

Scrutiny committee

Date: Thursday, 26 February 2015

Time: 16:30

Venue: Mancroft room

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

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

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

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

For further information please contact:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Councillors:

Wright (chair)

Maxwell (vice chair)

Barker

Bogelein

Carlo

Galvin

Haynes

Herries

Howard

Manning

Packer

Ryan

Woollard

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Information for members of the public

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

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



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

Agenda

1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence

2 Public questions/petitions

To receive questions / petitions from the public (notice to be given to committee officer no later than 10am on the working day before the meeting, in accordance with appendix 1 of the council's constitution)

3 Declarations of interest

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

Working style of the scrutiny committee and a protocol for those attending scrutiny 5 - 6

4 Minutes 15 January 2015 7 - 10

Purpose - To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2015

Minutes 29 January 2015 11 - 16

Purpose - To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2015

5 Scrutiny committee work programme 2014 - 2015 17 - 28

Purpose - To note the scrutiny committee work programme and agree any potential topic(s) that may be tested against the TOPIC analysis for future inclusion onto the programme. For the assistance of members, the cabinet forward agenda is also included.

6 Street scene safety – trips and falls

29 - 34

Purpose - To provide an overview of pavement and street scene safety such as trips and falls, as relates to highways infrastructure, its maintenance or obstructions upon it.

Date of publication: **Wednesday, 18 February 2015**

Working style of the scrutiny committee and a protocol for those attending scrutiny

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



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16:35 to 18:00

15 January 2015

Present: Councillors Wright (chair) Maxwell (vice chair), Barker, Bogelein, Button (substitute for Ryan), Carlo, Galvin, Haynes, Herries, Howard, Manning, Packer and Woollard

Apologies: Councillor Ryan

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Review of challenges and responses to rough sleeping and homelessness in Norwich

(Councillor Waters, cabinet member for resources and Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for housing were present)

Dan Chadder, a student of the University of East Anglia presented a report to the committee on public perceptions of rough sleepers in Norwich. He took members through his findings and said that the individuals he had spoken to were generally positive about the work being carried out by charities but displayed less of an understanding of the work of the council in this regard. Perhaps this showed the need for a clearer dialogue between the council and those who are homeless. He said that the number of rough sleepers had risen from 6 in 2006 to 13 in 2014 but due to the nature of rough sleeping, these figures were only a snapshot. It was difficult to say whether these rough sleepers had come to Norwich from outlying areas to use services although anecdotal evidence suggested that this was the case for some rough sleepers.

Christine Spooner from Homeless Link gave the committee an overview of homelessness in the east of England and Norwich. She said that the public perception of what homeless people needed was very different from what they actually needed.

Rough sleeper numbers used to be recorded by central government with local authorities reporting an annual figure.

Issue surrounding homelessness and rough sleeping in Norwich were typical of those both in the Eastern region and nationally. Norwich had undertaken a lot of

preventative work such as reducing evictions, hostel move on services, and 'No second night out' which tried to meet needs of rough sleepers as soon as possible.

Agencies had become very adept at assessing needs and finding individual solutions, however, service users were presenting with increasingly complex needs which was a challenge.

In response to a member's question, Christine Spooner said that a lot of 'spend to save' work was being undertaken and that work on co-ordinating services would help to save money. The new Homeless Link manifesto had asked government to commit to five principles with a view to having a more strategic approach at a higher level.

She said that those with no recourse to public funds, including those with asylum status, were a very difficult group to help. Drug and alcohol services were open to everyone but language could be a barrier. Sometimes voluntary reconnection with an individual's home country was the best solution.

In response to a member's question, she said that hidden disabilities such as learning disabilities were sometimes a factor in homelessness and that the emphasis was on assessment of need on an individual basis, with the realisation that a hostel placement was not the best solution for all individuals.

A member commented that in the draft of the Greater Norwich Homeless Review, there seemed to be an increase in those who had been excluded from services. Christine Spooner said that complex needs, including behavioural issues, could be difficult to manage. A hostel was not the solution for everyone so a range of approaches were needed. A 'housing first' approach was being trialled in Norwich rather than a treatment first approach before being considered for housing.

The executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods presented the report and said that it was the culmination of many pieces of work undertaken by the scrutiny committee and officers in recent months.

