

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 8

REPORT for meeting to be held on Thursday 30 May 2019

Setting of the scrutiny committee work programme for 2019/20

Summary:

The purpose of the report is to assist committee members in setting the work programme for 2019/20. 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, standing items taken to the scrutiny committee are included in the annual work programme planning grid and items suggested by members for consideration for inclusion are attached as appendix A.

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 2019/20. The programme is a standing item at each committee meeting and can be adjusted as necessary.

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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. 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 will benefit from the scrutiny process.
- 1.4 Members have been asked to submit suggestions for the 2019-20 work programme to be considered by the committee. Those received before publication of the agenda are attached as appendices to this report. Additional topics may be considered by the committee at the meeting.

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 the scrutiny committee work programme (each meeting), pre-scrutiny of the corporate plan and performance framework (December) Equality Information Report (December), pre-scrutiny of the proposed budget (January) Environmental Strategy (January) and the annual review of the scrutiny committee (March).
- 2.2 Updates are received from the representative sitting on the Norfolk County Health and Overview Committee (NHOSC). The proposed dates for NHOSC along with suggested scrutiny report dates are outlined below in the annual work programme planning grid.
- 2.3 Updates are also received from the representative sitting on the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny sub panel (NCCSPSSP). The proposed dates for NCCSPSSP along with suggested scrutiny report dates are outlined below in the annual work programme planning grid.
- 2.4 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 this civic year, members will also 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.

4. Annual work programme planning grid

- 4.1 Members may find this a useful tool to use during the meeting to allocate items for scrutiny in the next civic year;

Date of meeting	Item
Thursday at 16.30	
2019	
20 June	Work programme
18 July	Work programme
19 September	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 30 May and 25 July
17 October	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 5 September
14 November	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 10 October

12 December	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 28 November Corporate plan and performance framework Equality information report
2020	
16 January	Work programme Pre-scrutiny of the proposed budget Environmental strategy
12 February	Work programme Pre-scrutiny of the budget 2020/21 Report back from NHOSC meeting from 23 January
11 March	Work programme Annual review of the scrutiny committee

- 4.3 Reports from the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership
Scrutiny sub panel to be added when dates of the meeting are known.



Scrutiny TOPIC form

Adaptation to Climate Change: To consider the likely effects of climate change on the city of Norwich and evaluate the measures which are planned to limit their impact on residents.

BRIEF SCOPE:

- 1) Gather data from climate scientists which gives some indication of likely effects of climate change on the city of Norwich and its residents.
- 2) Consider how these effects might impact on the residents of Norwich.
- 3) Examine existing plans for adapting to climate change.
- 4) Evaluate the effectiveness of the existing plans.

TIME	<p>Is this the right time to review the issue and is there sufficient officer time and resource available?</p> <p>The IPCC special report (2018) provided evidence that climate change, including global warming, will impact on human and environmental systems.</p> <p>Climate events are likely to become more severe so action needs to be taken urgently.</p> <p>If officer time and resource is not available, it needs to be made available. The cost of inaction will exceed the cost of action.</p>
OPPORTUNITY	<p>What would be the objective of the scrutiny?</p> <p>Councillors and residents need to know that the city's climate change adaptation strategy is robust and will be adequate to protect communities in Norwich now and in the future.</p> <p>A recent LGIU briefing stated "While the metric for assessing climate mitigation success is clear (C02e), there is no single unit of measurement to understand the success of climate adaptation actions. There is a significant lack of evidence as to whether the plans and policies being put in place in climate change adaptation are successfully reducing vulnerability or not. Monitoring and evaluation are therefore vital."</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>Can performance in this area be improved by scrutiny input?</p> <p>Scrutiny from councillors and experts at this time is necessary to ensure that the council is playing its part in the climate emergency. All areas of the council's activity need to be explored in the light of this emergency.</p>

