

# Public Document Pack



Democratic Services  
The Corby Cube,  
George Street,  
Corby,  
Northants,  
NN17 1QG

**Meeting:** Council  
**Date:** Thursday 29th September, 2022  
**Time:** 2.00 pm  
**Venue:** Council Chamber, The Cube, George St, Corby NN17 9SB

## Council Membership:

Councillors Larry Henson (Chair), Barbara Jenney (Vice-Chair), Jean Addison, Tim Allebone, Valerie Anslow, Ross Armour, Paul Bell, Charlie Best, Matt Binley, Jennie Bone, David Brackenbury, Wendy Brackenbury, Cedwien Brown, Scott Brown, Leanne Buckingham, Lyn Buckingham, Lloyd Bunday, Jon-Paul Carr, Robin Carter, William Colquhoun, John Currall, Alison Dalziel, Mark Dearing, Dez Dell, Scott Edwards, Jonathan Ekins, Emily Fedorowycz, Martin Griffiths, Jim Hakewill, Clive Hallam, Ken Harrington, Helen Harrison, Kirk Harrison, Helen Howell, David Howes, Philip Irwin, Bert Jackson, Ian Jelley, David Jenney, Matt Keane, King Lawal, Graham Lawman, Lora Lawman, Anne Lee, Richard Levell, Paul Marks, Dorothy Maxwell, Peter McEwan, John McGhee, Zoe McGhee, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Macaulay Nichol, Steven North, Jan O'Hara, Dr Anup Pandey, Tom Partridge-Underwood, Mark Pengelly, Harriet Pentland, Roger Powell, Elliot Prentice, Simon Rielly, Russell Roberts, Mark Rowley, Geoff Shacklock, David Sims, Jason Smithers, Chris Smith-Haynes, Joseph Smyth, Mike Tebbutt, Kevin Thurland, Sarah Tubbs, Michael Tye, Malcolm Ward, Malcolm Waters, Kevin Watt, Andrew Weatherill and Lee Wilkes

Members of the Council are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed on the agenda.

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Contact: [democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk)

Item	Subject	Page no.
01.	<b>Apologies</b>  To receive any apologies for absence.	
02.	<b>Minutes of the Council meeting held on 28th July 2022</b>  The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2022 to be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	7 - 12
03.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  Members to declare any interest as appropriate in respect of items to be considered at the meeting.	

<b>04.</b>	<b>Chair's Announcements</b>  To receive any announcements from the Chair.	
<b>05.</b>	<b>Leader's Announcements</b>  To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council.	
<b>06.</b>	<b>Public Participation</b>  (i) Public Statements  (ii) Public Questions	
<b>07.</b>	<b>Councillor Questions</b>  To receive questions from members.	
<b>08.</b>	<b>Executive Presentations</b>  To receive any presentations from the Executive.	
<b>Items requiring decisions</b>		
<b>09.</b>	<b>Councillor Learning and Development Policy</b>  For Council to approve the Councillor Learning and Development policy recommended by the Member Training Working Group.	13 - 30
<b>010.</b>	<b>Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22</b>  For Council to receive the Annual Report on scrutiny activity in 2021/22.	31 - 44
<b>011.</b>	<b>Motions on Notice</b>  To consider motions received in accordance with Meeting Procedure Rule 17 as follows:-  <b><u>Motion 1</u></b>  To be proposed by Cllr Lyn Buckingham and seconded by Cllr Leanne Buckingham:-  The cost-of-living crisis will have an impact on the Council's most vulnerable tenants, especially if the winter turns out to be long and hard, and no one knows if it will be mild or harsh winter. Whilst the government works out what it needs to do, we as a landlord also need to look at and prepare for how we ensure our tenants remain safe and well.  Our housing stock is getting older and whilst we as a Council do have a boiler replacement scheme, it is still possible we could have	

many boiler failures over the coming winter, with tenants facing long waits for either boiler parts or replacement.

This motion asks –

“North Northamptonshire Council to review the energy efficiency of any temporary heating given to families to help in those conditions where tenants have a boiler failure and face a long wait for repairs or replacement, as the current temporary heating (usually fan heaters) could cost up to 84p per hour to run per heater, over a month this could add £100s per month compared to average heating costs; the motion also asks if heating in these circumstances could be subsidised by the Council in properties where there are children under 5, the elderly and the disabled, who are disproportionately affected by the need and ability to keep warm.”

### **Motion 2**

To be proposed by Cllr Emily Fedorowycz and seconded by Cllr Sarah Tubbs:-

“This Council moves to lobby central government for retrospective price caps (October 2021 levels) to protect the British public and British businesses against rising energy prices.”

012.	<b>Urgent Items</b>	
013.	<b>Close of Meeting</b>	

Adele Wylie, Monitoring Officer  
North Northamptonshire Council



**Proper Officer**  
**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022**

## Public Participation

The Council has approved procedures for you to present petitions or request to address meetings of the Council

ITEM	NARRATIVE	DEADLINE												
Members of the Public Questions	Questions may be submitted by members of the Public who live or work in the North Northamptonshire council area to meetings of the Council. The question must be in writing and submitted 2 clear working days prior to the meeting. There are no supplementary questions permitted, and no debate on questions or answers. A period of 15 minutes (Chair's Discretion) is allocated for Public Questions.	5:00 pm Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2022												
Members of the Public Agenda Statements	Members of the Public who live or work in the North Northamptonshire council area may make statements at meetings of the Council in relation to reports on the agenda. A request to address the Council must be received 2 clear working days prior to the meeting. The member of the Public has a maximum of 3 minutes to address the committee. A period of 15 minutes (Chair's Discretion) is allocated for Public Statements.	5:00 pm Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2022												
Other Members Questions	Written questions of up to 50 words maximum permitted. To be received at least 2 clear working days prior to the meeting. Chair's discretion on supplementary question. A period of 30 minutes (Chair's Discretion) is allocated for Other Members Questions.	5:00 pm Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2022												
Members of the Public Petitions	<p>Anyone who lives, works or studies in North Northamptonshire may submit a petition to the Council. Depending on the size of your petition it will be responded to as follows:-</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Signatory Threshold</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Petition which triggers a debate</td> <td>1,500 +</td> <td>Any petition with 1,500 or more signatures will trigger a debate at a Full Council meeting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Petition which calls an officer to account</td> <td>750 – 1,499</td> <td>Any petition with 750 – 1,499 signatures will summon a senior officer of the Council to give evidence at a public Council meeting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standard Petition</td> <td>5 – 749</td> <td>Any petition with 5 – 749 signatures will be referred to a senior officer of the Council to provide a response</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Signatory Threshold	Description	Petition which triggers a debate	1,500 +	Any petition with 1,500 or more signatures will trigger a debate at a Full Council meeting	Petition which calls an officer to account	750 – 1,499	Any petition with 750 – 1,499 signatures will summon a senior officer of the Council to give evidence at a public Council meeting	Standard Petition	5 – 749	Any petition with 5 – 749 signatures will be referred to a senior officer of the Council to provide a response	
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These procedures are included within the Council's Constitution. Please contact [democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk) for more information.