Discussion ensued in which he responded to member's questions and comments. This included an explanation of 'Groundswell' which was an organisation that trained service users to have greater influence on services through a range of project work.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) commend the proactive approach of the council and its partners towards homelessness and that investment levels are maintained and increased where possible and that a specialist services continue to be available on the frontline
- 2) lobby against policies that detrimentally affect this client group who are suffering from mental health issues,
- 3) develop a report on the effect of cuts on mental health services on homeless people in Norwich and take this to the County Health Scrutiny Committee

- 4) further promote information on available services,
- 5) recommend the development of an accreditation scheme for services in Norwich,
- 6) support the proactive work to increase the percentage of people kept in their own homes,
- 7) continue to provide an individualised approach and ensure services to different groups are as accessible as possible,
- 8) explore with partners the plans for other solutions other than hostels, earning from the 'housing first', pilot
- 9) explore and develop with partners user opportunities to inform the work of the council's services for this client group,
- 10) ensure that an understanding of mental health issues underpins all work,
- 11) calculate the true value of preventative approaches to homelessness,
- 12) develop further protocols with other organisations on steps to take when dealing with the homeless and rough sleepers,
- 13) recommend that senior officers raise, through the Norfolk Chief Executives, the issue of cost sharing when Norwich works with homeless people from surrounding districts,
- 14) continue to treat people based on individual need,
- 15) continue to work with and assist partners in identifying additional support; and
- 16) For the scrutiny committee to carry out a review of the DWP sanctions with particular emphasis on the effects for the homeless and for officers to investigate who best to include in this scrutiny review, including inviting relevant politicians.

CHAIR



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16:30 to 18:50

29 January 2015

Present: Councillors Wright (chair) Maxwell (vice chair), Barker, Bogelein, Carlo, Galvin, Haynes, Herries, Howard, Manning, Ryan and Woollard

Apologies: Councillor Packer

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2014.

3. Scrutiny committee work programme

Members discussed the forward agenda and asked that the report on establishing a local housing company be brought to scrutiny before going to cabinet.

RESOLVED to ask officers to bring the report on establishing a local housing company to the scrutiny committee before going to cabinet.

4. Corporate plan 2015 – 2020

(The cabinet member for resources was present for this item.)

The executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods presented the report and answered member's questions. He said that the ranking question within the consultation gave a sense of priorities and informed how to approach future consultations.

It was explained that the corporate plan was a framework for many different plans, including action plans. He said that members were entitled to see all service delivery plans, regardless of whether they were brought to a scrutiny meeting.

A member suggested that there could be a target for the key performance measure surrounding maintaining the historic character of the city, of a percentage of listed buildings in good repair. The cabinet member for resources said that the *Heritage Management Strategy* may be a useful tool to inform this. The executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods said that a suitable measure for this would be investigated by officers.

In response to a member's question, he said that the key performance measure for empty homes brought back into use should include 'long term' to read 'the number of long term empty properties brought back into use.' These were properties which had been empty for six months or longer. A baseline figure for a city the size of Norwich was around five hundred long term empty properties. It was proposed that this target be expressed as a percentage to allow for any economic fluctuations. It was queried whether a target of 75% satisfaction for parks and open spaces was ambitious enough. The executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods said that benchmarking figures showed that the current percentage of just under 75% was good, therefore a 75% target was stretching yet realistic. The policy and performance manager added that targets were reviewed annually therefore if the target needed to be amended, it would be brought to scrutiny in the first instance.

(Councillor Woollard left the meeting at this point.)

A member referred to 'Prosperous and vibrant city' priority and said that there should be a focus on the outcomes of economic development and regeneration activities and that the delivery of the regeneration action plan could be a useful measure to include. It was also suggested that the measure for 'Number of people who feel that the work of the home improvement agency has enabled them to maintain independent living' be changed from a figure to a percentage. The committee were reminded that although officers would look into this, the service was oversubscribed and the ageing population meant that it was likely that there would always be more people that require assistance than the target figure.

Discussion ensued surrounding 'Value for money services' and the channel shift measure. A member expressed concern that some customers preferred to speak to an advisor face to face and did not want this to be lost within the measures. The executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods said that the principle of the channel shift measure was not just to shift to online contact but to ensure that customers contact the council in the manner most appropriate for them.

RESOLVED:

- 1) to make action plans available to members, once completed, so that members can review them for possible inclusion on the future scrutiny work programme,
- 2) to ask officers to investigate an appropriate performance measure regarding listed buildings,
- 3) to amend the performance measure for 'number of empty homes brought back into use' to a percentage of the total brought back into use,

- 4) to include the delivery of regeneration action plans as a performance measure under prosperous and vibrant city,
- 5) to amend the performance measure for 'those who feel that the work of the home improvement agency has enabled them to maintain independent living' to a percentage of those who have been assisted; and
- 6) Where the corporate plan refers to the high level of inward travel to Norwich, to acknowledge the positive effects this has on the city.

5. Pre-scrutiny of the proposed budget 2015 – 16

The chair agreed to look at items 7(a) and 7(b) separately.

The chief finance officer presented 7(a). She said that the figure of £17, 056m in recommendation (a) of the report may be subject to change before the final report to council, as the financial settlement had not yet been confirmed. She also explained that the figure on page 69 of the agenda showing the Contribution to/from balance was an assumption based on expected business rates. Recommendation (e) had been amended in the report to cabinet to read that 'a new general fund earmarked reserve be set up into which all Section 31 Business Rates Relief grant monies are transferred until applied to offset related business rates deficits as they arose.' The Greater Norwich Growth Board programme had been to cabinet and the leader of the council had asked for the programme to be agreed at full council. It would therefore be appended to the General fund revenue and non-housing capital programme report to council.

