

Scrutiny committee

Date: Thursday, 24 May 2018

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 committee 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 formal meeting. The public will not be given access to the Mancroft room before 16:30.

Committee members:

Councillors:

Carlo
Coleshill
Fullman
Fulton-McAlister (M)
Hampton
Manning
Raby
Sands (S)
Smith
Stewart
Thomas (Va)
Thomas (Vi)
Wright

For further information please contact:

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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

Agenda

Page nos

1 Appointment of vice chair

To appoint the vice chair for the ensuing civic year

2 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence

3 Public questions/petitions

To receive questions / petitions from the public

Please note that all questions must be received by the committee officer detailed on the front of the agenda by **10am on 21 May 2018**.

Petitions must be received must be received by the committee officer detailed on the front of the agenda by **10am on 23 May 2018**

For guidance on submitting public questions or petitions please see appendix 1 of the council's constitution.

4 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)

5 Minutes

7 - 10

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2018

6 Appointment of representative and substitute for the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 - 14

Purpose - To appoint a representative and a substitute to the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the ensuing civic year.

7 Appointment of representative and substitute for the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny sub panel

15 - 16

Purpose - To appoint a representative and a substitute for

the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership
Scrutiny sub panel for the ensuing civic year.

- 8 Setting of the scrutiny committee work programme for 2018-19 17 - 22**
Purpose - To set the scrutiny committee work programme
for the ensuing civic year

Date of publication: **Wednesday, 16 May 2018**

- 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

Scrutiny committee and a protocol for those attending meetings of the scrutiny committee

- 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

16:30 to 18:55

22 March 2018

Present: Councillors Wright (chair), Brociek-Coulton (vice chair) Bogelein, Bradford, Bremner, Coleshill, Grahame, Haynes, Jones (B), Manning, Peek (substitute for Malik) Ryan and Thomas (Va)

Apologies: Councillor Malik

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2018.

3. Norwich City Council debt collection policy

The director of business services introduced the report. He said that the council had a legal obligation to collect debts owed and a duty to do so in a timely manner. If a customer was unable to make payments on a debt, officers would talk to the customer to try and come to an agreeable resolution. This could be through benefits or debt management advice.

The first step would be to notify the customer of the debt either by telephone, letter or a home visit which was an initial opportunity to engage with the council, discuss the issue and implement any support needed. If the initial notification was ignored, further engagement would take place which would identify any action that may be taken against the customer if they did not contact the council and legal action may begin. The final action taken would depend on the debt but could include eviction, prison or a winding up order for a business. These were not the preferred outcomes as the council would aim to work through support at a much earlier stage.

If a debt was deemed irrecoverable, it could be written off; however, if this changed, the debt could be written back on.

In response to a member's question, the Anglia Revenues Partnership strategic manager explained the role of the enforcement agents. She said that if no payment had been made against a debt and the reminder stage had been completed, an

application was made for a liability order which allowed the use of enforcement agents and attachments to income or benefits. Once a case was sent to an enforcement agent, a further three letters, emails or calls were made over a minimum of thirty days. The enforcement agents would then visit the debtor and had the power to remove goods but this did not happen often. The enforcement agents had to be certified by the court following a comprehensive training programme. It was important to ensure that the right people were recruited for these roles. In response to a supplementary question, the director of business services confirmed that debts were not sold to other companies.

A member questioned the reason for the increase in evictions on page 15, paragraph 29 of the report. The tenancy services and income manager said that each case was looked at individually which led to fluctuation in the numbers of cases each year. Budgetary and debt advice was offered to those affected and if the customer had engaged with the council during the process, officers would try to offer housing advice through the home options team. Issues around vulnerability would be taken into account with regards to housing advice which meant that in some circumstances, the customer was placed in housing again with the council.

In response to a member's question regarding repeated parking tickets on vehicles, the director of business services said that the council had no authority to clamp or remove vehicles but the council did have a duty to remove abandoned vehicles. He agreed to find out further information around the council's powers to seize vehicles and circulate this to the committee.