## **Members' Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded of their duty to ensure they abide by the approved Member Code of Conduct whilst undertaking their role as a Councillor. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, you must declare the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** other Registerable Interests, you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but must not take part in any vote on the matter unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** your own financial interest (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or **relates to** a financial interest of a relative, friend or close associate, you must disclose the interest and not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

Members are reminded that they should continue to adhere to the Council's approved rules and protocols during the conduct of meetings. These are contained in the Council's approved Constitution.

If Members have any queries as to whether a Declaration of Interest should be made please contact the Monitoring Officer at – [monitoringofficer@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:monitoringofficer@northnorthants.gov.uk)

## **Press & Media Enquiries**

Any press or media enquiries should be directed through Council's Communications Team to [communications@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:communications@northnorthants.gov.uk)

## **Public Enquiries**

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## Full Council

North Northamptonshire Council

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022

At 2:00 pm in the Council Chamber, The Cube, George Street, Corby.

### Present: -

### Members:

Councillors Larry Henson (Chair), Jean Addison, Ross Armour, Paul Bell, Charlie Best, Matt Binley, Jennie Bone, David Brackenbury, Wendy Brackenbury, Cedwien Brown, Scott Brown, Leanne Buckingham, Lyn Buckingham, Lloyd Bunday, Jon-Paul Carr, William Colquhoun, John Currall, Alison Dalziel, Mark Dearing, Dez Dell, Scott Edwards, Emily Fedorowycz, Jim Hakewill, Clive Hallam, Ken Harrington, Helen Harrison, Helen Howell, Philip Irwin, Bert Jackson, Barbara Jenney, David Jenney, Matt Keane, Graham Lawman, Lora Lawman, Anne Lee, Richard Levell, Paul Marks, Peter McEwan, Zoe McGhee, Macaulay Nichol, Anup Pandey, Mark Pengelly, Simon Rielly, Russell Roberts, Mark Rowley, Geoff Shacklock, Jason Smithers, Joseph Smyth, Mike Tebbutt, Kevin Thurland, Michael Tye, Malcolm Ward, Andrew Weatherill, Lee Wilkes.

### Officers in Attendance:

Rob Bridge (Chief Executive), Adele Wylie (Director of Governance and Human Resources/Monitoring Officer), Paul Goult (Interim Democratic Services Manager) and Ben Smith (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager).

*(Prior to commencing the formal business of the meeting, the Chair invited attendees to observe a minute's silence in memory of former councillor Mick Scrimshaw who had recently passed away. Speeches of condolence were made by Councillors Smithers, Addison, Hakewill, Lee, Roberts & Pengelly who had served with Mick Scrimshaw on Kettering BC, or NCC or the Shadow Authority. A written submission of condolence was also read out received from Councillor J McGhee).*

## 137. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tim Allebone, Valerie Anslow, Robin Carter, Jonathan Ekins, Kirk Harrison, David Howes, Ian Jelley, Dorothy Maxwell, John McGhee, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Steven North, Jan O'Hara, Tom Partridge-Underwood, Harriet Pentland, Elliot Prentice, David Sims, Chris Smith-Haynes, Sarah Tubbs, Kevin Watt.

## 138. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 had been circulated. It was noted that Councillor Edwards and Councillor Bells apologies had been submitted but were not recorded; these would be recorded.

Councillor Larry Henson MOVED the minutes (as amended) of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 be agreed. Councillor Lora Lawman SECONDED the motion.

### RESOLVED that: -

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 be agreed.

### **139. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Andrew Weatherill declared an interest with regard to Agenda Item 11 – the report on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), as he had a personal interest.

### **140. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair drew Council's attention to two recent visits to North Northamptonshire by members of the Royal Family. HRH The Duke of Gloucester had recently visited Oundle, whilst HRH The Princess Royal had attended the official opening of Chester House.

### **141. Leader's Announcements**

There were no Leader's Announcements on this occasion.

### **142. Public Participation**

There were no public statements or public questions on this occasion.

#### Petition

The Council had received a petition from the Corby Hackney Owners Association (CHOA) relating to proposals currently under consideration by the Council in relation to Hackney Carriage fares. The proposal under consideration was due to be determined later in the year by the Executive.

The petition had been submitted under the Council's Petition Scheme and contained in excess of 1,500 signatories therefore meeting the criteria to trigger a debate at Full Council.

The Chair invited Mr Rielly on behalf of the CHOA to address Council. Mr Rielly was proposing that there should be separate zone increases for the next 12 months which would allow for "*proper*" consultation and save their customers from a "*huge*" increase. Mr Rielly stated that CHOA were looking for a moderate increase but felt that the harmonisation option at a higher rate would have a negative impact on their business and on their customers.

Several members expressed sympathy with the sentiments in the petition and suggested that the Executive consider the points made by the CHOA and other Hackney Carriage owners prior to making a final decision.

Councillor David Brackenbury thanked Mr Rielly for his address to Council and confirmed that all consultation responses would be taken into account. Council noted that the views of the Licensing and Appeals Committee would be considered following its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022. The Executive would consider all responses received in reaching a final determination on this matter.

It was agreed to note the petition and refer to the Executive for consideration.

### **143. Councillor Questions**

There were a total of 12 written questions submitted. The questions and responses were circulated to all members prior to the commencement of the meeting. Supplementary questions were presented and responded to during this agenda item.

### **144. Executive Presentations**

There were no Executive Presentations on this occasion.

### **145. North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement**

The report was recommending adoption by the Council of the North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).