A member asked for more detail surrounding two projects; Hurricane Way and Waterloo Park pavilion. The executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods explained that Hurricane Way was a new housing development and he would ask officers to prepare a briefing note for circulation on the Waterloo Park pavilion.

The chief finance officer presented 7(b). She explained that on page 99 of the agenda, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) balances were reducing as these were deliberately being used before borrowing any money. This was to avoid interest charges where possible. In response to a member's question, the executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods said that this year, the tenant involvement structure had been engaged when consulting on the HRA budget but officers were in discussion regarding widening this in future years.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) ask the head of communications, customers and culture to circulate a briefing note explaining the £30,000 expenditure on City Hall external lighting,
- 2) ask the head of citywide services to circulate a briefing note detailing the works on the Waterloo Park pavilion; and

- 3) ask in the future that wider consultation on the HRA budget is undertaken and that a request is made to the tenant involvement panels regarding the potential for joint scrutiny.

6. Draft environmental strategy

(The cabinet member for environment, development and transport was present for this item.)

The executive ahead of strategy, people and neighbourhoods presented the report. He highlighted that priority one on page 148 of the agenda should read as 2.4%. He advised that two recommendations had been agreed by the sustainable development panel on the environmental strategy which were:

- 1) To investigate a way to work with the UEA and the Tyndall Centre to further break down carbon usage data; and
- 2) To look at opportunities for co-designing and co-developing the taking forward of the action programme and future strategy development with stakeholders and the public.

The cabinet member for environment, development and transport added that some projects in the strategy were already ongoing. He said the strategy would be reviewed on an annual basis with regards to technology, effectiveness and resources. The implementation of the strategy was built into the day to day work of the council.

Discussion ensued in which officers answered member's questions. The executive head of people, strategy and neighbourhoods said that work was still being undertaken with Norfolk County Council to develop a Norwich based measure for buses and public transport. He also explained priority nine of the strategy regarding improvement in air quality. He explained that the national measure for this was due to change shortly and the environmental strategy would be updated to reflect this. A comprehensive engagement and communication plan was in development to share the strategy on a wider level. The environmental strategy manager said that the first element of this would be a sustainable living festival on the 8 and 9 March 2015 at the Forum showcasing businesses, charities and council services; and including lectures from the UEA.

In response to a member's question, the executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods said that a measure regarding biodiversity in the built environment may be measured through the 'building for life' mechanism.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) ask the Public protection manager to produce a briefing note on the compliance with national air quality standards,
- 2) ask group leaders to consider the inclusion of a member briefing on engaging the public in environmental issues by the Tyndall Centre, for inclusion on the member briefing programme,

- 3) include ward members when drafting an engagement and communications plan for the environmental strategy; and
- 4) ask officers to investigate a suitable performance measure in relation to biodiversity in the built environment, relating to new developments.

7. Verge and pavement parking update

RESOLVED to note the verge and pavement parking update, and to consider this item for inclusion on the new scrutiny committee work programme.

(Councillors Bogelein and Herries left the meeting at this point.)

8. Exclusion of the public

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item number 9 below on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

9. Pre-scrutiny of the proposed budget – appendix 5

Members considered the appendix and the executive head of strategy, people and neighbourhoods, along with the chief finance officer, answered member's questions.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) note appendix 5 to the general fund revenue and non-housing capital programme 2015-16; and
- 2) ask officers to look at how the council will engage members in scrutinising and assessing and future commercial arrangements between the council and the private sector.

ITEM 5

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION OFFICER CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR	REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT
30 Sept 2014	Draft corporate plan – early stage development scrutiny	Councillor Brenda Arthur and Russell O'Keefe	To consider the draft plan when it is in an early stage of development prior to the commencement of a public consultation exercise in October.
30 Sept 2014	Private rented housing market	Councillor Bert Bremner, Russell O'Keefe, Paul Swanborough, Emma Smith and Andy Watt	To consider and look at ways in which the council is able to safeguard tenants in the private rented sector in its work.
30 Sept 2014	Final draft of the agreed scrutiny work programme	Councillor James Wright and Steve Goddard	To agree the scoping element to the agreed topics on the work programme which was set at the 17 July meeting of the scrutiny committee
16 Oct 2014	Welfare reform	Councillor Alan Waters, Councillor Brenda Arthur, Councillor Gail Harris, Bob Cronk, Adam Clark and Boyd Taylor	To look at and evaluate what advice and sign posting is offered to see if it is meeting need and is easily accessed. Ask how those entitled to help who are not coming forward can be reached.
27 Nov 2014	Street scene and road safety overview	Councillor Mike Stonard and Andy Watt with officers from the county council, police and health service.	In forming an overview and understanding of road casualty trends in Norwich and the work that is carried out to reduce casualties, the committee wishes to look at evidence based ways to keep the City's roads safe.
27 Nov 2014	Quarter 2 performance monitoring	Councillor Brenda Arthur and Russell O'Keefe	Identification of any causes for concern and note successes arising from this 6 monthly look at performance monitoring data
27 Nov 2014	Progress update of the task & finish group; Self-esteem and aspiration in communities	Russell O'Keefe and Councillor Lucy Galvin	For the committee to note the progress made by the task and finish group.

