

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2013/2014 – NORWICH CITY COUNCIL

Item 7A

Please contact the scrutiny officer; Steve Goddard, Scrutiny officer, Norwich city council, Room 333, City Hall, Norwich NR2 1NH

Phone: 01603 212491 email: stevegoddard@norwich.gov.uk

The work programme for the scrutiny committee is informed by a combination of what councillors' feel are important topics, gathered from their ward work and their activities across the whole council or members of the public highlighting issues for debate. Also requests by cabinet for scrutiny to undertake 'pre-scrutiny' before policies are taken to cabinet. Council officers can also request that scrutiny investigate and consider certain issues on their behalf. When raising a possible topic for the work programme it is advisable to make a formal request by using the **Request form to raise an item for Scrutiny Review** which can be obtained from the scrutiny officer or via e-councillor. Once a topic request for scrutiny has been received the topic will usually be required to be put through the following by the committee:

Picc Analysis for Prioritising Topics – YOU ARE ASKED TO USE THE PICC ANALYSIS AS A FILTER TO ASSESS THE APPROPRIATENESS FOR SCRUTINY OF TOPICS BEFORE INCLUDING THEM ON THE WORK PROGRAMME

TOPIC TITLE: **REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT:**

WHO/WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION?

WHO ARE THE RESPONSIBLE CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR(S) AND OFFICER(S)?

The council's FIVE main priorities are provided to assist members and can be used as a guide and reminder to draw links between the work of the scrutiny committee and the corporate plan:

- TO MAKE NORWICH A CITY OF CHARACTER AND CULTURE
- TO MAKE NORWICH A SAFE CLEAN CITY
- TO MAKE NORWICH A PROSPEROUS CITY
- TO PROVIDE VALUE FOR MONEY SERVICES
- TO MAKE NORWICH A CITY WITH DECENT HOUSING FOR ALL

P Public interest	
Is there sufficient public interest in the topic?	
Where is the evidence to support this?	
Is interest confined to the city or of broader interest?	
How would it be in the public interest to look at this topic?	

I Impact	
Will the topic impact community well-being?	
To what extent will the topic impact on the community?	
How will the review bring value to community well-being?	

C Council & performance	
How is the council/organisation performing in this area?	
What is the performance data showing? (direction of travel?)	
Are there other performance comparisons or bench marks?	
Is there adequate performance measurement?	

C Keeping in context	
What else is happening in this area such as recent reviews or inspections?	
How does this rank within the context of other work or priorities?	

WHEN WOULD BE THE BEST TIME TO CARRY OUT SCRUTINY OF THIS TOPIC?

WHAT METHOD(S) SHOULD BE USED TO CARRY OUT THIS SCRUTINY? (task & finish group, topic on agenda at main meeting, themed meeting, consultation etc.)

WHO ELSE SHOULD BE INVOLVED/INVITED?

VENUE? (city hall, other venue, site visit etc)

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION OFFICER CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR	REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT	METHODS AND VENUE
28 Nov 2013	City deal	Councillor Brenda Arthur and Jerry Massey	To gain an overview and to comment on the accountability aspects of the city deal	At committee
28 Nov 2013	Annual housing report	Councillor Bert Bemner, Tracy John, and tenant reps	Annual update and overview	Annual at committee
19 Dec 2013	Overview of the corporate plan	Councillor Brenda Arthur and Russell O'Keefe	For the scrutiny committee to gain an overview and refresh their knowledge of the corporate plan prior to pre scrutiny of the proposed policy and budget framework in February	Annual at committee
19 Dec 2014	Quarters 1 and 2 performance monitoring	Councillor Brenda Arthur, Councillor Alan Waters, Russell O'Keefe, Mark Smith and Phil Shreeve	Identification of any causes for concern and note successes arising from this 6 monthly look at performance monitoring data	6 monthly overview
30 Jan 2014	Pre scrutiny of the proposed policy and budget framework	Councillor Brenda Arthur, Councillor Alan Waters, Russell O'Keefe and Caroline Ryba	To comment on the proposed budget and make suggestions to cabinet regarding the proposed budget's ability to deliver the priorities of the council	Annual at committee
27 Feb 2014	Healthy city	Councillor Brenda Arthur, Russell O'Keefe and Phil Shreeve	Overview of the progress being made between partners and the council and consideration of possible further scrutiny options	On going
20 March 2014	Annual scrutiny review	Councillor Claire Stephenson	To agree the annual review of the scrutiny committee's work 2013 to 2014 and recommend it for adoption of the council	Annual at committee
Date TBC	20 MPH limits	Councillor Mike Stonard, Andy Watt and Joanne Deverick	To gain an overview and comment upon a progress report on the work being undertaken regarding 20 MPH limits and cycle city ambition	Annual at committee