An updated SCI had been prepared for North Northamptonshire setting out how the Council would consult with local communities on planning issues and support the preparation of neighbourhood plans.

Public consultation on the draft SCI had been undertaken for a period of six weeks during December 2021 and January 2022. All representations received had been fully considered in the final SCI, which was included at Appendix A to the report.

The final SCI, along with the schedule of representations received during public consultation on the draft SCI and amendments to the document following public consultation had been considered and endorsed by Members of the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022, and also by the Executive on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The Executive had recommended the final SCI be adopted by Full Council.

The recommendation was **MOVED** by Councillor David Brackenbury and **SECONDED** by Councillor David Jenney.

*(Councillor Bone left the meeting at this point).*

Members noted the Council was required to have an up-to-date SCI in place setting out how the Council would consult on development plans and planning applications.

**RESOLVED that: -**

- (i) The Council adopt the North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement as set out at Appendix A.

*(Councillor Rielly and Councillor Leanne Buckingham joined the meeting at this point).*

#### **146. Health & Wellbeing Terms of Reference**

The report before full Council was seeking approval to amend the existing terms of reference for the Council's Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB). The amendments were being proposed due to implications arising from the recent Health and Care Act 2022 and to ensure that the HWB was compliant in its membership and operation.

The proposed amended terms had been considered by the Democracy and Standards Committee meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022; the Committee were recommending that full Council approve the suggested revised terms.

The recommendations were **MOVED** by Councillor Jon-Paul Carr and **SECONDED** by Councillor Helen Harrison.

**RESOLVED that: -**

- (i) The revised Terms of Reference for the Health and Wellbeing Board as detailed in Appendix A be approved.

*(Councillor Weatherill left the meeting at this point).*

#### **147. Response to Council Motion of 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 on Houses in Multiple Occupation**

The report before Council provided a response to Members in relation to the amended motion at Full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022. The report outlined progress and plans for gathering evidence to test and develop options on how to ensure the highest standards of licensing and strong governance for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The report did not consider the implementation of options, which would be subject to a separate process.

The report indicated that significant progress had been made in the previous 12 months to collect evidence on HMOs following resolution at the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 to investigate the possible use of Article 4 Directions.

The evidence gathering had been coordinated by a cross cutting officer working group, comprising subject matter experts from various service areas that interacted with HMOs in their separate functions, including representatives from Environmental Health, Private Sector Housing, Planning Enforcement, Council Tax, Development Management, Public Health, Housing Strategy and Planning Policy, under the governance of the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel that had scrutinised progress of the investigation by way of regular reports.

The first report on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 outlined the range of evidence collected to support the investigation, including GIS data analysis to understand the quantity and spatial distribution of HMOs, intelligence on the effects of HMOs concentrations, and the identification of six 'hotspot' wards containing the highest numbers and concentration that would be subject to further local analysis. The report highlighted key information gaps and limitations, emphasising the importance of reliable and robust evidence to justify any additional planning or regulatory requirements, and noted the investigation was considering a wider range of measures than only Article 4 Directions to ensure the highest standards of licensing and robust governance of HMOs.

The second report on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022 explained actions taken to improve the quality of the evidence and outlined the process for undertaking a consultation survey to supplement the information already gathered.

The online consultation survey was launched on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022 for a period of eight weeks via the Council's Consultation Hub. This included questions to tenants, landlords, and those living or working near HMOs. The consultation included an interactive mapping feature where respondents could identify properties they suspected were being used as HMOs, although they were required to submit evidence to support these submissions.

Work continued with a parallel project exploring opportunities for transformation of system and services to improve data sharing and establish a central database that could be accessed and updated by multiple people across the relevant departments within the Council to improve monitoring of HMOs, and which would assist in effectively measuring the outcomes and recommendations of the investigation.

A timeline of key dates was included in the report before full Council. It was noted that the plans and projected timescales for this project would need to remain flexible to take account of the evidence gathered at each stage of the project.

- Online consultation ends – 9 September 2022
- A summary of the consultation survey results would be reported to Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel on 24 October 2022
- HMO Officer Working Group to review consultation responses and key issues raised by these and develop options – October/November 2022
- Report to Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel to identify and advise on issues, options, and any potential implications for planning and regulatory functions – 21 November 2022

The project would run in its current form, with governance by the Planning Policy Executive Advisory Panel, until the Council's Executive agrees a final paper. There would then be a period of implementation that would come after that. It was expected any delivery of the recommendations would not result in an immediate change in the regulatory framework, in particular Article 4 Directions and Discretionary Licensing, that had lengthy periods of mandatory consultation and engagement as part of the process.

The recommendation was **MOVED** by Councillor David Brackenbury and **SECONDED** by Councillor Matt Binley.

Members welcomed the report and the progress made to date. The use of Article 4 Directions was noted as a potential option available, however Councillor David Brackenbury stressed there were other options and Directions may not be suitable in every circumstance. There was a legitimate role for HMOs in meeting housing demand, and the Council needed to ensure that a comprehensive system of licensing and regulation was in place.

**RESOLVED that: -**

- (i) The Council endorsed the report setting out progress and plans for gathering evidence to test and develop options on how to ensure the highest standards of licensing and strong governance for HMOs, including indicative timescales.

*(Councillor Weatherill re-joined the meeting at this point. Councillor Pengelly left the meeting at this point).*

**148. Virement – Salary Increments 2022/23**

The report before full Council was requesting approval for a virement which was in excess of £0.5m. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, virements in excess of £0.5m must be approved by full Council.

A report was presented to the Employment Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 which set out that the Council had a range of terms and conditions relating to pay for its employees as a result of local government reorganisation. Staff transferring to North Northamptonshire Council on 1st April 2021 transferred on the terms and conditions they were subject to at their predecessor authorities.

Whilst those employees who transferred on nationally agreed pay and terms and conditions, and those who have been appointed to NNC since 1 April 2021 would contractually receive an annual salary increment (subject to being in post for 6 months prior to 1st April 2022 and not being at the top of the corresponding grading structure), those on local terms and conditions or 'other' TUPE terms would not automatically receive a salary increment.

To support the Council's ambition to become an employer of choice and ensure fairness across the organisation, the Employment Committee agreed that all eligible employees receive a salary increment.

The report requested that full Council approve the virement from the Council's corporate contingency budget in order to fund the additional payment to staff.