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION OFFICER CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR	REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT
18 Dec 2014	Draft corporate plan (and transformation programme)	Councillor Brenda Arthur and Russell O'Keefe	Ongoing scrutiny to consider the draft plan, the transformation programme and the development of the corporate plan towards the end of the public consultation.
18 Dec 2014	Annual equality information report	Councillor Gail Harris and Russell O'Keefe	Pre scrutiny of the report before it goes to cabinet.
15 Jan 2015 (Special meeting)	Rough sleeping and homelessness – challenges and response	Councillor Bert Bremner and Russell O'Keefe	Review of the evidence around the challenges and response to rough sleeping and homelessness and consideration of the council's draft rough sleeping strategy
29 Jan 2015	Pre – scrutiny of the proposed policy and budget framework	Councillor Brenda Arthur and Russell O'Keefe	To make suggestions to cabinet regarding the proposed budget's ability to deliver the council's overarching policy framework (corporate plan).
29 Jan 2015	Environmental strategy	Councillor Mike Stonard and Russell O'Keefe	Pre-scrutiny of the draft strategy before it goes to cabinet.
29 Jan 2015	Verge side issues update	Councillor Mike Stonard and Andy Watt	A briefing paper to outline the likely direction of any council activity in this area and the possible options for the council and the implications for the council of any measure that may be used.
26 Feb 2015	Pavement and street scene safety	Councillor Mike Stonard, Andy Watt	Overview of the pavement and street scene safety such as trips and falls and winter maintenance around Norwich. To assess issues that may impact on people's safety around the City.

DATE OF MEETING	TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY	RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION OFFICER CABINET PORTFOLIO COUNCILLOR	REASON FOR TOPIC REQUEST AND OUTCOME SOUGHT
19 Mar 2015	Annual review of scrutiny	Councillor James Wright and Steve Goddard	To agree the annual review of the scrutiny committee's work 2014 to 2015 and recommend it for adoption by council.
19 March 2015	Report of the task & finish group; Self-esteem and aspiration in communities	Councillor Lucy Galvin and Russell O'Keefe	For the task and finish group findings to be presented to the scrutiny committee for adoption.

Suggested items for 2015 – 2016 work programme:

To review the corporate plan after the general election, once the new government's programme had been clarified.

FORWARD AGENDA: CABINET, COUNCIL, SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEES, and MEMBER BRIEFINGS 2014-2015



