draft for the December meeting.
- 2.2 Last year, members requested that they receive a periodic update from the representative sitting on the Norfolk County Health and Overview Committee. The proposed dates after this meeting for NHOSC along with suggested scrutiny report dates are:
  - 20 July 2017 (21 September 2017)
  - 7 September 2017 (21 September 2017)
  - 26 October 2017 (23 November 2017)
  - 7 December 2017 (14 December 2017)
  - 11 January 2018 (25 January 2018)
  - 22 February 2018 (22 February 2018)
  - 5 April 2018 (TBC June 2018)
- 2.3 Scrutiny committee may wish to keep some space free to be able to move items on and off the work programme as required

### **3. Scope for scheduling items to the work programme**

- 3.1 Although sometimes not possible to achieve, it was previously agreed that the committee should agree as few as possible substantive topics per meeting. The main reason for this is to ensure that there is enough time for the committee to effectively consider the issues and has a fair chance of reaching sound, evidence based outcomes. Ideally, one main item per meeting would be the aim.
- 3.2 Although setting the future work of the committee for up to 22 March 2018, members will have the opportunity on a monthly basis to revise the programme if and when required or due to changing events. This is done via the work programme standing item on the scrutiny committee agendas.
- 3.3 Along with this report, the accompanying annual standing items taken to the scrutiny committee (appendix A) and items suggested by members for consideration for the work programme (appendix B), the committee will be able to select future items that assist with the delivery of the council's priorities.
- 3.4 In addition to this, at the June meeting, members suggested they wanted to establish a task and finish group looking at a city access charter.
- 3.5 It is proposed that any discussion is as a whole committee using the TOPIC criteria. This will assist members in achieving the goal of an agreed work programme that is met by consensus.

### Standing Scrutiny Committee Items

Committee	Day of meeting	Time	2017								2018				
			May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Scrutiny	Thu	16:30	25	22	13	-	21	19	23	14	25	22	22	-	-

May – *meeting cancelled*

June – *City accessibility meeting*

July – Work programme setting, Quarterly performance review

August – *no meeting*

September – Pre scrutiny of proposed budget consultation (proposed officer suggestion)

October –

November –

December – Corporate plan and performance framework, Equality information report

January – Pre scrutiny of the proposed budget, MTFS and Transformation Programme (before Feb cabinet), Environmental Strategy (yearly update)

February –

March – Annual review of the scrutiny committee

## Items for consideration for scrutiny committee work programme 2017-18

### 1. **Health inequality in Norwich**

A review of the health policies which currently exist for Norwich, such as the Healthy Norwich Action Plan and also a county-wide comparison by looking at the Public Health Strategy for Norfolk, and identify any issues to consider and note successes and progress reported.

### 2. **Access to justice**

To understand the wide range of issues affecting those seeking legal aid. This includes the impact of legal aid cuts, changes to tribunal fees, debt, and the impact of cuts to probation / prisons / courts. The city council commissions' advice services which provide elements of legal advice and how these work in Norwich.

### 3. **The private rented sector**

To consider how this has grown since 2001 and the implications for both private renters, low income people / housing benefit cuts / the profits landlords are making / the lack of regulation from national government / the way in which former council properties are moving from the public sector to becoming privately rented accommodation (particularly around UEA). The impact of this upon the city economy.

### 4. **The co-operative agenda in local government**

A report detailing the current work/case studies of co-operatives throughout the country and how/what city council may be able to implement; what resources are already in place which could be utilised; what cooperatives currently exist and operate in the district area. To understand how the co-operative and social enterprise sector could contribute to council strategy.

### 5. **Review of council's enforcement service**

'Enforcement' covers a wide range of areas including parking, flytipping, food safety, and planning and licensing conditions. Scrutiny of the enforcement service would enable members to consider the issue as a whole and whether the proposed changes to the service are the most effective way to streamline it. Members will bring a different perspective and may be able to offer new suggestions. This will help to ensure that the council's performance in this area remains as good as possible.

### 6. **Review of parks and play areas**

To support the scoping of a review of the council's provision of parks and play areas and the facilities therein. Timescales for this are unclear currently, but once review is complete the committee could also seek to form recommendations based on this.

## The scrutiny committee: work and outcomes tracker 2016 – 2017

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER/LEAD MEMBER	SCRUTINY REQUEST	OUTCOMES OR CURRENT POSITION
26 May 2016	<b>Setting of the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme</b>	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	<b>Quarterly performance report</b>	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?	<p>The Economic development officer responded –‘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.</p> <p>The measure does not include business closures’</p>
30 June 2016	<b>Update on the Norwich Market Consultation</b>	Adrian Akester	<p>The scrutiny committee to explore the possibility of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. for a bus route to take in the market place via Saint Peters Street; and,</li> <li>2. to improve sign posting from existing bus stops to the market (particularly on Castle Meadow)</li> </ol>	<p>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.</p> <p>As Scrutiny Committee notes the nearest</p>

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	<b>Update on the Norwich Market Consultation</b>			main bus stops are at Castle Meadow. The market is already signed from Castle Meadow (at the junction with Davey Place). To 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	<b>Switch and Save</b>	Adam Clark	For members to better understand the Switch and Save process	It was agreed that the best way to implement this would be for the scrutiny committee to refer to documents available on the Norwich City council website
24 November 2016	<b>Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) update</b>	Cllr 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

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	<b>Education and Social Mobility</b>	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 of 12 December 2016.
24 November 2016	<b>Education and social mobility</b>	Cllr James Wright	Recommend to cabinet the establishment of a cooperative academy chain	Ongoing
		Cllr 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
		Cllr 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	<b>Equality Information Report</b>	Adam Clark	a) Consider if the current proposed timescale for producing and publishing the equality report is the most suitable or time appropriate. b) Change the final sentence of the equality information to report to refer to	These recommendations were considered by cabinet on 18 January 2017. a) Given the timetable for the publication of underlying data, the existing schedule of publishing the report by the end of January remains optimal.