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION OFFICER CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR	REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT	METHODS AND VENUE
Date TBC	Review of the work programme	Scrutiny committee, corporate leadership team, cabinet and the scrutiny officer	To identify the issues facing the work of the council for the civic year and agree the scrutiny committee work programme up to April 2015	Annual at committee
Date TBC	Quarters 3 and 4 performance monitoring	Councillor Brenda Arthur, Councillor Alan Waters, Russell O'Keefe, Mark Smith and Phil Shreeve	Identification of any causes for concern and note successes arising from this 6 monthly look at performance monitoring data	6 monthly overview

Scrutiny committee recommendation & request tracking

Item 7B

Date	Topic	Responsible officer	Scrutiny request	Progress	Outcome
20 June 2013	Q4 performance; satisfaction measures	Roger Denton	There had previously been, circulated to scrutiny a document showing how each of the performance measures within the corporate plan were calculated. Following the discussion on satisfaction measures scrutiny requested that this document be re circulated.	Completed	C:\\Sfil2\\Shared folders\\Information management\\Research service\\Performance\\Corporate Plan KPIs 2012-13\\CP 2012-13 Pls methods.xls
20 June 2013	Q4 performance; Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads	Joanne Deverick	That a note be circulated outlining the legislative context regarding the aspiration of 20 mph limits throughout the city	Completed	<p>Legally there are two ways by which the speed on a road can be restricted to 20 mph; either through a 20 mph zone or a 20 mph speed limit.</p> <p>20 mph zones require traffic calming measures (e.g. speed humps or chicanes) or repeater speed limit signing and/or roundel road markings at regular intervals, so that no point within a zone is more than 50 m from such a feature. There must be at least one physical traffic calming measure within the zone. In addition, the beginning and end of a zone is indicated by a terminal sign. Zones usually cover a number of roads and are designed to be self enforcing.</p> <p>20 mph limits are signed at the beginning and end with terminal signs and within the area there must be a repeater sign every 400 m. They do not require traffic calming. 20 mph limits are</p>

Date	Topic	Responsible officer	Scrutiny request	Progress	Outcome
	Q4 performance; Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads (continued)				<p>normally applied to individual or small numbers of roads but are increasingly being applied to larger areas. 20 mph limits should only be introduced where the average speed of traffic in the street(s) to which it is to be applied to is below 24 mph.</p> <p>20 mph speed limits generally result in a reduction of no more than 1mph in average speeds. This is understood to be the reason for the 24 mph criterion, i.e. that speeds need to be close to the intended 20 mph limit.</p> <p>When introducing a 20 mph speed limit there should be no expectation on the police to increase their enforcement regime in the area.</p> <p>The Department for Transport issued revised its guidance on setting speeds limits in January 2013. The document is available online at:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/63975/circular-01-2013.pdf.</p> <p>Paragraphs 79 to 103 are directly relevant to the 20 mph issue. The circular claims to have made it easier and more cost effective for councils to introduce 20 mph zones and limits. However other than accepting repeater signs as a feature that can be used in 20 mph zones, it is not clear where the savings could be made when introducing 20 mph signed only limits.</p>