<p>PUBLIC INTEREST</p>	<p>What would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>The population of Norwich is likely to be affected by the impacts of climate change in the coming years. The sooner effective procedures are put in place to lessen the negative impact of these changes, the more resilient Norwich will be towards them.</p> <p>In addition, the positive effects of implementing a robust climate adaptation strategy could include more local jobs, local food and cleaner air, for example. These benefits could improve the local economy and health of residents.</p>
<p>CONTRIBUTION</p>	<p>Will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the council's activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p> <p>Under the umbrella of great neighbourhoods, housing and environment, a key action in the corporate plan is to: Mitigate and reduce the impact of climate change wherever possible and protect and enhance the local environment.</p>



Scrutiny TOPIC form

Practical steps to improve air quality in Norwich

BRIEF SCOPE: There is rightly a significant interest in air quality in Norwich. Norwich City Council has achieved significant reduction in CO2 emissions in recent years. For the council itself a 57% reduction in operational CO2 emissions against a 2007 baseline has been delivered. Carbon Emissions (Norwich Per Capita) has witnessed a 45% fall. A scrutiny investigation into this area, to examine the practical steps possible to further enhance and build upon this record would be useful.

Your item will be considered for inclusion on the work programme on the following 5

TIME	<p>is this the right time to review the issue and is there sufficient officer time and resource available?</p> <p>There is significant public interest in air quality within the city and ongoing work to reduce CO2 emissions as part of the long established environmental strategy.</p>
OPPORTUNITY	<p>what would be the objective of the scrutiny?</p> <p>To examine the potential practical measures that Norwich City Council, as a district council, might take to further enhance air quality improvements within Norwich.</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>can performance in this area be improved by scrutiny input?</p> <p>Significant effort to measure air quality and CO2 emissions have been developed but a further investigation into practical measures might illicit additional opportunities within this area.</p>
PUBLIC INTEREST	<p>what would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>There is established significant interest in air quality which is well represented from both questions from the public, motions in council, local coverage in the press and constituent enquiries.</p>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the councils activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p> <p>Scrutiny activity in this area, if resulting in additional practical suggestions to reduce carbon emission will help fulfil the <i>Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment and people living well corporate priorities.</i></p>



Scrutiny TOPIC form

Young people and the impact of austerity

BRIEF SCOPE: Significant research has been conducted showing the impact of austerity upon particularly younger people since 2010. Norwich is becoming a rapidly younger city and the priority of younger people is shown through the City Vision work. This would be a good opportunity to understand the particular needs and pressures facing this demographic group.

TIME	<p>is this the right time to review the issue and is there sufficient officer time and resource available?</p> <p>Norwich is becoming a younger city with the rapid expansion of anchor institutions, such as NUA and UEA, which will see younger people coming to the city. Research and participation with younger people is being undertaken as part of the City Vision agenda. The council have developed links with organisations supporting younger people including organisations such as MAP and the YMCA.</p>
OPPORTUNITY	<p>what would be the objective of the scrutiny?</p> <p>Explore the impact of austerity upon younger people in the city and recommend ways in which organisations can support those in the city most affected.</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>can performance in this area be improved by scrutiny input?</p> <p>A better understanding of the changing structure of Norwich and how services which cater / relate to younger people could be improved.</p>
PUBLIC INTEREST	<p>what would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>There is a significant younger person demographic within the city and ensuring that their needs are effectively met will be of interest to all members of the community.</p>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the councils activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p> <p>It could further enhance and develop the agenda around the City Vision and improve general services aimed at younger people.</p>



Scrutiny TOPIC form

YOUR ITEM: **Norwich Economic strategy**

BRIEF SCOPE:

The 2019-2024 Norwich Economic Strategy provides a five-year framework for the development of the sustainable and inclusive growth of Norwich's economy. Given its importance and linking within the emerging City Vision this document would benefit from scrutiny review.