The recommendation was **MOVED** by Councillor Jenney and **SECONDED** by Councillor Bunday.

**RESOLVED that: -**

- (i) The use of £1.150m of the contingency budget be approved to fund a salary increment for all eligible employees in 2022/23. This would include staff not at the top of their grade where their protected TUPE terms and conditions of employment had no contractual entitlement to incremental progression as agreed by the Employment Committee at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and as reported to the Executive meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

*(Councillor Dearing left the meeting at this point).*

## 149. Motions on Notice

The Chair informed Full Council that a motion had been received; this was printed on the agenda paper.

### Motion – Member Conduct

*“The North Northamptonshire Council wishes to re-assert the importance of the ‘Nolan Principles’ of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership for all in public life. These principles serve as the foundations of our Councillor Code of Conduct and underpin how Councillors must behave when carrying out their duties.*

*The honour of becoming an elected representative comes with the responsibility of maintaining and building the confidence in which the democratic political process is held, both for central and local governments. These principles guide not only how decisions and functions are carried out by elected members but also how they treat officers, the public and their colleagues.*

*In light of the attention these principles are receiving locally and nationally, this council therefore notes:*

- The seven Nolan Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership) underpin the conduct and behaviour expected of our elected representatives nationally and locally.*
- The obligation as a Council and as individual Councillors to adhere to these principles at all times.*

*This Council resolves:*

- To defend and protect these principles as a matter of duty, so as to maintain and build the confidence of residents in their democratic institutions.*
- That members should confront and report actions or omissions by other members of this council that appear to be contrary to the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, which includes and reflects the Nolan Principles.”*

The motion was MOVED by Councillor Alison Dalziel and SECONDED by Councillor Matt Keane. In moving the motion Councillor Dalziel stressed the importance of ensuring that there was mutual respect shown at all times and emphasised the importance in complying with the Nolan Principles at all times.

Several members across the Chamber spoke in support of the motion, many pointing out that members in signing their respective Acceptance of Office forms agreed to abide by the approved Code of Conduct.

**RESOLVED that: -**

- (i) The motion be supported.

## 150. Urgent Items

There were no Urgent Items on this occasion.

## 151. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 4:01 pm.

# Agenda Item 9



## FULL COUNCIL 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Councillor Learning and Development Policy</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	Adele Wylie (Director of Human Resources & Governance/Monitoring Officer)

<b>Are there public sector equality duty implications?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### List of Appendices

#### Appendix A - Draft Councillor Learning and Development Policy

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1 To consider and approve the draft Councillor Learning and Development Policy.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. North Northamptonshire Council signed up to the East Midlands Region Councillor Development Charter on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021.
- 2.2. As part of the Charter process, the Council is required to approve and maintain a written and up-to-date councillor learning and development strategy, of which the Councillor Learning and Development Policy forms part.

#### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1. It is recommended that Full Council:
- a) Approve the Draft Councillor Learning and Development Policy attached as **Appendix A** to this report.
- 3.2. Reasons for Recommendations
- (i) Award of the Councillor Development Charter is dependent upon the Council being able to demonstrate that it has a strategic approach to

councillor development. The Councillor Learning and Development Policy is pivotal to this requirement.

- (ii) The Councillor Learning and Development Policy sets out the framework to enable North Northamptonshire Councillors to be equipped with the support they need in their roles. The framework it contains is flexible to local needs whilst remaining resilient in times of national and global challenge and sets out an effective and positive approach to ensuring all councillors are supported and developed.

#### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1. On 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Full Council committed to developing the necessary strategy, processes and environment to support effective councillor learning and development, with the aim of eventually achieving accreditation of the East Midlands region Councillor Development Charter. At the same time, the Council constituted a cross-party councillor development working group to achieve this aim (the “Member Development Working Group”).
- 4.2. The East Midlands Regional Charter for Councillor Development aims to promote best practice in councillor development. The Charter has an accreditation process which is set against standards. These standards have been developed in conjunction with the Local Government Association and other regions.
- 4.3. There are three essential criteria to achieving the Charter. These are:
  - 1. There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support.
  - 2. The Council has a strategic approach to councillor development.
  - 3. Learning and development is effective in building councillors' skills and knowledge.
- 4.4. Within each of these criteria there are elements and requirements to demonstrate that the criteria are being met. These do not dictate what should be in the Council’s strategy or the nature of the content or the delivery mechanisms that should be used. The emphasis is on ensuring that all councillors are appropriately developed and supported so that they can be effective in their roles. Achieving the Councillor Development Charter is a chance for the Council’s work to be recognised.
- 4.5. The draft Councillor Learning and Development Policy has been drafted over the course of the last year, along with some other essential documentation to enable work to begin on collation of the evidence required for award of the Charter.
- 4.6. The Member Development Working Group met on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022 to consider the draft policy prior to submission to full Council for approval. It endorsed the document submitted as **Appendix A** with a recommendation that the Policy be approved by Council.
- 4.7. The Council is required to regularly review and refresh its Councillor Learning and Development Policy once it has been approved by Council, and it is

proposed that this process is overseen in future by the Democracy and Standards Committee every three years.

## **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Charter, the Councillor Learning and Development Policy is required to be approved by Full Council.

## **6. Next Steps**

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- 6.1 The Member Development Working Group is meeting again on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and thereafter will meet quarterly. Once the Group develops its action plan, based both on the Councillor Learning and Development Policy and the evidence requirements for the Councillor Development Charter, progress will be regularly reported in a planned Councillor Bulletin

## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **7.1. Resources and Financial**

There are currently no identified financial implications that cannot be contained within existing budgets.

### **7.2. Legal and Governance**

None

### **7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans**

The Councillor Learning and Development Policy has been developed in harmony with the Council's aims and objectives as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

### **7.4. Risk**

If the Council does not have a formally adopted Councillor Learning and Development Policy there is a significant risk that it would not be awarded the East Midlands Region Councillor Development Charter.

### **7.5. Consultation**

The Member Development Working Group has been consulted on the contents of the draft Policy as set out above.

#### **7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel**

Not applicable. Matters relating to councillors' training and development currently fall within the remit of the Member Development Working Group and Full Council.

#### **7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny**

None.

#### **7.8. Equality Implications**

All learning opportunities are accessible across all political parties and conform to the Council's Equalities Policy and practice.