Date	Topic	Responsible officer	Scrutiny request	Progress	Outcome
20 June 2013	Integrated transport budget	Andy Watt	To appraise Members of changes to the Local Transport Plan integrated transport budget available to the County Council and, via the agency agreement, within the city, arising due to changes in Government expenditure since 2010	To be completed Briefing note currently being drafted	
20 June 2013	Q4 performance; Recycling rates	Adrian Akester	To ensure minimal contamination with recycling, that it be looked into, to use local estate agents to disseminate information on local recycling practices to private tenants	Completed	<p>Previously, local estate agents have not been enthusiastic in promoting the waste and recycling service. However, the council is very active in promoting recycling and private tenants are just as likely as homeowners to come into contact with our communications.</p> <p>In carrying out a door knocking exercise, over 12,000 properties have now been visited since March 2012, many will be tenanted. Through this exercise many residents have been encouraged to participate in food, glass and blue-bin recycling. If no one is home, information is left for the householder. Each year we carry out a targeted door knocking programme aimed at the city's student population and as part of this we participate in the UEA annual housing fair. This is also useful for getting the messages across to the land lords, many of whom also let properties to non-student tenants. We also run articles in 'Concrete' which is the university's own newspaper and a regular feature in the student pocket guide.</p> <p>Also, recycling information is always included in the tenants handbook and recycling features have been included in many issues of the</p>

Date	Topic	Responsible officer	Scrutiny request	Progress	Outcome
	Q4 performance; Recycling rates (continued)				council's citizen magazine. We also provide a link to the waste and recycling web pages via the front page of the council's website.
18 July 2013	Switch & save	Richard Willson	That the department of energy and climate change 'new definition of fuel poverty' be circulated to members of the scrutiny committee as soon as possible	Completed	<p>New definition of fuel poverty;</p> <p>'The definition of fuel poverty that will be adopted finds a household to be fuel poor if it is below the income poverty threshold (i.e. has an income below 60% of the median once energy costs have been taken account of) and if it has energy costs that are higher than the typical (median) household. This new indicator of fuel poverty also includes a fuel poverty gap, which is the difference between a fuel poor household's energy costs and what they would need to be in order for that household to no longer be fuel poor. This provides a measure of the depth of fuel poverty that a household is experiencing'. (Published 9 July 2013 - Department of Energy and climate change)</p> <p>The department of energy and climate change 'new definition of fuel poverty'</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/news/davey-determined-to-tackle-scourge-of-fuel-poverty</p>
18 July 2013	Work programme – Lgss, benefits performance	Anton Bull	Circulate an update of the progress position on the performance and targets, and that this be circulated to scrutiny members before August	Completed	This is now available on e-councillor

Date	Topic	Responsible officer	Scrutiny request	Progress	Outcome
18 July 2013	Switch & save	Anton Bull	To circulate the switch & save - original contract tender document to scrutiny members	Completed	This is now available on e-councillor
18 July 2013	Switch & save	Richard Wilson	Investigate ways of capturing rates of take up in different demographic groups and consider appropriate targets to benchmark the success of the third tranche	Completed	As part of the on-line participant sign up you are now asked to respond to questions that identify people's demographic group. This information is treated as confidential and is anonymous. The council is now bench marking its performance against the other Norfolk councils as well as other authorities that are running collective switch over schemes.
18 July 2013	Work programme – 20 MPH limits	Steve Goddard and Andy Watt	For the scrutiny work programme to include a progress report on the work being undertaken regarding 20 MPH limits and cycle city ambition (Autumn 2013)	To be completed An update will be reported via the tracker after the November NHAC which will consider the county's speed limit policy review and which will have a bearing on the 20 mph programme and progress.	