TIME	
OPPORTUNITY	<p>what would be the objective of the scrutiny?</p> <p>As the Norwich economy rapidly changes the importance of reviewing the City Council strategy to respond to these challenges will be particularly timely and important.</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>can performance in this area be improved by scrutiny input?</p> <p>Economic development is a key area within the corporate plan and measured closely. Work to enhance this through effective scrutiny would see the "an inclusive economy" objective better realised.</p>
PUBLIC INTEREST	<p>what would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>Norwich is witnessing rapid changes within the local economy. Over the course of the last two years we have seen high profile job losses and restructuring within the Norwich economy so public interest in any strategic objective to improve the local economy will be significant. Without a strong local economy, particularly as local government will be largely financed through domestic business rate retention, public services could be further threatened.</p>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the councils activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p> <p>The "an inclusive economy" objective will be better realised through ensuring that the strategy underpinning economic development is as successful as possible.</p>



Scrutiny TOPIC form

YOUR ITEM: Transforming Cities Fund.

BRIEF SCOPE:

To examine the opportunities and future of the new Transforming Cities Fund through Transport for Norwich. The success of Norwich City Council in being awarded this fund, working with partners, could lead to significant opportunities to develop positive improvements for people to access jobs, training and retail and also respond to issues around air quality.

Your item will be considered for inclusion on the work programme on the following 5 criteria. Please give any further information for each criteria below:

TIME	
OPPORTUNITY	<p>what would be the objective of the scrutiny?</p> <p>To consider how the fund could deliver significant practical transport enhancements within the city.</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>can performance in this area be improved by scrutiny input?</p> <p>With the likely changes to the Norwich Joint Highway Agreement the administration of this fund will be important to the City Council as it seeks to deliver upon its corporate priority of achieving 'great neighbourhoods, housing and environment'.</p>
PUBLIC INTEREST	<p>what would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>There is already significant and established public interest over highways and opportunities to improve the practical experience of communities affected by issues such as poor air quality, lack of safe routes for pedestrian and cycle access together with speeding traffic in built up residential communities. This fund, and the very significant opportunities attached to it, could if properly implemented make significant and fast improvements upon quality of life issues at a time of overall general reduction in services.</p>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the councils activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p> <p>With imminent changes to Norwich Joint Highways Committee,</p>

	the introduction of new structures of delivery and the significance of the fund for the city, effective governance and oversight into how this initiative develops into the future could contribute to better performance.
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Scrutiny TOPIC form

YOUR ITEM: **Universal Basic Income**

BRIEF SCOPE:

The concept, which involves ditching the traditional means tested benefits and replacing them with an unconditional flat rate payment to all citizens, has been piloted in various parts of the world, including Finland and Canada.

Advocates argue that the policy is more effective in reducing poverty while the acceleration of artificial intelligence, which risks reducing the amount of jobs available, could make experimentation with the radical idea important in the coming years. Nationally, there is interest within established political parties around piloting this in certain towns and cities.

TIME	
OPPORTUNITY	<p>what would be the objective of the scrutiny?</p> <p>To explore the concept of a UBI and whether it might work for a city such as Norwich.</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>can performance in this area be improved by scrutiny input?</p> <p>Norwich City Council is a key administrator of benefits, such as council tax reduction, with considerable experience of this. We are council which rightly prioritises social inclusion and this UBI could be a policy which impacts upon Norwich in the future.</p>
PUBLIC INTEREST	<p>what would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>Norwich is witnessing rapid, significant and high profile, job losses with Unilever and Britvic factories intending to close this year. The Norwich economy is moving towards, in some areas, highly precarious work on zero hour contracts with associated poor quality terms and conditions. The advent of the 4th industrial revolution and enhanced automation will pose major issues for many people. For some citizens the opportunity of work of any kind is becoming more difficult to achieve and reliance on social security ever more prevalent. With the problems of Universal Credit well documented there could be enhanced interest in this alternative and a forward thinking council prepared to consider it.</p>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the councils activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p>