#### **7.9. Climate Impact**

There are no identified climate or environmental implications.

#### **7.10. Community Impact**

The Councillor Learning and Development Policy will help ensure that councillors not only offer more effective leadership to their communities, but work at the highest strategic level to draw down external funding to improve facilities and services in their local area

#### **7.11 Crime and Disorder Impact**

None specific to this report.

### **8. Background Papers**

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8.1. None





## **COUNCILLOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The role as a political, civic and community leader requires responsive and resilient leadership. Serving as a councillor is a responsibility, a privilege and a hugely rewarding undertaking which is vital in shaping places where people want to live, work and play. Democracy and decision-making are strengthened when councillors are empowered to speak to, and for, communities and support the effective business of local government. If Councillors are to continue to meet these expectations in an ever-changing world, they need to make sure they have the skills and expertise to carry out their duties.
- 1.2. The Councillor Learning and Development Policy sets out the framework to enable North Northamptonshire Councillors to be equipped with the support they need in their roles. This framework is flexible to local needs whilst remaining resilient in times of national and global challenge and sets out an effective and positive approach to ensuring all councillors are supported and developed.
- 1.3. In March 2018 Max Caller was commissioned to conduct a Best Value inspection of Northamptonshire County Council. The report concluded that Northamptonshire required *“a way forward with a clean sheet, leaving all the history behind, is required.”* The report recommended: *“It is the inspection team’s clear view and recommendation that in the particular circumstances that the county finds itself in, the two unitary (West and North) model is the preferred way forward.”*
- 1.4. From early 2020 local government has faced serious challenges in multiple areas, with issues around climate change becoming even more acute than they were previously. Residents and businesses are naturally looking to their local government leaders to help them navigate these large-scale and complex problems to enable everyone to think ahead to a better, if different, future beyond the early years of the decade. Additional responsibilities have therefore been placed on locally elected representatives and communities. Continuing and emerging global and national pressures have meant that authorities have become involved in new areas, such as maximising the use of assets, developing new partnerships within and beyond local government and getting more involved in strategic service delivery. This has put training and development of councillors at the heart of the Council.

- 1.5. Councillors need a whole range of skills to embrace the increasing complexity of their individual roles as members of a unitary authority, both in their representative capacity as a ward councillor and their constitutional roles, for example as an Executive member, a member of a Committee or of an Executive Advisory Panel. In recent years, skills in areas such as working with communities, engaging with partners and lobbying have been developed to ensure that elected members not only offer more effective leadership to their communities, but work at the highest strategic level to draw down external funding to improve facilities and services in their local area.
- 1.6. Every Councillor has the right to access learning activities that will provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to effectively perform their duties.
- 1.7. The Councillor Learning and Development Policy brings together all the areas that need to be considered for the delivery of a continuously effective learning and development programme for councillors. It is designed to:
  - Set out a means of meeting the training needs of individual councillors and the organisation as a whole.
  - Help councillors to gain the skills and knowledge they require to fulfil their role as a councillor
  - Raise awareness amongst councillors of their responsibilities.
- 1.8. The success of the Policy is based on a range of inter-related areas:
  - Councillor commitment to learning, setting high standards and making open, transparent, sound decisions that will stand up to scrutiny
  - The Council's corporate priorities in relation to sustainable communities, customer service, the environment and community and rural issues
  - The Council's commitment to partnership working and fulfilling its commitments as set out in the Corporate Plan and emerging strategic local plans
  - Councillor learning and development needs, identified through the Learning Needs Analysis, individual consultations, Councillor Reviews, evaluation and impact assessments
  - Committee learning and development as identified through ongoing committee consultation
  - Sound induction and pre-induction principles and practices for new and prospective councillors
  - Encourage and develop citizenship in training, further learning and educational opportunities for all
  - Support for community initiatives in wards and areas and the skills to act as an advocate for individuals or groups as appropriate
  - An outward-looking Council which has a long-term commitment to working with partners to deliver easily accessible public services

- A council that connects with regional and national issues and seeks to influence government policy and secure the best possible outcomes for its residents
- A commitment to continuous improvement

## **2. Principles and Context**

### **Local**

- 2.1. Customers demand high levels of service from their local authority and increasingly expect public organisations to work in partnership to deliver services to them. The Council will continue to invest in technology and continuously identify what customers want. It will bring partners together in the delivery of services and develop extended partnerships, both in front-line service delivery and in back-office activities.
- 2.2. The process of identifying training and development needs for councillors and committees will need to have clear links to corporate objectives and local priorities as expressed in the Corporate Plan, strategic business plans, legal requirements and reports from inspections and/or audits. The process will also aim to take into account any specific needs identified through the annual Learning and Development Needs Analysis questionnaire and the Councillor Review Scheme. Should the need arise to provide councillors with information on issues of local significance, or to enhance the representational element of their role, such sessions will be given priority in the training and development programme.
- 2.3. The Training and Development Programme will be drawn up annually to meet the identified needs. The programme will be continually reviewed throughout the year to ensure it meets local and national priorities in a timely manner.

### **National**

- 2.4. National and international events can have an impact locally and present a challenging agenda for local authorities, resulting in stretched resources and potentially different ways of working, particularly in relation to the following areas: -
  - Climate change and the green agenda
  - Supply chain shortages and related issues
  - Police and crime initiatives
  - Education, Children and Adult Social Care
  - Levelling up

- Continuing growth and investment in North Northamptonshire and the wider region
- 2.5. The Council must maximise the resources available to it to deliver quality services in response to all of the above challenges, maintain front-line services and ensure added value for the residents of North Northamptonshire.
- 2.6 The local and national context means we are in a period of change for Local Government. Change can only be delivered by and through decision makers having the necessary skills, motivation and team behaviours required to meet these challenges.

### **Equality of Opportunity**

- 2.7 All learning opportunities are accessible across all political parties and to all councillors and conform to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and practice.

## **3. Strategic Development Issues**

- 3.1 The following Strategic Development issues are important to equip the Council for the challenges ahead.
- i. Developing political leadership capability to enable the Council's priorities to be achieved.
  - ii. Creating shared values and behaviours throughout the organisation.
  - iii. Building adaptability and capacity to respond to the national changing environment and exploit the benefits of technology and working in partnership with others.
  - iv. Giving priority to addressing basic skills needs
  - v. Delivering training and development in innovative ways to make the best use of the resources available to the Council.
  - vi. Enabling councillors to direct and support community initiatives and act as advocates when appropriate.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Council's Commitment**

4.1 The Council is committed to regularly identifying and supporting the learning and skill development requirements of its councillors to ensure political capacity building and effective management of the authority.