Date	Topic	Responsible officer	Scrutiny request	Progress	Outcome
26 Sept 2013	Revenues and benefits benchmarking	Steve Goddard	That the issue of benchmarking against the council's close comparators be looked at by officers to help inform future target setting for the service run by LGSS	To be completed	
24 Oct 2013	Welfare reform	Anton Bull	Consider, based on recent appeal cases nationally, the council's policy regarding the spare room subsidy.	To be completed	
24 Oct 2013	Welfare reform (continued)	Anton Bull	look into current policy with regards to students and the spare room subsidy to see if both students living in halls of residence and private rented accommodation are treated equally (52 day temporary absence rule)	To be completed	
		Tracy John	Investigate with partners to see if any creative solutions with regards to flexible accommodation and ensuring single fathers are able to safely have children to visit	To be completed	

Date	Topic	Responsible officer	Scrutiny request	Progress	Outcome
		Russell O'Keefe	<p>work to encourage private landlords to take on tenants on housing benefit</p> <p>To ask the council to update how it is helping with advertising volunteering opportunities.</p>	<p>To be completed</p> <p>To be completed</p>	
24 Oct 2013	Welfare reform (continued)	Steve Goddard	<p>Request further information for a break down of:</p> <p>those affected by the spare room subsidy in Norwich</p> <p>those affected who are now in arrears as a result of the spare room subsidy</p> <p>Request the current number of the smaller council properties required to address any shortfall due to the spare room subsidy</p> <p>Are there now vacant 3/4/5 bedroom council properties as people have been forced to downsize? If so, would it be possible</p>	To be completed	

[illegible]

**FORWARD AGENDA: CABINET, COUNCIL, SCRUTINY AND
AUDIT COMMITTEES, and ALL MEMBER BRIEFINGS (AMB) 2013/2014**



NORWICH
City Council

ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
COUNCIL 26 NOV	Annual report of the monitoring officer	To summarise the key work carried out from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 and provide an assurance that the council's control measures to the areas which are the responsibility of the monitoring officer are adequate and effective.	Philip Hyde Head of law and governance EXT 2440	11 Nov	Laura McGillivray		No
COUNCIL 26 NOV	Amendments to the constitution	To consider amendments to the council's constitution	Cllr Waters Phil Hyde Head of law and governance EXT 2440 Jackie Rodger Senior committee officer EXT 2033	11 Nov	Russell O'Keefe	PH	No
COUNCIL 26 NOV	Greater Norwich Development Partnership	To receive a report on closing the Greater Norwich Development Partnership and agree future arrangements for joint working.	Cllr Arthur Andy Watt Head of city development services EXT 2691 Gwyn Jones City Growth and Development	11 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	No



ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
			Manager EXT 2364				
COUNCIL 26 NOV	Threescore infrastructure-inclusion in capital plan and programme	To seek approval to the inclusion of the construction of the Threescore infrastructure into its capital plan and the capital programme 2013/14 and 2014/15 to fully fund the infrastructure	Cllr Arthur Andy Watt Head of city development services EXT 2691 Gwyn Jones City Growth and Development Manager EXT 2364	11 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	No
SCRUTINY 28 NOV							
MEMBER TRAINING SESSION 3 DEC	Performance management (R O'Keefe and P Shreeve)						
MEMBER TRAINING SESSION 9 DEC	Welfare rights and local advice services (NCAN)						
CABINET 11 DEC	Quarter 2, 2013-14 performance report	To report progress against the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and key performance measures for quarter 2 of 2013 - 14	Cllr Arthur Russell O'Keefe Executive head of strategy, people and	20 Nov	Russell O'Keefe	PH	No



