

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 8

REPORT for meeting to be held on Thursday 11 June 2015

Setting of the scrutiny committee work programme for 2015/2016

Summary:

The purpose of the report is to assist committee members in setting the work programme for 2015/16. A series of potential topics have been listed in the report which have either been raised by the committee in the last year or have been suggested by officers due to their strategic significance to the council.

Conclusions:

Along with this report, the accompanying draft work programme (appendix A) and any further suggested topics, the committee will be able to select future items for the scrutiny committee work programme that assist the delivery of the council's priorities.

It is proposed that any discussion is a whole committee discussion using the TOPIC criteria (attached). 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 2015/16

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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. Therefore these are pre-programmed onto the work programme. Presently, these are pre-scrutiny of the council's draft policy framework (corporate plan) and budget and the performance monitoring reports. The scrutiny committee has also requested that it receives the draft equality information report on an annual basis. Similarly, members requested that they receive a periodic update from the representative sitting on the Norfolk County Health and Overview Committee.

3. Scope for scheduling items to the work programme

- 3.1 Although sometimes not possible to achieve, it is proposed 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 17 March 2016, 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 As explained in section 2 of this report, the draft work programme (attached) is mainly populated by items that the committee has agreed in advance. If members agree to the proposed approach at 3.1, to keep agenda size to one, or at a push two substantive items per meeting, 3.4 outlines the scope members have for placing additional items on the work programme on a per meeting basis. Also, section 5 of this report lists the items for scrutiny that have already been put forward.
- 3.4 The scope available for placing additional items on the work programme on a per meeting basis:
- **18 June 2015 – No scope;** Due to the meetings schedule agreed by council the agenda for this meeting will have already been published by the time the scrutiny committee sets its work programme. However, it is already understood that the scrutiny committee receives the quarter 4 performance monitoring report at the appropriate time. Also, at the February meeting of the scrutiny committee and as part of the annual review of scrutiny, it was agreed that members receive periodic updates from the Norfolk County Health and Overview Committee. The other item for this agenda will need to go to the 8 July cabinet. This is that the previously requested item on establishing a local housing company be considered at scrutiny.
 - **16 July 2015 – Scope for one substantive item;**
 - **17 September 2015 – Scope for one substantive additional item;** At present this meeting has a report back from the July and September meetings of the Norfolk County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee programmed. These are not intended to take up more than 10 to 15 minutes of committee time. Therefore there is room for one other item to be added for this meeting.
 - **15 October 2015 – No scope;** As things stand, this meeting will be the one where the committee looks at the corporate plan and transformation programme in light of the emerging implications for local government from the Governments funding and legislative programme. This looks to be a meeting that will need all the available time to focus on these issues.
 - **12 November 2015 – No scope;** Two recurring/standing items for the meeting are already scheduled. These are, quarter 2 performance monitoring and the report back of the representative on the Norfolk County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (October meeting). Also, at the time of agreeing the findings of the task and finish group on community space before it went to cabinet, the scrutiny committee requested that a progress report be made at an appropriate time. Officers have proposed that November would be a good time for a report to be made to members.

- **17 December 2015 – No scope;** This is the meeting that the annual Equality Information report goes to the scrutiny committee for comment. There will have been a meeting of the Norfolk County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the month which means that the December report back would need to take place at this meeting also. The other item preliminarily scheduled for this meeting is the ongoing look at the transformation programme for the council as this would assist the committee in the proposed work at the January meeting.
- **28 January 2016 – No scope;** The January meeting of the scrutiny committee is always set aside for the pre scrutiny of the proposed policy and budget framework.
- **25 February 2016 - Scope for one substantive additional item;** Presently the only item scheduled for this meeting is an update from the Norfolk County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, although the date of the meeting at county hall is yet to be finalised.
- **17 March 2016 – scope for one additional substantive item;** The standing item for this meeting is for the annual review of scrutiny to be agreed before submission to council.

3.5 From the above, we can see that the available additional slots on the work programme, as it is suggested, stand at 4. Time management and an effective approach for these meetings will be as important as keeping the number of items to a manageable level for the committee to be able to produce sound and effective evidence based outcomes.

4. Draft work programme

- 4.1 A basic draft of the scrutiny committee work programme is attached to this report. This takes account of the recurring topics that the committee will be dealing with. All dates are provisional at this stage. However, this will help to illustrate the remaining scope for accommodating topics selected as a result of member consideration of this report.
- 4.2 The policy, performance and partnerships manager and the scrutiny officer will liaise with the cabinet and officers to schedule the topics selected by the scrutiny committee and produce a work programme for the period 2015/16.

5. Possible scrutiny topics for consideration

5.1 The following topics listed have been raised as possible scrutiny topics by the scrutiny committee members:

- **Verge issues – maintenance, parking and trading enforcement**

NOTE: Members are advised that a review of verge and pavement parking forms part of the city development service plan for 2015/16. This means that work will take place to look at future policy and possible revised ways of working. It is hoped that the resources will be in place for this work to begin in September with a view to developing options by the end of the year. It is therefore proposed that this item be placed on to the tracker and for the scrutiny work to take place as a pre cabinet exercise prior to cabinet considering these options.

- **Best practice in tackling transphobia and transphobic hate crime**

- **Assessment of the corporate plan against the programme of the new government**

- **Six monthly periodic overview of quarterly performance monitoring Q4(14/15) Q2 (15/16)**

- **Establishing a local housing company**

- **An overview of Department of Work and Pensions sanctions with particular emphasis on the effects for the homeless**

- **Review of community space – update on progress**

- **Consider establishing a follow up task and finish group or standing item at scrutiny over the time frame of the delivery work plan for the Building Social Inclusion and Capital in Norwich project, to monitor and evaluate the impact of the results of increasing social capital on social inclusion in Norwich, including further analysis of the barriers faced due to race, gender, sexuality and mental health, poverty and unemployment.**

NOTE: This suggested scrutiny topic arose from the recent task and finish group that reported on building social inclusion and capital in Norwich. Due to the work that needs to take place as a result of the review, members may wish to consider waiting for the various tasks and pieces of work that have begun, but are still in their early stages, to take shape before looking at results and impact. It would then make it clearer which areas in particular emerge and may need looking at by the scrutiny committee.