4.2 This commitment is underpinned by:

- Seeking accreditation of the East Midlands Councillor Development Charter following the collation of sufficient evidence
- Maintaining and supporting a cross-party Councillor Development Working Group
- Councillors engaging in appropriate learning and development activity to ensure their continued effectiveness as community leaders; regulators and monitors; scrutineers; partnership workers; policy developers; strategic decision makers and members of consultation and partnership forums.
- An annual budget allocation for councillor development and adequate resources to meet the training and development needs of councillors to enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities collectively or individually
- Promoting an organisation-wide understanding and recognition that councillors have individual learning and development needs
- All Councillors to participate in event evaluation analysis to inform future planning
- The Council to provide adequate officer support to the Member Development Working Group to enable it to meet its objectives

## **5. The Member Development Working Group**

The cross-party Member Development Working Group will: -

- Facilitate an annual Councillor Review programme and Learning Needs analysis to be undertaken by all councillors
- Introduce and formulate a councillor training and development programme that reflects the vision of North Northamptonshire Council and the objectives it is trying to achieve.
- Ensure individual councillors have an individual learning and development record detailing learning activities both internally and

externally, and that personal learning and development records are maintained and reviewed yearly by the Member Development Group

- Identify organisational learning and development needs, where appropriate.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and value for money of all learning activity by continuously monitoring outcomes and the effective management of the councillor training budget.
- Explore and identify new methods of learning such as interactive sessions, distance learning and e-learning
- Identify critical information needs and the most effective ways of councillors communicating that information
- Act as a co-ordinating body linking all political group learning and development needs
- Promote citizenship and local democracy in North Northamptonshire
- Produce an annual programme of training and development opportunities
- Develop and maintain an Action Plan for Councillor Development
- Ensure all seminars, briefings, advice and other formal learning opportunities are designed and delivered in relation to the Council's Corporate Priorities and other relevant strategic policies.
- Promote mentoring support for all new councillors and those who require mentoring when changing role.
- Ensure that pre-induction materials are made available for prospective councillors in the community and an induction programme is offered to every newly elected councillor.
- Implement a structured induction programme for all new councillors and ensure all new councillors attend core and mandatory training and those sitting on relevant committees, e.g. Planning and Licensing, attend the mandatory training before they take up their role.
- Identify opportunities for sharing learning activities with officers, partners, the voluntary sector and citizens of North Northamptonshire where appropriate.
- Act as a consultancy service for all councillors on training and development issues.

## **6. The Democracy and Standards Committee**

6.1 The Democracy and Standards Committee will oversee the work of the Member Development Working Group in the following respects: -

- Carry out a review of the Councillor Learning and Development Policy every three years
- Ensure that the councillor training and development programme reflects the strategic objectives for North Northamptonshire Council
- Ensure that a culture of lifelong learning is developed for all councillors at North Northamptonshire Council
- Ensure there is genuine commitment across the council to support the training and development of all councillors

## **7. Individual Learning and Development**

7.1 The Councillor Review is a yearly analysis of individual councillors' learning and development needs. It takes place as part of a guided learning and development interview with group leaders or members of the Member Development Group. Any of the following may be used to help with the analysis, but this list is not exhaustive:

- The Council's Corporate Priorities
- Councillor Role Descriptions
- New or pending legislation
- Organisational policies and practices
- Learning Styles Questionnaires
- Local, Regional and National developments
- Observations of individual current skills and behaviours
- Health and well being
- Career aspirations

7.2 The outcome of the analysis of Councillor Reviews culminates in the production of the councillor training and development programme, which is refreshed on a rolling basis, with sessions added as necessary and appropriate.

### **Councillors conducting reviews are responsible for:**

- Assisting councillors to identify training and development needs that reflect organisational and personal objectives
- Ensuring a Personal Development Plan is produced on an annual basis for each councillor through the Councillor Review process.

- Developing/contributing to councillor and committee training and development plans that reflect equality of opportunity and prioritised needs
- Identifying and encouraging career development opportunities
- Committee Learning and Development

## **8. Executive**

8.1 The emphasis is on the political executive being able to: -

- Work closely with senior officers to develop, agree and implement Council strategies
- Support scrutiny and respond positively to feedback, challenge and ideas from non-executive councillors
- Work as an Executive team and share responsibility for success and failure
- Achieve their own Portfolio Action Plan for which they are accountable to the Leader of the Council
- Work with Executive officers to collect and analyse complex information to inform budget priorities and performance plans
- Act as Council representatives at a strategic level and represent the organisation in partnership at local, regional and national levels
- Work across political and council boundaries to further communication and encourage co-operation
- Develop others and share best practice
- Represent the interests of North Northamptonshire externally, including lobbying government, and national and regional agencies and organisations, working constructively with councillors from West Northamptonshire Council, Town Councils in North Northamptonshire and the wider regions we are part of, to secure the best outcomes for our residents.

## **9. Scrutiny**

9.1 There will be occasions when Scrutiny Commission members will have sparse knowledge of a particular subject that they wish to scrutinise. At



times like these, structured learning events will need to be arranged in order for a successful scrutiny review to be achieved.

- 9.2 Scrutiny Commission learning and development needs are included in the councillor training and development programme.
- 9.3 Scrutiny Commission Members will be offered targeted training as and when required to ensure the following range of skills: -
  - To call witnesses (including Executive Members) when appropriate
  - To investigate a range of subjects as identified in the Work Programme
  - To instigate Council debates
  - To request a response from the Executive
  - To participate in topic-related Task and Finish Groups and Executive Advisory panels
- 9.4 The Council will appoint a dedicated Scrutiny Officer to ensure the Council is able to deliver high quality scrutiny.

## **10. Regulatory**

- 10.1 In order for Councillors to comply with legislation and carry out their duties effectively within the regulatory committees, the realisation of their learning needs is seen as vital. Training is mandatory for councillors sitting on regulatory committees, and they will also be required to attend any briefings and refresher training sessions which may be arranged to reflect changes in legislation or policy.
- 10.2 Councillors may not participate in regulatory committee proceedings unless the relevant training has been undertaken prior to taking up the role.
- 10.3 Councillors need to be able to evaluate arguments according to the evidence that is presented and make independent and impartial judgements. Legal processes have to be followed and councillors are placed in a position where they need to balance public needs with local policy.