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Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
			democracy Phil Shreeve Policy and Performance Manager EXT 2356				
CABINET 11 DEC	Revenue budget monitoring 2013-14	To update members on the financial position and the forecast outturn for the year	Cllr Waters Caroline Ryba Chief finance officer (S151 Officer) 01223 699292 Mark Smith EXT 2561	20 Nov	Caroline Ryba	PH	No
CABINET 11 DEC	Treasury management half year report	To update members on the Treasury Management performance for the first six months of the financial year to 30 September 2013	Cllr Waters Caroline Ryba Chief finance officer (S151 Officer) 01223 699292 Mark Smith/Phlipa Dransfield EXT 2561	20 Nov	Caroline Ryba	PH	No
CABINET 11 DEC	Push the pedalways - access to housing land east of Hassett Close	To agree the use of council owned land in the vicinity of Heathgate for the construction of a cycle and pedestrian path and to be adopted as public highway as part of the Push the	Cllrs Stonard and Bremner Andy Watt Head of City Development Services	20 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	No



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Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
		Pedalways programme.	EXT 2691 Andrew Turnbull/Ben Webster				
CABINET 11 DEC	Public art donation Policy – KEY DECISION	To seek approval for a policy that determines how decisions will be made about when and under what circumstances the council will agree to the installation of public art on the highway or other land that it owns or manages	Cllr Arthur Nikki Rotsos Head of customers, communications and culture EXT 2211 Ben Webster Design, conservation and landscape manager EXT 2518 Clare Hubery Culture and events officer EXT 2241	20 Nov	Nikki Rotsos	PH	No
CABINET 11 DEC	Business rates pooling	To consider the principle of business rates pooling	Cllr Waters Caroline Ryba Chief finance officer	20 Nov	Caroline Ryba	PH	No
CABINET 11 DEC	Review of housing gas safety management policy	To seek approval of the council's revised housing gas safety management policy	Cllr Bremner Chris Rayner NPS Norwich Ltd EXT 3208	20 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	No



ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
CABINET 11 DEC	Strategic project	To consider a strategic investment project	Cllr Waters Jerry Massey	20 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	Yes - para. 3
CABINET 11 DEC	Transformation programme	To consider next steps on one project within the transformation programme	Cllr Waters Laura McGillivray Chief executive	20 Nov	Chief executive	PH	Yes – para 2
CABINET 11 DEC	Managing assets - general fund	To consider the disposal of an asset in the general fund	Cllr Waters Andy Watt Head of City Development Services EXT 2691	20 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	Yes - para. 3
CABINET 11 DEC	Replacement finance system – KEY DECISION	To approve a replacement to the existing finance system	Cllr Waters Anton Bull Executive head of service – business relationship management EXT 2326	20 Nov	Anton Bull	PH	No
CABINET 11 DEC	Award of contract for housing structural repairs and improvements– KEY DECISION	To advise of the tender process and seek approval to delegate to the deputy chief executive, in consultation with the portfolio holder for housing, authority to award the contract for structural repairs to council homes - Contract C	Cllr Bremner Chris Rayner, Head of Property Services, NPS Norwich Ltd EXT 3208	20 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	No
CABINET 11 DEC	Risk management policy and strategy	To seek approval for the council's updated risk management policy and risk	Cllr Waters Caroline Ryba Chief finance	20 Nov	Caroline Ryba	PH	No



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Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
		management strategy	officer (S151 Officer) 01223 699292				
CABINET 11 DEC	Part of joint core strategy (JCS): consideration of inspectors report and adoption – KEY DECISION	To consider the report of the JCS inspectors and whether to recommend to council to adopt final JCS	Cllr Arthur Graham Nelson, Head of planning services Ext 2530	20 Nov	Jerry Massey	PH	No
SCRUTINY 19 DEC							
MEMBER TRAINING SESSION 7 JANUARY	Impact & influence (John Carter Impact Associates)						
MEMBER BRIEFING SESSION 13 JAN	Policy and budget framework (R O'Keefe and C Ryba)						
CABINET 15 JAN	Equality information report	Statutory publication on equality progress at Norwich city council	Cllr Mike Sands Russell O'Keefe Executive head of strategy, people and democracy EXT 2908 Nadia Jones	23 Dec	Russell O'Keefe		No



ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
			Policy officer EXT 2368				
CABINET 15 JAN	Award of contract for the On street CCTV repairs, maintenance and upgrade service.	To advise of the procurement process for the on street CCTV repairs, maintenance and upgrade service contract, and seek approval to award the contract to the selected supplier for a five year period from 1 April 2014.	Cllr Kendrick, Tracy John, Head of housing EXT 2939 Robin Hare, Strategic contract and procurement manager EXT 2412	23 Dec	Anton Bull		No
AUDIT 21 JAN							
COUNCIL 28 JAN	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011- Early Morning Restriction Orders	To consider the recommendations from Licensing Committee concerning the Early Morning Restriction Orders (EMROs) proposed under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.	Cllr Stonard Adrian Akester Head of city wide services EXT 2331 Ian Streeter Licensing Manager EXT 3232		Jerry Massey	PH	No
SCRUTINY 30 JAN							
CABINET 05 FEB	Revenue budget monitoring 2013-14	To update cabinet on the financial position and the	Cllr Waters Caroline Ryba	15 Jan	Caroline Ryba	PH	No



ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
		forecast outturn for the year	Chief finance officer (S151 Officer) 01223 699292 Mark Smith EXT 2561				
MEMBER TRAINING SESSION 4 FEB	Data protection (Anton Bull)						
MEMBER BRIEFING SESSION 10 FEB	Role of monitoring officer (NPLAW)						
COUNCIL 18 FEB							
SCRUTINY 27 FEB							
MEMBER BRIEFING SESSION 3 MAR	Preventing homelessness (Tracy John)						
AUDIT 11 MAR							
CABINET 12 MAR	Quarter 3, 2013-14 Performance Report			19 Feb			



ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
CABINET 12 MAR	Revenue budget monitoring 2013-14	To update cabinet on the financial position and the forecast outturn for the year	Cllr Waters Caroline Ryba Chief finance officer (S151 Officer) 01223 699292 Mark Smith EXT 2561	19 Feb	Caroline Ryba	PH	No
CABINET 12 MAR	Annual review of partnership register and business relationships register	To inform cabinet of the outcomes of the annual review of the council's involvement with partnerships and also its business relationships.	Cllr Arthur / Russell O'Keefe, Executive head of strategy, people and democracy	19 Feb	Russell O'Keefe	PH	No
CABINET 12 MAR	Voluntary and community sector commissioning programme	To consider grant awards for 2014-15	Cllr Arthur Russell O'Keefe, Executive head of strategy, people and democracy	19 Feb	Russell O'Keefe	PH	No
COUNCIL 18 MAR							
SCRUTINY 20 MAR							
MEMBER TRAINING SESSION	Speed Reading Skills (External provider)						



ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
15 APRIL							
AMB 22 APR							
COUNCIL 20 MAY							
SCRUTINY 20 MAR							



Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 7D

REPORT for meeting to be held on 28 November 2013

Parking on verges and pavements

Summary: The attached form was submitted by councillor Caroline Brimblecombe and raises certain issues around verge and pavement parking. Procedure for considering a request for scrutiny is that the committee has a chance to decide whether to accept the request, when considering the work programme item.

Conclusions: **In preparing for the meeting, members are requested to consider the attached request for scrutiny and the information in this report prior to the meeting.** This is so that the committee can easily reach a decision as to whether it would like to include this topic on a future work programme for scrutiny.

If the decision is to place this topic onto the work programme, the committee would need to indicate its reason and the outcome sought.

Recommendation:

- a) decide whether or not to place Parking on verges and pavements on to the scrutiny work programme as a future topic
- b) to agree on the reason for scrutiny and the outcome sought if it is decided that Parking on verges and pavements becomes a future item for scrutiny.
- c) If not placing this item on the work programme, to decide if there are any elements of the topic picked up in the report and request form that should be monitored via the scrutiny tracker.

Or

- d) decide to take no further action

Contact Officer: Steve Goddard – **scrutiny officer**
stevegoddard@norwich.gov.uk 01603 212491

1 Questions raised by the request for scrutiny

1.1 In determining if this is a topic that would benefit from scrutiny committee time; the following points raised by the request have been responded to by officers. Also you are reminded that the scrutiny committee work programme is extremely full of items, so if the decision was that this item be added to the work programme it would be done so with the benefit of having as much evidence to consider as possible.