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?
SCRUTINY 26 FEB	Pavement and street scene safety	Overview of the pavement and street scene safety such as trips and falls and winter maintenance around Norwich. To assess issues that may impact on people's safety around the city.	Cllr Stonard Andy Watt Head of city development services EXT 2691		Dave Moorcroft	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Quarter 3 2014-15 performance report	To report progress against the delivery of the corporate plan priorities and key performance measures for quarter 3 of 2014- 15	Cllr Arthur Phil Shreeve Policy and performance manager EXT 2356 Roger Denton Performance and Research Officer EXT 2535	25 Feb	Russell O'Keefe	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Establishing a local housing company – KEY DECISION	To approve the establishment of a local housing company to allow the council to take forward development.	Cllr Bremner Andy Watt Head of city development services EXT 2691 Gwyn Jones City growth and development manager EXT 2364	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	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 MAR	Affordable housing supplementary planning document (SPD)	To approve adoption of the revised affordable housing SPD.	Cllr Stonard Graham Nelson Head of planning services EXT 2530	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	CB	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Duty to Cooperate: options report.	To agree how Norwich City Council will meet the requirement to cooperate on strategic matters in local plan making.	Cllr Stonard Graham Nelson Head of planning services EXT 2530 Mike Burrell Policy team leader (planning) EXT 2525	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Constitution review	To review appendices 4, 8 and 9 of the council's constitution.	Cllr Waters Andy Emms Democratic services manager EXT 2459 Jackie Rodger Senior committee officer EXT 2033	25 Feb	Anton Bull	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Safeguarding and safer communities	To report the activities the council is undertaking to meet its safeguarding duties and responsibilities and to seek approval for a number of proposed actions.	Cllr Harris Bob Cronk Head of local neighbourhood services EXT 2373	25 Feb	Russell O'Keefe	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 MAR	Revenue budget monitoring 2014-15 – period 10	To update cabinet on the financial position as at 31 January 2014, the forecast outturn for the year 2014/15, and the consequent forecast general fund and housing revenue account balances.	Justine Hartley Chief finance officer, LGSS EXT 2440 Neil Wright, Service accountant, LGSS 2498	25 Feb	Justine Hartley	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Reducing inequalities action plan.	To agree a series of actions designed to target council activity at reducing key economic, social and other inequalities.	Cllr Harris Russell O’Keefe Executive head of service, strategy, people and neighbourhoods EXT 2908 Phil Shreeve, Policy, performance and partnerships manager EXT 2356	25 Feb	Russell O’Keefe	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Business rates transitional relief for small and medium properties policy – KEY DECISION	To consider the implementation of the Business rates transitional relief for small and medium properties policy	Cllr Waters Tracy Woods Business relationship manager EXT 2140	25 Feb	Anton Bull	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 MAR	Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 –Norwich City Council's response	To inform members of new legislation and the impacts it will have on current working practices, and to identify any issues, decisions and delegations the council is required to take.	Cllr Driver Bob Cronk Head of local neighbourhood services EXT 2373 Adrian Akester Head of citywide services EXT 2331 Tracy John Head of housing EXT 2939	25 Feb	Russell O'Keefe	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Contract award – Housing Improvement Agency: framework of suppliers to provide housing improvement works – KEY DECISION	To inform members of the procurement process resulting in the selection suppliers to deliver the works and to seek authority to award the contract to the suppliers	Cllr Bremner Andy Watt Head of city development services EXT 2691	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Contract award – Housing improvement works and services – KEY DECISION	To inform members of the procurement process resulting in the selection suppliers to deliver the works and services and to seek authority to award the contracts to the suppliers	Cllr Bremner Andy Watt Head of city development services EXT 2691	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	PH	No
CABINET 11 MAR	Review of partnerships, business relationships and grants – KEY DECISION	To consider the council's key external relationships for 2015- 16 including partnerships, business relationships and grants.	Cllr Arthur Adam Clark, senior policy officer EXT 2273	25 Feb	Russell O'Keefe	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 MAR	Mountergate West phase 2 – KEY DECISION	To approve the entering into collaboration agreement with the Great Hospital to take forwards the development of housing on the Mountergate West site.	Cllr Bremner Andy Watt Head of city development services EXT 2691 Gwyn Jones City growth and development manager EXT 2364	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	PH	Yes (Para. 3)
CABINET 11 MAR	Proposed write-off of bad debt	To consider the proposed write- off of debt believed to be irrecoverable.	Justine Hartley Chief finance officer, LGSS EXT 2440 Neil Wright, Service accountant, LGSS 2498	25 Feb	Justine Hartley	PH	Yes (Para. 3)
CABINET 11 MAR	Managing Assets (Housing) – KEY DECISION	To outline the options available for its future within the housing stock.	Cllr Bremner Chris Rayner operations director NPS Norwich TEL 227902 Jay Warnes property investment manager NPS	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	PH	Yes (Para 3)



ALLOCATED ITEMS

Meeting	Report	Purpose	Portfolio holder Senior Officer	Report signed off by	Management Clearance	Cabinet Briefing / Portfolio Holder?	Exempt? If yes – which paragraph?
			TEL 227906				
CABINET 11 MAR	Managing Assets (Non housing) – KEY DECISION	To consider the disposal of a property and a strip of land as identified in this report.	Cllr Waters David Rogers, client property and parking manager EXT 2463	25 Feb	Dave Moorcroft	PH	Yes (Para 3)
AUDIT 17 MAR							
COUNCIL 17 MAR							
SCRUTINY 19 MAR	Annual review of scrutiny	To agree the annual review of the scrutiny committee's work 2014 to 2015 and recommend it for adoption of the council	Cllr Wright Steve Goddard	11 Mar	Steve Goddard	PH	No
SCRUTINY 19 MAR	Report of the task and finish group; self-esteem and aspiration in communities	For the task and finish group finding to be presented to the scrutiny committee for adoption.	Cllr Galvin Russell O'Keefe		Russell O'Keefe		
COUNCIL 26 MAY							