Members discussed the impact of Universal Credit on the debt collection process. The tenancy services and income manager said that there were four teams in the housing income section and one of these was dealing solely with Universal Credit. The strategy manager said that the Financial Inclusion Consortium was able to deal with such issues in relation to Universal Credit. The 'Better Off Norwich' platform included an online journal to complete so that Universal Credit claimants could get used to using the online journal element of the process.

In response to a member's question, the director of business services said that the need for co-ordination between council departments when collecting debts had been identified. Currently this was a manual process but solutions to this were being investigated.

The director of communications and culture said that the council was aware that some letters sent by the council could be difficult for customers to understand and this was a priority area of work for the communications team. There would need to be a balance between letters meeting legal obligations but still being understandable. The financial inclusion manager said that with large document packs, a summary covering letter was being included so that the customer understood the different documents being sent.

A member questioned whether the council asked for information from customers regarding any vulnerabilities they may have. The director of business services said that customers would offer information, councillors would bring information to the council and these were often also picked up by staff during interactions with the customer. Diversity monitoring also took place to identify these issues.

In response to a member's question, the financial inclusion manager said that the council was working with the Department of Work and Pensions to address the problem of those claiming Universal Credit needing a bank account to do so. The next area of work around this would be the management of the account once it was set up so basic training on this was being considered in conjunction with banks.

The director of business services confirmed that council tax liabilities did not affect a person's credit rating and details of housing arrears were not passed to credit reference agencies.

RESOLVED to ask cabinet to:

- (1) Explore how to make council debt-related letters more accessible by:
 - a) developing easy read letters, potentially in conjunction with a service-user led organisation (such as Opening Doors) to offer staff training
 - b) testing the reading age of our letters
 - c) extending the use of a summary or key facts covering letter
 - d) learning from 'nudge' techniques
- (2) Appoint a member of the communications team to lead on improving our correspondence and to report progress to scrutiny committee in six months
- (3) Ensure that comprehensive information about the full range of an individual's debts to the council is available to all council staff and can be reflected in any correspondence, no matter which debt the customer has initial contact with the council regarding
- (4) Consider increasing the PCN fine and reducing the discount amount with consideration to current legislation
- (5) Develop initial screening to ensure all information about a customer is available and proactively identify any vulnerability or existing debts

4. Scrutiny committee annual review

RESOLVED to recommend the annual scrutiny review for approval at the next available meeting of full council.

CHAIR

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 6

REPORT for meeting to be held on 24 May 2018

Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Summary: This report provides a brief introduction to health scrutiny, the county council's role, the city council's role and an explanation of how the city council's representative on the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NHOSC) role is undertaken. The scrutiny committee is also requested to select a representative and substitute to sit on the Norfolk County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2018/2019

Conclusions: Since the Health and Social Care Act 2012 came into effect in 2013, health scrutiny powers lie with the county council rather than directly with the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. County and district councils have different service responsibilities, but both have a significant impact on health and wellbeing. By adoption of a way of working provided by the suggested protocol, the city council and its representative on NHOSC will be able to continue to work in partnership towards positive outcomes on behalf of residents.

Recommendation:

- (1) Agree to continue with the protocol agreed last year
- (2) Select a member of the scrutiny committee to be the representative to sit on NHOSC
- (3) Select a member of the scrutiny committee to be the substitute representative on NHOSC

Contact Officer: Joanna Rowan
Scrutiny Liaison Officer
jorowan@norwich.gov.uk
01603 212153

What follows is the text from the protocol and reporting agreements agreed by last year's Scrutiny Committee. It is recommended that this approach is continued and the dates noted of the planned meetings for 2017 / 18. A suggested report back timetable is outlined in the main work programme document.

1 Introduction to health overview and scrutiny

1.1 Since the Health and Social Care Act 2012 Norfolk County Council has delegated its powers to Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NHOSC). The county council has a statutory duty to run a county-wide Health and Well Being Board, to which the city council send a representative from the cabinet. It has eight county councillors and seven co-opted district council members. The scrutiny committee at Norwich appoints a member representative (plus a substitute).