	<p>If a change of government occurred there might be an opportunity to trial this initiative at short notice. In the meantime it will again help the council understand issues of a rapidly changing economy and need for a much stronger social security system contributing to the corporate plan priorities of an inclusive economy and people living well.</p>
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Scrutiny TOPIC form



YOUR ITEM: **NEW Anglia LEP**

Scope: See below

TIME	<p>New Anglia LEP is one of 38 self-regulating business-led partnerships between the private and public sectors set up by the Coalition Government in 2010 to drive private sector-led growth in their areas. LEPs receive significant public funds - about £12 billion to date, including £9 billion for Local Growth Funds, the mechanism through which the Government channels funding for local growth projects. Public funding for LEP programmes is held and managed by a local authority acting as an accountable body.</p> <p>Leaders from local government and higher education serve on the LEP board and provide public accountability. The Board approve strategic decisions and the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.</p> <p>LEPs also plays a major role in developing and delivering local economic strategies and programmes. Along with local political leaders, New Anglia LEP is a partner in the Greater Norwich City Deal. It is represented on the Greater Norwich Growth Board. The Board delivers the City Deal; it decides on infrastructure priorities funded from Local Growth Funds; it develops the annual Greater Norwich Growth Programme that identifies and delivers infrastructure schemes using pooled Community Infrastructure Levy funding.</p> <p>The scope and route for elected backbench councillors in helping to shape the LEP agenda (other than through preparation of the Joint Core Strategy) is unclear, whilst the ability of the public to engage has been negligible. Until recently, several LEPs did not publish papers nor hold Board meetings in public.</p> <p>Following concerns raised about governance and transparency arrangements of some LEPs, the Public Affairs Committee looked at the role of LEPs in July 2016 and reported that LEPs needed to be more transparent. A DCLG review of LEPS on governance and transparency in Oct 2017 made several recommendations and in January, the MHCLG published best practice to this effect.</p> <p>In July of this year, MHCLG published 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships' that sets out an enhanced role for LEPs in developing local industrial strategies outlined in the Government's Industrial Strategy White Paper, alongside measures for increasing the public accountability of LEPs. They include the need to hold meetings in public and an annual general</p>
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	<p>meeting open to the public where they can influence the economic plans for their area.</p> <p>Given the role, influence, powers and public spending ability available to LEPs, it is right to consider the public accountability and effectiveness of New Anglia LEP, how the City Council and LEP inter-act and how political leaders reflect the views of backbench members and report back to them on LEP business. It is timely because the LEPs are being required to demonstrate greater transparency and they will shortly embark on the preparation of local industrial strategies which will require local input.</p> <p>Scrutiny of New Anglia LEP would involve officer time and resource in terms of background research and liaising with New Anglia LEP.</p>
OPPORTUNITY	<p><i>What would be the objective of the scrutiny?</i></p> <p>The main objectives would be to consider:</p> <p>Democratic Accountability and Transparency Are processes in place for supporting member involvement and input?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how do NCC members feed into LEP via the City Council representative? - how are member informed of upcoming LEP decisions? - how are LEP business decisions fed back to members? <p>What is the extent of public involvement in contributing to the LEP agenda and can improvements be made?</p> <p>Value for Money and Effectiveness The extent to which the LEP agenda is aligned with the Corporate Plan? Is the LEP achieving its economic plans for Norwich? Is the LEP achieving a reduction in deprivation in Norwich? Is LEP achieving sustainability?</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>Scrutiny could consider ways of improving democratic accountability of New Anglia LEP and public input and thereby increase its effectiveness.</p> <p>Also, the Government recognises the role that local authority scrutiny can play in scrutinising LEP investment decisions:</p> <p><i>“The Government will support Local Enterprise Partnerships to set out how they will ensure external scrutiny and expert oversight, including participating in relevant local authority scrutiny panel enquiries to ensure effective and appropriate democratic</i></p>

