

Report to Cabinet
14 October 2020
Report of Chair of scrutiny
Subject Scrutiny committee recommendations

Item

7

Purpose

To consider the recommendations from the scrutiny committee meeting held virtually on 17 September 2020.

Recommendation

To ask cabinet to consider the recommendations made at the meeting of scrutiny.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet all the corporate priorities.

Financial implications

None

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Kendrick - Resources

Contact officers

Adam Clark, strategy manager

Emma Webster, scrutiny liaison officer

Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. The council's scrutiny committee is constituted of councillors who do not sit on cabinet. They are expected to review/scrutinise and oversee decisions made by cabinet. They can 'call in', for reconsideration, decisions made by cabinet or an officer which have not yet been implemented. The main functions of scrutiny are to hold cabinet to account by examining their proposals; evaluating policies, performance and progress; ensuring consultations, where necessary, have been carried out; and highlighting areas for improvement.
2. The committee makes recommendations for cabinet, the wider council and other stakeholders based on evidence on the issues scrutinised at their meetings.
3. The two main items discussed at this meeting were the work of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the report back from the scrutiny select committee on short term lets.
4. Mr Chris Starkie, Managing Director and Lisa Roberts, Head of Strategy for the LEP attended overview and scrutiny. This was an opportunity for members to question the LEP on issues which concerned them and table questions on behalf of their constituents. Topics were wide ranging and broadly fitted into five lines of enquiry;
 - Business themes
 - Covid recovery and social equality themes
 - The environment themes
 - Accountability theme
 - Voluntary sector engagement theme

During the discussion it was apparent that not all of the questions tabled in advance would be considered during the meeting due to time constraints. It was agreed that the LEP would submit answers in writing to those questions which remained outstanding and it was resolved that scrutiny committee would consider the information received from the LEP at the meeting and the further written responses at their next meeting on 19 November, with a view to then making recommendations to cabinet.

5. The scrutiny select committee for short term lets is made up of Clls Carlo, Giles, McCartney-Gray and Oliver. The select committee presented their report which shows that research indicated there is an increase in the number of whole properties let on a short term basis in Norwich. This in turn had led to a number of issues including impact on neighbours, impact on housing supply, compliance with health and safety and the impact on council finances. A letter from a member of the public received in response to the report noted the absence of council policy on short term lets. Scrutiny agreed to ask the Chair to write to both Norwich MPs with a copy of the report to seek their views on the subject, and agreed that the select committee would sign off a response to the points made from the member of the public.

It was **RESOLVED** to ask cabinet to consider the following recommendations made by the select committee in its report on short term lets:

- (1) nominating a lead Portfolio Holder with responsibility for short lets.
- (2) promoting a way for citizens to report on-line complaints about short lets without fear of repercussions; (ASB, sub-standard, whole properties operating short stays). Relevant officers to liaise where necessary with relevant local agencies (Police, Fire Service)
- (3) contacting Airbnb UK and request copy of their proposals for a registration system and to comment.
- (4) conducting a sample of whole property short stay lettings and the extent to which they comply with planning and health/safety standards.
- (5) examining a sample of short let properties in receipt of business rates relief to determine whether they require planning permission for change of use and if not, should they be paying Council tax?
- (6) whether a policy on short stay lets is needed as part of the review of the City of Norwich Development Management Plan Policies and any policy changes to feed into the Greater Norwich Local Plan.
- (7) Asking the chair of scrutiny to write to Clive Lewis MP and ask him to join the Short Let Sector All-Party Parliamentary Group and work with Parliamentary colleagues on the need for a registration system, enforcement of health and safety standards (to include need for locks on bedrooms and bathrooms) and report back on progress to Scrutiny Committee.
- (8) writing to the Government and outline the growing problems around short stay accommodation in Norwich and request: a compulsory registration and licensing scheme fully funded by Whitehall; a specific planning use class; and basic, enforceable health and safety obligations to install smoke detectors, carbon monoxide monitors, and locks on individual bedrooms where properties are split into multiple lettings, and/or the owner continues to live.

(9) considering responding to the HM Treasury Business Rates Review with regard to short term lettings and business rates relief and short stay visitor costs falling on permanent residents and businesses; (deadlines of 18 September and 31 October).

(10) Scrutiny Committee will consider whether it wishes to consider the impact of short-lets accommodation in relation to the gig economy on local hospitality businesses such as independent hotels, guest houses, restaurants, cafes and taxi firms; and

(11) Scrutiny Committee to keep short term lettings under review.

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	14 October 2020
Director / Head of service	Director of resources
Report subject:	Scrutiny Committee Recommendations
Date assessed:	28 September 2020
Description:	A summary of scrutiny committee discussions and recommendations from 17 September 2020

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment

Positive

Negative

Neutral

Issues