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

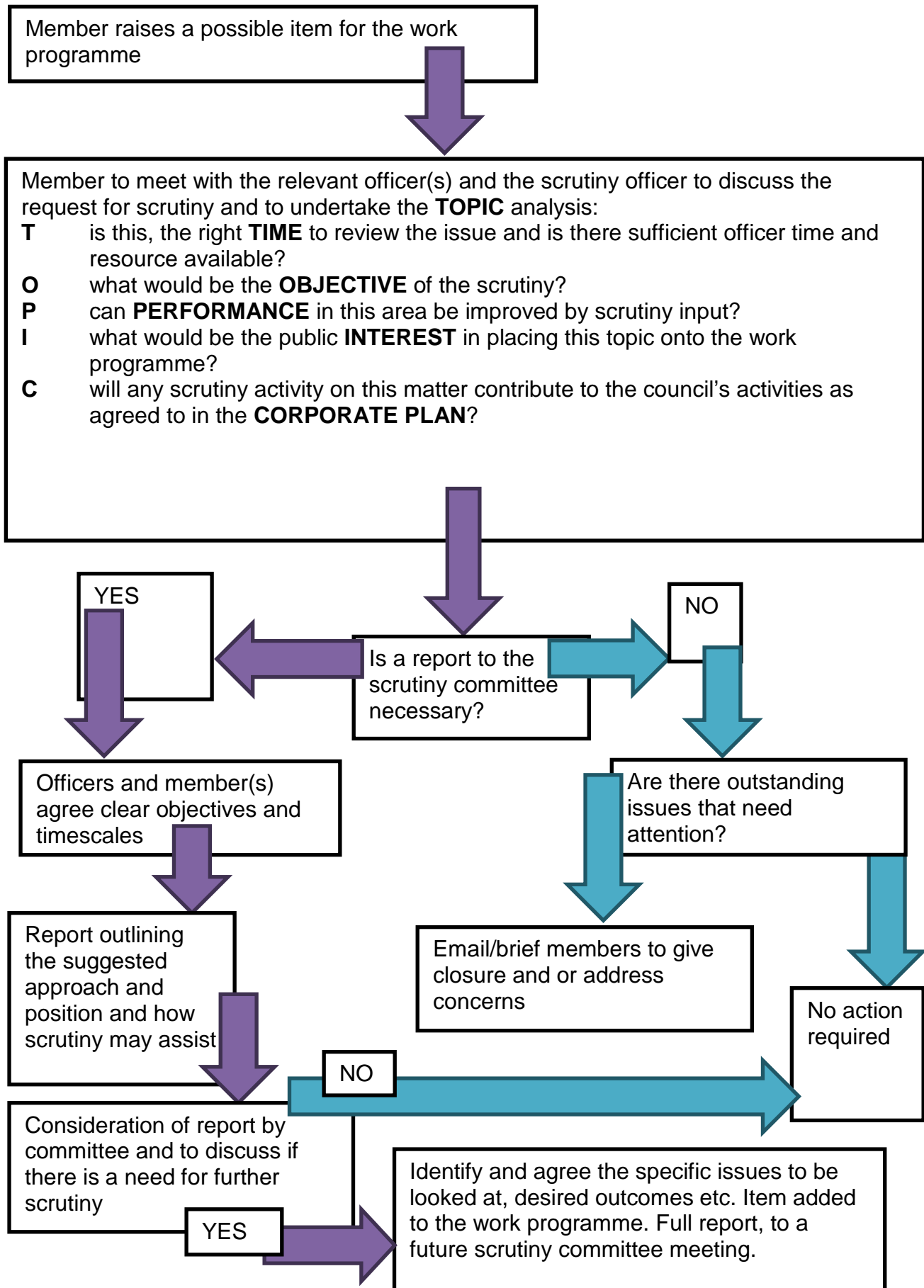
Once the TOPIC analysis has been undertaken, a joint decision should then be reached as to whether a report to the scrutiny committee is required. If it is decided that a report is not required, the issue will not be pursued any further. However, if there are outstanding issues, these could be picked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

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

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

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound

Guidance flow chart for placing items onto the scrutiny committee work programme



Report to Scrutiny committee
26 February 2015
Report of Head of city development services
Subject Street scene safety – trips and falls

Item

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Purpose

This report provides an overview of pavement and street scene safety such as trips and falls as relates to highway infrastructure, its maintenance or obstructions upon it.

Recommendation

To note the report

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority “A safe and clean city” and the service plan priority to undertake the routine and structural maintenance of highways assets.

Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard – Environment and transport

Contact officers

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Background documents

[Norfolk County Council Transport Asset Management Plan 2014/15 to 2018/19](#)

[Well-maintained Highways – Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 2005 \(updated Sept 2013\)](#)

Report

Background

1. Norwich's footways provide an important asset for the city's residents and visitors. The following figures give some idea of the numbers of people using footways:
 - a) Well in excess of 38000 pedestrians cross the inner ring road per day (the actual figure is higher than this as this count is from selected sites not every location).
 - b) Footfall at Norwich rail station is approximately 4m p.a.
 - c) 17m day visitors to Norwich each year.
 - d) There are 50000 shoppers in the city centre each day, rising to 75000 on Saturdays.

Most journeys use a footway at some point, regardless of the main mode of transport used. Women, older and younger people are more likely to spend more time using paths due to having less access to cars.