1.2 The following points for clarification have been responded to, to assist the committee:

a) What is the annual related cost to this council as a result of parking on pavements/verges?

- It is not possible to precisely determine the maintenance costs incurred due to pavement and verge parking. Whilst such parking undoubtedly causes damage, pavements and verges will deteriorate for other reasons as well. These other reasons include, for example, the effects of weather, damage from tree roots or work by utility companies.
- The council's footway reconstruction programme for 2013/14 is £652,017. A proportion of routine maintenance budget is also used to repair footway defects. The budget allocated in 2013/14 is £340,000 although actual expenditure will be partly determined by other maintenance demands. There is no capital programme of verge repair work and a very small amount of routine maintenance funding is used to carry out safety repairs.

b) What are the main maintenance issues caused by parking on the verge/pavement?

- Footways are not necessarily designed to take the weight of a vehicle and this can lead to damage. In particular where there are pavement slabs these will tend to shift over time which may then result in them breaking when a vehicle parks on top. The damage caused by larger vehicles is much greater than by cars although the locations where this occurs is more limited and concentrated in the city centre.
- Verge parking prevents grass growing and the soil may then be eroded away by vehicles driving over the bare areas. This soil may increase the need to clean out highway drains. The eroded areas may develop into potholes and pits and kerb edges may become undermined thereby creating trips

c) What are the enforcement issues and processes that members need to be aware of in considering this issue?

- Both driving on a footway or verge is an offence but it can only be

enforced by the police if they see such driving occurring.

- The council can insist that householders provide a properly constructed vehicle cross-over to enable off-street parking; where there is space to do this¹. However, if the verge is wide this will run to more than £5,000 which the householder or landlord would need to pay for. Any enforcement is not straightforward.
- When the council carries out a footway reconstruction under capital maintenance it will offer a reduced price for vehicle cross-overs.
- The council can introduce Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) to prevent footway and verge parking. This has been done in connection with a number of verges in the city such as Earlham Road between Colman Road and Fiveways. Such orders can only be introduced following public consultation and are relatively costly as consequence. With limited budgets, Norwich Highways Agency Committee's priority for implementing new TROs is highway safety.
- The sale of cars from verges and footways is a specific problem in parts of the city; very often in areas which do not otherwise suffer from verge or footway parking. There are powers under the Clean Neighbourhood Act to control this but the wording of the legislation makes this increasingly hard to do. As an alternative pavement or verge parking TROs could be explored and there appear to be powers under the Local Government Acts that would prevent highway trading including the sale of cars. These are planned to be explored by officers as part of the 2014/15 city development service plan.

d) Is there available data on accidents and or insurance claims and any related and knock on effects that can be attributed to the practice of parking on verges and pavements?

- Such data is not readily available. It might be possible to collate such data from individual insurance claim records but this would be time consuming and costly to undertake. The highway authority has a good record in defending all highway claims.

e) What evidence exists; does the council hold related data in terms of complaints from the public and other agencies and are these logged? Can they be reported to members?

- Officers are investigating this to see if a report can be prepared in time for circulation at the meeting.

f) Is the issue of roadside/pavement/verge car sales a major problem city wide? Is it legal or not? What if anything is being done?

¹ On classified roads the off-street area for parking needs to be sufficient to enable a vehicle to enter and leave in forward gear.