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			the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, rather than the Equality act (2010)	b) Changes implemented on Equality Information Report on council website.
	<b>Neighbourhood model and the role of the ward councillor</b>	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
26 January 2017	<b>Pre scrutiny of the proposed budget</b>	Justine Hartley	RESOLVED to: 1) ask the strategy manager to: a) to review the integrated impact assessments for the budget papers prior to the report being taken to cabinet, in consultation with the chief finance officer, b) circulate to all members, information on the purpose of impact assessment for committee reports 2) ask the chief finance officer to: a) circulate information to scrutiny committee members on the decrease in community safety and environment b) review the communication strategy	A response to these points was circulated to all members by the scrutiny liaison officer.

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26 January 2017	<b>Pre scrutiny of the proposed budget</b>		and consultation timing around the budget papers to council to ensure the citizens of Norwich can engage effectively in the process c) consider using the summer edition of Citizen magazine to publish an accessible summary of the 2017 – 18 budget 3) note the importance of parks and facilities in Norwich	
	<b>Environmental Strategy – Yearly update on the progress statement</b>	Richard Willson	RESOLVED to: 1) note the Environmental Strategy 2015 – 2018 progress update, 2) ask the environmental strategy manager to: a) consider linking the priorities in the Environmental Strategy and the Environmental Statement to allow for easy cross referencing of the documents; and b) send a link to scrutiny committee members to the national dataset for carbon emissions 3) ask the director of regeneration and development to bring the draft environmental strategy 2018 – 2021 to the scrutiny committee at an appropriate time; and	A response to these points was circulated to all members by the scrutiny liaison officer.

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	<b>Environmental Strategy – Yearly update on the progress statement</b>		4) to consider using a member briefing session for a workshop on the draft environmental strategy 2018 – 2021 to allow all councillor input.	
23 February 2017	<b>Causes of food poverty in Norwich</b>	Bethany Clark, Adam Clark and Cllr Kevin Maguire	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
6 April 2017	<b>Food poverty</b>	Adam Clark and Cllr Kevin Maguire	RESOLVED to ask cabinet to consider;- 1) trying to access charitable trust funding to resource projects such as social supermarkets 2) developing a food poverty strategy to act as an umbrella document for existing actions 3) increasing awareness and availability of financial advice and early intervention 4) developing community led food literacy projects 5) increasing awareness of the Go4less cards which entitle residents to reduced allotment fees; and 6) linking older and socially isolated people with good food literacy skills with younger generations in need of such skills	These recommendations are currently on the cabinet's forward agenda.

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6 April 2017 (exempt item)	<b>*Portfolio Disposal Transition Strategy</b>	Andy Watt and Justine Hartley	RESOLVED to 1) note the asset and investment strategy; and 2) to ask cabinet to consider instead of increasing the delegated authority spending limit for portfolio acquisitions, cabinet instead considers the implementation of a 'fast-track' recorded procedure for purchases retaining wider cabinet member involvement.	This recommendation was taken to 12 April cabinet and the decision was made: To delegate authority to the director of regeneration and development, in consultation with the chief finance officer and the equivalent number of a quorum of cabinet members, including the cabinet member for resources and business liaison, to invest in income generating assets up to the limit in value described in this report as budgeted for in the council's capital programme.
22 June 2017	<b>City accessibility</b>	Bruce Bentley	(1) Ask Norfolk County Council's Environment, Development and Transport committee to review the same evidence presented to this meeting to inform their work going forward; particularly in relation to their work with bus stops and bus companies (2) Improve stakeholder representation earlier in the design process of new transport schemes, potentially with a champion to sit on relevant committees or a stakeholder panel to be established (3) Ask relevant officers to ensure that any new signage be evaluated in terms of accessibility (4) Ask the Norwich Highways Agency Committee to consider formally	Ongoing

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			<p>pausing the use of shared space schemes</p> <p>(5) Ensure the A Boards policy is easily accessible on the Norwich City Council website</p> <p>(6) Extend consultations to groups not represented at the scrutiny meeting, especially those with hidden disabilities</p> <p>(7) To ask cabinet to consider ways to more robustly enforce the engine switch off policy for buses within Norwich</p> <p>(8) Consider ways to increase awareness of the telephone number to report misuse of blue badge parking</p> <p>(9) Ask the chair of the licensing committee to consider receiving a report on the sufficient supply of wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles</p> <p>(10) Ask relevant officers to approach the Business Improvement District(BID) to explore ways of improving city center retail access for those with mobility issues, such as more drop off points and a mini bus 'hopper' service</p> <p>(11) To consider the formation of a task and finish group at the work programme setting meeting of the scrutiny committee to progress the idea of a city accessibility street charter.</p>	