2. The county council is three quarters of the way through a four year Footway Network Survey to assess overall condition. No firm conclusions can be drawn from the current data at the moment as it is incomplete. Results should be available in spring 2015 and reported to the Norwich highways agency committee later this year.
3. The city council does not have figures for numbers of people tripping or falling. As far as can be ascertained, no highway authority collects this data. If people fall, they tend to either not report it, or if they do, make a claim (see figures below). The number of claims received can give an indication of the scale of the problem. Civica has been set up to record details such as footpath defects, rather than people falling. That way, we can respond to reports before anyone trips rather than just reacting afterwards. Out of over 3700 Civica processes, at least 330 were reports of footpath defects. Unfortunately, some people can trip over defects of only a few mm, regardless of their age or mobility; recording all these trips would not be a useful exercise as the levels we work to are greater than that.
4. It has not been possible to get data showing how many people have received treatment for injuries sustained as a result of a fall.
5. The causes of trips and falls include raised/lowered slabs, utility covers, misaligned kerbs, potholes and tree roots. These are caused by settlement of the ground or construction materials, vehicles driving over them, tree roots pushing surfaces up or age related deterioration of surfaces. There are very few reports of people slipping on such things as wet leaves or ice.
6. Injuries sustained are usually relatively minor such as cuts and bruises, occasionally sprained wrists or ankles, and very occasionally, a broken bone. Of course, any injury is distressing for the individual and their family and can have other implications.

Insurance claims

7. The main reasons identified for trips on insurance claims are uneven slabs, potholes, and covers. Although there can be underlying reasons such as tree roots pushing slabs up, these could not be identified for this report.
8. For the 12 months to the end of October 2014, 48 claims related to trips and falls, out of a total of 80 received.
9. For the period October 2012-13, 42 pedestrian related claims were received.
10. 10-15% of pedestrian related claims are from falls in the carriageway.
11. No claims have been received for slips on snow/ice or leaves.

Footpath maintenance

12. Maintenance standards and the approach to footway maintenance are set out in Norfolk County Council's Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). TAMP is based on the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management. It also sets out the inspection regime.
13. Resources are limited and have to be prioritised; it is currently not possible to provide a perfect surface over the whole network. There is perhaps a gap between expectation and what can be delivered.
14. Maintenance is split into two areas: routine and capital. Routine deals with day to day defects mainly of a safety nature, and capital maintenance involves resurfacing or reconstructing a path to restore its surface regularity and extend its life.

Routine maintenance

15. Routine maintenance work is identified through regular safety inspections and also reports from the public and members.
16. Safety inspections are carried out in line with TAMP. This governs the frequency of inspection and the response times for differing defects. Inspection frequency varies from annually for cul de sacs to monthly in the city centre.
17. A measure of the robustness of the system is the defence rate of insurance claims. Over 80 % of claims against us are successfully defended, which is similar to Norfolk County Council highways defence rate. The inspectors have recently all completed the City and Guilds qualification in highway inspection.
18. Response times vary depending on the size and nature of a defect together with its location. They are based on a risk matrix which takes into account the likelihood of a defect causing an incident, and the impact of that, should it occur. For example, a pothole/trip in the footway (including tree roots, high or low slab) with a height of 20-29mm warrants a response time up to 28 days from seeing the defect to carrying out the work). Should the height be 30mm or more, the response would be by the end of the next working day. In a particularly busy street, repairs might get ordered and carried out within 2 hours which is a higher response time than required. Defects less than 13mm are not recorded or acted upon. Defects of 13-19mm could be added to the next programme of work, or be reviewed at the next inspection.

19. Should Norwich City Council want to provide a higher level of service than that funded by the county, it can do so but would have to pay the additional cost. This is unlikely in the current economic climate as the city council has many other priorities.
20. The city council is responsible for highway maintenance under an agency agreement with Norfolk County Council who fund the work. The following table shows the level of expenditure on footway maintenance in Norwich:

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HMF overall budget	1547000	1514000	1493000	1248000
Kerbs and footways expenditure	131000	135000	143000	Forecast 92000
FW patching expenditure	251000	205500	185000	
Capital footway expenditure	559000	596000	723000	542000 forecast
Number of capital schemes	10 excluding slurry programme	11	14	11

21. Officers reallocate funds within the overall maintenance budget to suit the needs of the city, and chose to spend more on kerbs and footways. This reflects the importance and difficulty of keeping footways in good condition, the risk of not doing so, and the damage caused by vehicle overriding and tree roots. However, this is a difficult decision as it reduces the amount for other areas of expenditure such as fencing and means other work gets delayed or left. Analysis of the city's highway maintenance allocation shows that it is provide in proportion to other areas of the county.