1.2 The Norfolk County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee acts as a central point to consider and review the overall links between different parts of the broad health and well-being services and activities across Norfolk. All commissioners and providers of health services, not just NHS organisations, are included in the overview / remit of health scrutiny. It also reduces the risk of organisations needing to duplicate reports or responses across a number of councils. It [defines](#) its own role as:

"The Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee is a statutory Committee which considers all matters relating to the needs, health and health related-services of the population of Norfolk. It scrutinises services that have an impact on the health of Norfolk's citizens and challenges the outcomes of interventions designed to support the health of Norfolk people."

1.3 County and district councils have different service responsibilities, but both have a significant impact on health and wellbeing. For example the county has social care, education and public health roles and districts have planning and housing roles.

1.4 Overall the challenges for health scrutiny can fall between taking a strategic approach and a more local focus. With this comes an importance of understanding of how the county and district councils can complement each other and add value when scrutinizing local health and wellbeing matters.

1.5 Norwich City Council has a scrutiny member representative who sits on the NHOSC plus one substitute member.

2. A protocol for a good working practice between the City Council Scrutiny Committee and the Norfolk County Health Overview Committee

2.1 All NHOSC members have the opportunity to suggest items and the chair and the full committee decides whether or not to put them onto

the forward work programme. NHOSC has the ability to delegate health scrutiny powers to district councils for review of specific local subjects

- 2.2 Following each meeting members are given a brief note of the outcomes and actions from the meeting to enable them to report back to their councils. At the 26 February 2015 meeting of the city council scrutiny committee it was agreed that regular updates from the NHOSC representatives should be reported back to the scrutiny committee.
- 2.3 It is therefore suggested that scrutiny committee agree a protocol for the representative of the council to work to:
- **The representative should make it clear if they are not representing an agreed view of the council or scrutiny committee**
 - **A topic for scrutiny can be placed onto the NHOSC work programme either at a meeting of NHOSC as a member of NHOSC or on behalf of the Norwich scrutiny committee or the council if they have been asked to do so.**
 - **The council's representative on NHOSC may submit relevant reports and recommendations of the scrutiny committee for consideration by NHOSC either if agreed by the chair of the scrutiny committee or by the committee itself or as a result of a request made by the NHOSC chair.**
 - **The council's representative on NHOSC cannot agree on behalf of the Norwich scrutiny committee to carry out a piece of health scrutiny work. It is for the scrutiny committee to decide if it would like to include the matter on its work programme following a report back.**
 - **If the Norwich scrutiny committee wishes to take on an item of the NHOSC work programme, it would need to request this via the representative, through the chair of the NHOSC to seek the appropriate agreement of the county council to delegate health scrutiny powers for that item.**
 - **The council's representative on NHOSC must report back to the scrutiny committee on a regular basis and should liaise with the scrutiny officer on an ongoing basis. Reporting back will be scheduled onto the work programme. The summary of the NHOSC meeting provided by the county council will be attached to the agenda and the representative will give a verbal update and answer questions from the committee.**

The following dates have been agreed for 2018 / 19:

- 24 May 2018
- 12 July 2018
- 6 September 2018
- 18 October 2018
- 6 December 2018
- 17 January 2019
- 28 February
- 11 April 2019

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 7

REPORT for meeting to be held on 24 May 2018

Appointment of representative and substitute for the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny sub panel

- Summary:** To appoint a representative and substitute for the community safety scrutiny panel.
- Conclusions:** To appoint a representative and substitute for the community safety scrutiny panel.
- Recommendation:** To appoint a representative and substitute and that they report back at the earliest next scrutiny committee, subject to meetings being organised.
- Contact Officer:** Joanna Rowan
Scrutiny liaison officer
jorowan@norwich.gov.uk
01603 212153

1. Norwich City Council has a scrutiny member representative who sits on the Norfolk countywide community safety partnership scrutiny sub panel plus one substitute member. The role of the Norfolk countywide community safety partnership scrutiny sub panel is to:
 - Scrutinise the actions, decisions and priorities of the Norfolk Countywide community Safety Crime and Disorder Partnership in respect of crime and disorder on behalf of the county council communities committee
 - Scrutinise the priorities as set out in the annual countywide community safety partnership plan
 - Make any reports or recommendations to the countywide community safety partnership and the county council communities committee.
2. While the scrutiny sub panel has the duty of scrutinising the work of the CCSP, the police and crime panel scrutinises the work of the police and crime commissioner. There is a protocol regarding the relationship of these two panels to encourage and exchange information and to cooperate towards the delivery of their respective responsibilities. The community safety partnership meets once or twice a year at County Hall.