	<i>scrutiny of their investment decisions</i> ". 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships', (MHCLG, July 2018),
PUBLIC INTEREST	<p>what would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>New Anglia LEP receives significant public money and it is right to consider public accountability and whether the LEP has delivered for Norwich.</p>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>Will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the council's activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p> <p>This will contribute to all three corporate priorities:</p> <p>Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment Inclusive economy People living well</p>



Scrutiny TOPIC form

YOUR ITEM: **Climate mitigation**

BRIEF SCOPE: To consider whether the cabinet's action plan for making the city of Norwich carbon neutral as soon as possible is likely to be effective and is in line with public interest, and to consider the definition of what is considered "possible", as well as how carbon emissions and reductions are being measured.

TIME	<p>Climate mitigation (as opposed to climate adaptation) refers to measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions contributing to the climate emergency.</p> <p>Council on 29 January acknowledged the conclusions of scientists that climate temperature rise should be limited to 1.5°C, deeming this a Climate Emergency, and pledged to to make the city of Norwich carbon neutral as soon as possible, taking into account both production and consumption emissions. Council resolved that Cabinet should report within 6 months to Council the actions the cabinet will take to address this emergency.</p> <p>Given a) the emergency nature of this topic and the fact that all delays increase the likelihood of hitting a tipping point where climate change goes beyond any human control, and given b) the fact that the Cabinet's proposed actions, if adequate to address this emergency, will impact on all areas of the work of the Council, it is vital that the Cabinet's proposed action plan is scrutinised and is proven to be effective from the very start.</p> <p>If officer resource and time is not already available, it must be made available, in line with the emergency nature of the situation.</p>
OPPORTUNITY	<p>what would be the objective of the scrutiny?</p> <p>The main objective would be to scrutinise the Cabinet's action plan to ensure it fulfils the pledge to make the city of Norwich carbon-neutral <i>as soon as possible</i>. Scrutiny would ask how the terms of what is possible being defined.</p> <p>Scrutiny can also consider whether the Cabinet's action plan takes into account both production and consumption emissions, as resolved by Council, and how these are being measured and what they include. Will it include transport emissions? Council resolved to ask Cabinet to work with partners across the city and</p>

	<p>region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans – which strategies and plans are being deemed relevant, and are they being delivered effectively in line with Council’s motion?</p> <p>In addition, would the Cabinet’s action plan take into account carbon drawdown through preserving and increasing biodiversity?</p> <p>Scrutiny can also ensure that the way Cabinet works with partners across the city and region on its carbon reduction goal is held to account.</p>
PERFORMANCE	<p>can performance in this area be improved by scrutiny input?</p> <p>In recent years, the Council has made good progress in reducing carbon emissions by 56% from its own operations which amount to 1.2% of Norwich’s carbon footprint. In addition, the per capita carbon footprint of Norwich residents has fallen to 3.8 tonnes per annum. However, the per capita footprint measured does not take into account emissions from production and consumption, road transport outside Norwich administrative boundary, aviation and shipping, and so the actual footprint per capita according to this measure is much higher.</p> <p>In addition, “as soon as possible” leaves open the option of continual improvement. Instead of aiming for 2050 or 2030, why not aim for 2025? Every year, every month, of delay increases the chances of catastrophic loss of life.</p>
PUBLIC INTEREST	<p>what would be the public interest in placing this topic onto the work programme?</p> <p>There is increasing public awareness and demand for action on climate mitigation. From the school strikes gathering hundreds of children in Norwich to Extinction Rebellion to the increase in “ethical consumerism”, the demand from the public is clear. Cabinet must be held accountable and be seen to be taking the scientific evidence and the public demand as seriously as is needed.</p>
CONTRIBUTION	<p>will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the councils activities as agreed in the corporate plan?</p> <p>The goal of becoming carbon-neutral as soon as possible applies to all relevant strategies and plans, framed by the 2040 Vision, and should therefore be scrutinised.</p>