## **11. Evaluation Strategy**

- 11.1 Achieving the organisation's strategic objectives is a positive reflection of effective councillor learning and development. The councillors' role in the evaluation of learning and development solutions is critical to the continuous improvement of learning events and associated materials. The organisation invests a great deal in learning and development activities and it needs to know that it is spending its money wisely.

11.2 Following learning events, it is important to discuss/gather information of the councillors' experience of the learning that has taken place, to inform future planning and in some instances reinforce the learning that has taken place. Reflection and evaluation of learning are critical elements of the learning and development process. Councillors are expected to complete evaluation forms at the end of all learning events that take place in the Council. Where events are organised by other organisations, councillors are expected to discuss the value of the events on their return and make any learning materials available to others. Evaluation will also monitor councillor access to and take-up of training opportunities.

11.3 The most common model of evaluating learning and development identifies four levels: -

1. Reaction Identifies the participant's views and feelings about what they have experienced as this can influence what and how they take the learning forward
2. Immediate Looks at what the participants have actually learned and what they can transfer to their work/life
3. Intermediate Examines the effect of the learning on their job/role performance
4. Ultimate Traces the effect of the learning on the organisation

11.4 A summary of event evaluation will be submitted to the Member Development Group annually.

### **Impact Assessments**

11.5 An impact assessment is an important process to identify the anticipated or actual impacts of a development intervention on those social, economic and environmental factors which the intervention is designed to affect or may inadvertently affect. An Impact Assessment on selected training or information events will be carried out two months after the session to assess the intended, unintended, positive and negative impacts. This will inform any future action required. The Member Development Group will identify training or information events to be the subject of an impact assessment.

11.6 The Impact Assessment will be carried out by a senior officer, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder, and will comprise the following steps: -

1. Completion of an Impact Assessment form
2. Consultation with affected stakeholders
3. Summary of preferred option with an implementation plan

11.7 The Impact Assessment will provide information on the following: -

- The rationale for the Impact Assessment
- The relevant Corporate Objective(s)
- Description of options for further action under consideration (including 'do nothing')
- Monetised and non-monetised costs and benefits of each option, including administrative burden
- Evidence to justify further action
- Risks and assumptions
- Wider impacts on the community, the environment or the local economy
- Summary and preferred option, together with an implementation plan

## **12. Operational Procedures**

12.1 It is recognised that councillors as individuals have their own preferred learning styles and therefore respond differently to different learning methods that are employed during learning events.

12.2 Time is an important factor when considering how to enable learning and development to take place effectively and with maximum access for all.

12.3 Joint learning with officers, partners or voluntary sector representatives is always considered and promoted where appropriate.

12.4 The Council actively welcomes the attendance of its partners at full Council meetings, or at committees as appropriate. In this way councillors are kept up to date with emerging plans and the delivery of local public services. Examples of such items could be responses to the demands of the growth area agenda; regeneration; budgets and initiatives in relation to climate change. This will ensure that councillors remain continuously updated on issues of local significance.

12.5 The following range of learning and development opportunities may be used: -

- Briefings/explanations of policies (some of which may take place at full Council or at Committee meetings)
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Action learning
- Role plays

- Study or site visits
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Conferences
- E-learning websites and DVDs
- Interactive sessions
- Discussion forums
- Expert Advisers
- Case Studies
- Networking and shadowing
- Involvement in national working parties and the giving of feedback to others
- Open learning programmes
- Regional Councillor Briefing Programmes and Events

### **13. The Structure of Training**

13.1 The councillor training and development provision for North Northamptonshire Council will include core, mandatory and optional training. The annual programme will include refresher training on Development Control, Licensing and other mandatory training. Other topic areas covered may include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction for New Councillors</li> <li>• Good governance and standards including councillor/officer relations</li> <li>• Overview and Scrutiny</li> <li>• Local Government Finance</li> <li>• Employment Committee and joint liaison Training</li> <li>• Development Control</li> <li>• Licensing</li> <li>• Working with Communities</li> <li>• Case Working</li> <li>• New Initiatives (internally or externally driven)</li> <li>• Sustainability and climate change</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> <li>• Health and Safety/Personal Safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress Awareness</li> <li>• Speed Reading</li> <li>• Chairing a Meeting</li> <li>• Managing Public Meetings</li> <li>• Confident Speaking</li> <li>• Time Management</li> <li>• Media Management</li> <li>• Political Leadership/Leading Groups</li> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• IT Skills</li> <li>• Assertiveness</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Management of Change</li> <li>• Managing a Portfolio</li> </ul>
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## **14. Travel and Subsistence Claims whilst Training**

Full details are available from Democratic Services. Councillors should seek prior approval to ensure compliance with audit requirements.

## **15. Attendance**

Councillor attendance at in-house training events will be recorded. Printouts will be made available should they be required at the Councillor Review meetings and will be submitted annually to the Member Development Group.

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## FULL COUNCIL 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Annual Scrutiny Report 2021/22</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	Adele Wylie (Director of Human Resources & Governance/Monitoring Officer)

<b>Are there public sector equality duty implications?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### List of Appendices

#### Appendix A – Annual Scrutiny Report 2021/22

#### 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 To provide an overview of the work completed by the Scrutiny Committee during the Municipal Year 2021/22.

#### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1. The Scrutiny Commission and Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee have undertaken work in 2021/22 and have highlighted this within an Annual Report which is contained at **Appendix A**.

#### 3. Recommendations

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- 3.1 It is recommended that Council notes the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 as attached at **Appendix A** to this report

3.2 Reason for Recommendations

- (i) To ensure that all Members are informed of the work of the Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year. It is considered good practice for the Scrutiny Committee to provide an annual report.

#### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 The Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 was considered by the Scrutiny Commission and Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee at its meeting earlier in the year.
- 4.2 The Scrutiny Committees recommended that the report is submitted to Council for noting.
- 4.3 It is noted that all annual reports from Committees will be considered in March each year by Council to ensure that they tie in with the new municipal year.