5.2 The following topic was raised by officers. The scrutiny committee is also requested to consider this for inclusion to the work programme:

- **Transformation programme for the Council**

5.2.1 This suggested topic for the work programme represents an area of work for the council that will be developed as it plans for the future.

5.2.2 To be able to deliver its aims and future work programme, the council will consider how it moves forward in light of the emerging funding and legislative programme that affects local government, set by the new Government and Parliament.

5.2.3 The Queen's speech has just taken place and the new Government will be setting out its first budget in July. Therefore it is probable that it will not be until early autumn at the earliest for the emerging implications for the council to become fully apparent.

5.2.4 Therefore, in terms of time tabling, it is suggested that it might be of use for the Transformation programme for the council, to be taken later in the year and at the same time as Assessment of the corporate plan against the programme of the new Government. This is because there may be related cross cutting areas for consideration and using the meeting in October would allow enough time for the Government's programme to have been analysed and for some preliminary work to have been undertaken by the council towards thinking about how things might need to be shaped moving forward. The transformation work will shape how the council works moving forward over the next five years.

5.2.5 As well as helping to deliver the corporate plan, this will help inform the budget formation process which begins around the same time. It is also therefore further proposed that the scrutiny committee takes a further look at the transformation programme for the council as part of the budget setting work in December. The scrutiny committee could then undertake its pre-scrutiny of the proposed policy and budget frame work in January.

ITEM 8
APPENDIX A

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER, CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR or ORGANISATION	SCOPE - REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT
11 June 2015	Scrutiny committee work programme	Cllr James Wright, Russell O'Keefe, Phil Shreeve and Steve Goddard	To consider the options identified and agree a scrutiny committee work programme for 2015/16
11 June 2015	Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Cllr James Wright, and Steve Goddard	To agree the proposed protocol for the council, its representative and Norfolk Health and Scrutiny Committee
18 June 2015	Quarter 4 performance monitoring (14/15)	Cllr Alan Waters, Russell O'Keefe and Phil Shreeve	Identification of any causes for concern and note successes arising from this 6 monthly review of performance monitoring data
18 June 2015	Update from the Norfolk county health overview and scrutiny committee	Councillor rep and Steve Goddard	For the committee to note the work of the HOSC and comment on any implications for the residents for the rep to take back to the HOSC (May report)
18 June 2015	Establishing a local housing company	Cllr Bert Bremner and David Moorcroft	Pre-scrutiny of the report going to cabinet that outlines arrangements for the council towards establishing a local housing company to allow the council to take forward housing development in Norwich.

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17 September 2015	Update of the rep for the Norfolk county health overview and scrutiny committee	Councillor rep and Steve Goddard	For the committee to note the work of the HOSC and comment on any implications for the residents for the rep to take back to the HOSC (July & Sept report)
15 October 2015	Assessment of the corporate plan against the programme of the new government	Cllr Alan Waters, Russell O'Keefe and Phil Shreeve	To gain an overview of the new governments programme and any implications this may have for the council's corporate plan
15 October 2015	Transformation programme for the Council	Cllr Alan Waters and Russell O'Keefe	For the scrutiny committee to comment on and make suggestions towards the development of the council's programme for transformation
12 November 2015	Quarter 2 performance monitoring (15/16)	Cllr Alan waters, Russell O'Keefe and Phil Shreeve	Identification of any causes for concern and note successes arising from this 6 monthly review of performance monitoring data
12 November 2015	Review of community space - update on progress	Cllr Keith Driver, Russell O'Keefe and Bob Cronk	A report back to the scrutiny committee on how work has progressed since the task and finish group.
12 November 2015	Update of the rep for the Norfolk county health overview and scrutiny committee	Councillor rep and Steve Goddard	For the committee to note the work of the HOSC and comment on any implications for the residents for the residents for the rep to take back to HOSC (Oct report)

ITEM 8
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DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION OFFICER CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR	SCOPE - REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT
17 December 2015	Transformation programme for the Council	Cllr Alan Waters and Russell O'Keefe	Ongoing scrutiny to consider the development of the transformation programme.
17 December 2015	Annual equality information report	Cllr Vaughan Thomas and Phil Shreeve	Pre scrutiny of the report before it goes to cabinet
17 December 2015	Update of the rep for the Norfolk county health overview and scrutiny committee	Councillor rep and Steve Goddard	For the committee to note the work of the HOSC and comment on any implications for the residents for the rep to take back to the HOSC (Dec report)
28 January 2016	Pre-scrutiny of the proposed policy and budget frame work	Cllr Alan Waters, Russell O'Keefe and Justine Hartley	To make suggestions to cabinet regarding the proposed budget's ability to deliver the council's overarching policy and look into how tenants can use communal areas
25 February 2016	Update of the rep for the Norfolk county health overview and scrutiny committee	Councillor rep and Steve Goddard	For the committee to note the work of the HOSC and comment on any implications for the residents for the rep to take back to the HOSC
17 March 2016	Annual review of scrutiny	Cllr James Wright and Steve Goddard	To agree the annual review of the scrutiny committee's work 2015 to 2016 and recommend it for adoption of the council

(Please Note: the meeting scheduled for 16 July has not as yet had an item allocated to it.)