- Verge and footway parking is quite widespread in the city. Pavement parking is quite common place, for example, in terrace streets where there is little off-street residential parking. Verge parking problems tend to be found further from the city centre, again where off-street parking is limited. In these locations alternative parking is usually not readily available.
 - The problem of car sales on verges and footways appears to be more localised and includes Dereham Road and Aylsham Road.
- g) Is the issue of roadside car sales an issue for this council, or is the county council responsible for dealing with unofficial businesses/car selling and enforcing control etc? How?**
- Both councils have powers to control car sales from verges and footways. The county council's highways powers, however, are delegated to the city council through the highways agency agreement.
- h) Is the issue of unofficial businesses/car selling a trading standards issue?**
- There may be opportunities for action to be taken to prevent car sales on verges and footways via trading standards, although this would not specifically be because the car is being sold from a verge or footway. Officers are planning to discuss this matter with trading standards
- i) Are there actual drainage/water run off problems caused by pavement/verge parking? Where? What actions have been taken?**
- Soil erosion from damaged verges can wash into gulleys. This can result in gulleys being blocked and this has become a problem on some roads; in particular Colman Road. Officers are considering what further action may be required.
- j) Are there drainage/water run off pollution problems caused by pavement/verge parking? Where? What actions have been taken?**
- The only problem that appears to occur is where an area of eroded verge 'puddles'.
- k) Does the council have an agreed approach/policy on pavement/verge parking?**
- The council has a policy in relation to verge parking which was agreed by executive in September 2006 (see: <http://www.norwich.gov.uk/CommitteeMeetings/Executive/Documents/20Library/61/Repexecutivevergeparking20060920.pdf>). Following on from this NHAC endorsed the council's approach and agreed to advertise a number of verge parking TROs, albeit

following consultation not all were introduced.

I) Could this issue or elements that have been picked up by this request be dealt with via NHAC?

- Both verges and footways are highway assets and the issue of verge and pavement parking has direct relevance – albeit not exclusively – to NHAC.

1.3 The above questions and answers should provide more background and answer some of the main points raised by the member request. With this and the member request form as information it is hoped members have enough information in front of them to enable the committee's assessment. It is hoped that the committee will be able to determine if or not scrutiny should take this matter forward, based on sound evidence.

Item 7E

Request form to raise an item for Scrutiny Review

Councillors should be asked to carry out the following scrutiny review:

Parking on verges and on pavements

Please give your reasons (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Parking on verges and pavements causes damage (to the physical structure of the pavement, to the grass and other plantings), can obstruct access, and have a negative impact on road safety. Additionally, there is the issue of drainage and the impact on sustainable urban drainage systems.

Parking on verges and pavements is costly for councils (for example Solihull Council spent ~£55,000 in the period 2010-2012 for maintenance and other costs related to this issue). The practice has an adverse impact on pedestrians, but especially for vulnerable road users (elderly, disabled, visually-impaired). Pedestrians and wheelchair users can be forced onto the roadway, and parked cars can obstruct sight-lines. Damage to paving can also result in trip hazards.

In some areas cars are offered for sale from verges, which is unsightly, causes adverse impacts as described above, and can be a way of skirting relevant laws (and in some cases operates in direct competition to legitimate local businesses).

There is already pressure on drainage systems (which will continue to increase due to climate change impacts). Parking on verges and pavements also can have a negative impact on sustainable drainage systems (can increase run-off, pollution, and lead to other drainage problems).

Many councils have information on their web sites educating residents about the problems caused by verge and pavement parking. There have been some pilot schemes to discourage the practice, and in other cases enforcement strategies enacted.

The problem arises from a variety of causes (increased car ownership, more reliance on cars, some areas underserved by public transport, etc) and has multiple adverse impacts (on pedestrians, road users and on the environment, as well as unnecessary cost to the council). Addressing the problem will require a co-ordinated approach. Therefore I would like to propose it as a topic worthy of scrutiny, e.g. to assess the council's current policies and procedures, what can be done to minimise future adverse impacts related to the practice, to look at current and projected costs in dealing with the problem, to research best practice, and to formulate recommendations. (Perhaps suited to a task and finish group.)

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Date 24 October 2013

**Please return this form to Steve Goddard, Scrutiny Officer, Norwich City Council,
City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich NR2 1NH**

Email: stevegoddard@norwich.gov.uk