Norwich City Council
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Item No 8

REPORT for meeting to be held on Thursday 24 May 2018

Setting of the scrutiny committee work programme for 2018/19

Summary:

The purpose of the report is to assist committee members in setting the work programme for 2018/19. A series of potential items have been listed in this report, which have been raised by the committee throughout the last year.

Conclusions:

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

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

Recommendation:

To consider the options and agree a realistic and deliverable scrutiny committee work programme for 2018/19. The programme is a standing item at each committee meeting and can be adjusted as necessary

Contact Officers:

Joanna Rowan – Scrutiny liaison officer
Telephone (01603) 212153
Email jorowan@norwich.gov.uk

1. Developing a work programme for the scrutiny committee

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

2. Recurring items

- 2.1 There are certain areas of work identified for the scrutiny committee that are of a recurring nature. Presently, these are pre-scrutiny of the council's draft policy framework (corporate plan) and budget and the performance monitoring reports, as well as a yearly update on the environmental strategy. The scrutiny committee has also requested that it receives the draft equality information report on an annual basis. This latter item is usually in draft for the December meeting.
- 2.2 Update from the representative sitting on the Norfolk County Health and Overview Committee. The proposed dates after this meeting for NHOSC along with suggested scrutiny report dates are:
 - 24 May 2018 (28 June 2018)
 - 12 July 2018 (19 July 2018)
 - 6 September 2018 (20 September 2018)
 - 18 October 2018 (22 November 2018)
 - 6 December 2018 (13 December 2018)
 - 17 January 2019 (31 January 2019)
 - 28 February (21 March 2019)
 - 11 April 2019 (TBC)
- 2.3 Scrutiny committee may wish to keep some space free to be able to move items on and off the work programme as required

3. Scope for scheduling items to the work programme

- 3.1 Although sometimes not possible to achieve, it was previously agreed that the committee should agree as few as possible substantive topics per meeting. The main reason for this is to ensure that there is enough time for the committee to effectively consider the issues and has a fair chance of reaching sound, evidence based outcomes. Ideally, one main item per meeting would be the aim.
- 3.2 Although setting the future work of the committee for up to 21 March 2019, members will have the opportunity on a monthly basis to revise the programme if and when required or due to changing events. This is done via the work programme standing item on the scrutiny committee agendas.
- 3.3 Along with this report, the accompanying annual standing items taken to the scrutiny committee (appendix A) and items suggested by members for consideration for the work programme (appendix B), the committee will be able to select future items that assist with the delivery of the council's priorities.
- 3.4 It is proposed that any discussion is as a whole committee using the TOPIC criteria. This will assist members in achieving the goal of an agreed work programme that is met by consensus

Standing Scrutiny Committee Items

| Committee | Day of meeting | Time | 2018 | | | | | | | | 2019 | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| Scrutiny | Thu | 16:30 | 24 | 28 | 19 | - | 20 | 11 | 22 | 13 | 31 | 14 | 21 | - | - |

May – Work programme setting

June –

July –

August – no meeting

September –

October –

November –

December – Corporate plan and performance framework, Equality information report

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

February –

March –

Items for consideration for scrutiny committee work programme 2018-19

1. The impact of Operation Gravity/organised crime in Norwich since 2016.
2. Responses to domestic violence in Norwich.
3. Good quality jobs in Norwich – the digital and emerging economy.
4. The impact of Universal Credit on vulnerable groups of people.
5. The impact of Airbnb type properties.
6. Assessment of the viability of our joint ventures and outsourced services, with particular regard to LGSS and commissioners being drafted in to Northamptonshire County Council.
7. Scrutinise the role of the council and police when dealing with communities blighted by anti-social behaviour.
8. Scrutinise and feed into the parks and playgrounds review, its scope and approach.
9. Viability assessments and delivery of affordable housing.
10. Presentation of the report of the CLG scrutiny inquiry to the committee for consideration.