Capital Maintenance

22. In previous years when capital budgets were larger, Norwich City Council spent considerable sums replacing slab footways with asphalt to reduce maintenance need and risk to pedestrians. Increasingly, we are working with citywide services to coordinate footway reconstruction schemes with tree replanting. In the past, inappropriate tree species have been planted such as cherry or dawn redwood. The roots of these and other trees can cause disruption to surfaces. We are looking to coordinate reconstruction and tree replacement to give a longer lasting footway. For example, next year we are planning to improve the paths in Corton Road by removing two trees on one path to allow sufficient width for people to pass, and ramping the path over roots elsewhere. We believe that will provide a better balance between providing an accessible route and an attractive street environment. A less successful example is St Phillips Road where there was considerable public opposition to the removal of trees even though they caused difficulties for some path users. Trees in these locations will often mean compromises have to be made regarding safe and comfortable passage for pedestrians and wheelchair users.

Winter maintenance

23. The duty on highway authorities under the Highways Act is "... to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that a safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice". Reasonably practicable takes into account resources including budget and labour. Currently, Norfolk County Council spends £3.5m treating about 32% (1920 miles) of the road network.
24. County policy is to treat priority 1 and 2 roads when ice is forecast, along with some key footpaths in main shopping areas. After snow, the priority is to clear these routes. Other footways will receive treatment as resources permit, having first established reasonable conditions on higher priority roads and footways. It is not possible to clear all footways of snow and ice because of the time taken and resources required. Even if resources were available, the cost would be prohibitive.
25. Some key paths in the city centre are treated with a brine sprayer but the extent is limited by resources. In the event of prolonged snow and ice, city council contractor staff who are unable to do their normal work would be put to work clearing sheltered housing areas first, and then other paths such as those leading out of the city centre, and near to shopping areas in outer areas.
26. There are 326 grit bins on the highway. These are usually placed at slopes and bends, but consideration is also given to other locations such as steps, near schools and other community facilities. Most are provided by the city council, with the county council providing those on main roads particularly at key junctions. The county council currently fill these up at the start of the winter season and refill once. They are there for the public to use to treat nearby public roads and footpaths. Some people are concerned about liability from treating or clearing snow, but they needn't be if done sensibly. Ideally, people would clear the path outside their property and that of neighbours unable to do so themselves, but that is a difficult message to get across.
27. County policy is to provide grit bins at heavily used locations where accidents may occur or there are significant delays on ungritted parts of the network. If parish or district councils wish to have additional bins then they may buy them and the county will refill in line with current policy.
28. We get many requests for more grit bins and do provide more where they make sense, there is a demonstrable need and we can afford them. It is not possible to provide them everywhere due to the cost of installation and maintenance. Although the county council currently fill bins, there is always the possibility that the service be reviewed which might leave the city council having to fill the bins itself.

Leaf clearance

Leaf sweeping is carried out as part of the regular sweeping operations. Should there be a particular problem in between these cleans, officers will investigate and order additional action if necessary. Extra staff are employed for a 6 week period in the autumn to help deal with increased leaf fall. Should a path be reported as slippery from leaves or sap, for example, it will be cleaned within 24 hours.

Obstructions relating to trips and falls

29. A boards are a concern for many people, particularly those with visual impairment. We acknowledge that A-boards are an issue in terms of obstruction and visual intrusion although those matters are not the main focus of this scrutiny committee. Whilst they might present a hazard, there is no evidence to suggest that A boards actually cause trips. However, as they do present other problems, we hope to consult on a revised strategy in the new civic year which should address the needs of both footway users and businesses.

City Council performance

30. An attempt has been made to undertake comparative analysis with other authorities. Unfortunately limited data is available so it is not possible to compare us with other cities. However, the following figures show how the city compares with the county and nationally. These should be considered against the numbers of pedestrians referred to at the beginning of the report.
31. For the 12 months to the end of October 2014, 80 claims were received, of which 48 were pedestrians tripping or falling, Of the 49 claims involving pedestrians that were finalised in the last 12 months, 40 have been successfully defended. This is a defence rate of 82% which indicates that our inspection regime is robust. A total of £52,427 was paid out.
32. For the period October 2012-13, 42 pedestrian related claims were received. Of 32 claims finalised, 26 were denied giving a defence rate of 81%. A total of £26887 was paid out.
33. The city and county councils both successfully defend around 85% of all highway insurance claims. At the time of writing, it was not possible to analyse pedestrian figures county wide. However, as the overall performance is similar, it is reasonable to assume that the rate for trips is similar too.
34. Nationally, for 2013/14, there were 42,662 claims (property and personal injury), and 77% of these were successfully defended. The amount paid out was £2.9m. This indicates that the city is performing better than the national average.

Conclusion

35. Analysis shows that there is no immediate cause for concern. However, limited capital investment in the future could lead to an overall deterioration of the asset. This will put further pressure on revenue budgets, and difficulties meeting customer expectations. The city council will continue to work with the county council to maximise the effectiveness of any expenditure, and also to maintain or increase highway maintenance funding in the city where possible.