#### **4. Issues and Choices**

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- 4.1 This report increases the profile of the work carried out by Scrutiny and ensures that all members are provided with information in relation to the work of Scrutiny as well as providing an opportunity for all members to feedback on the Scrutiny function of the Council.

#### **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 As outlined in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 as attached at **Appendix A**.

#### **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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##### **6.1 Resources and Financial**

- 6.1.1 There are currently no identified financial implications that cannot be contained within existing budgets.

##### **6.2 Legal and Governance**

- 6.2.1 Scrutiny is a statutory requirement

##### **6.3 Relevant Policies and Plans**

- 6.3.1 Not applicable

##### **6.4 Risk**

- 6.4.1 There are no direct risks in not producing a Scrutiny Annual Plan, but ineffective scrutiny can result in poor governance of the organisation and North Northamptonshire being impacted negatively.



## **6.5 Consultation**

6.5.1 Both Scrutiny Committees were consulted and were able to contribute to the Annual Plan.

## **6.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel**

6.6.1 Not applicable.

## **6.7 Consideration by Scrutiny**

6.7.1 This is a Scrutiny report and has therefore been considered by Scrutiny members.

## **6.8 Equality Implications**

6.8.1 None

## **6.9 Climate Impact**

6.9.1 As contained in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 as attached at Appendix A.

## **6.10 Community Impact**

6.10.1 As contained in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 as attached at Appendix A.

## **6.11 Crime and Disorder Impact**

6.11.1 As contained in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 as attached at Appendix A.

## **7 Background Papers**

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7.1 None

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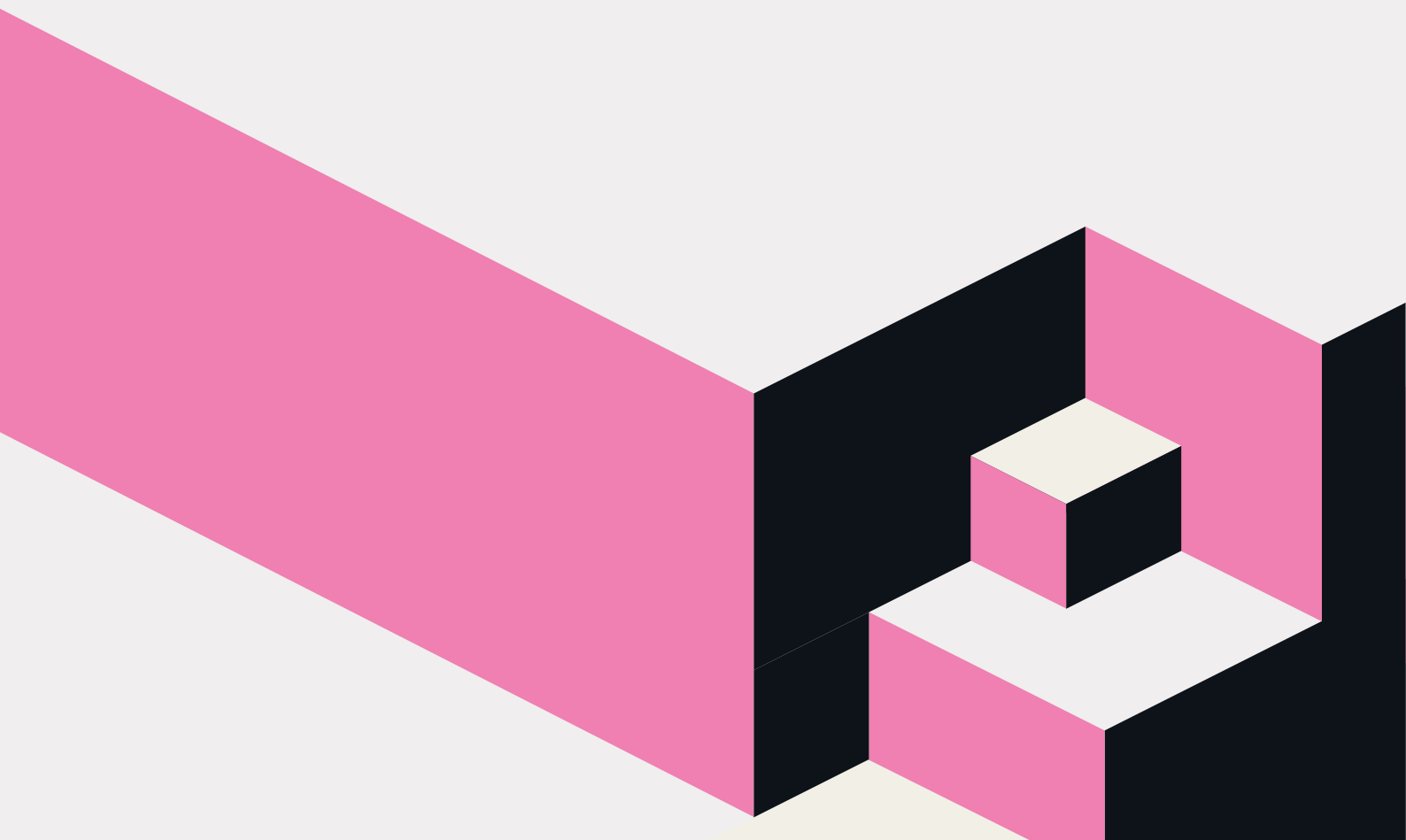


North  
Northamptonshire  
Council

Appendix

# SCRUTINY

Annual Report 2021/22



## INTRODUCTION



**Cllr Wendy Brackenbury**  
Chair, Scrutiny  
Commission  
Page 36



**Cllr Mark Pengelly**  
Chair, Finance & Resources  
Scrutiny Committee

We are pleased to present the first Scrutiny Annual Report for North Northamptonshire Council.

North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) came in to being on 1st April 2021 following local government reorganisation. Since the local elections in May 2021, we have implemented a new system of governance. The importance of strong scrutiny which would have a real impact on the Council and its residents was at the heart of the governance model.

The Scrutiny function acts as a critical friend on behalf of the community, to improve services and decision-making inside and outside of the Executive. The Scrutiny function belongs to the whole Council but is different from other committees in that it is councillor-led and evidence-based, with most of Scrutiny's Work Plan being decided by committee members, responding to concerns of elected members and the public.

Scrutiny calls for councillors with investigative minds who are prepared to challenge, when they have 'done some homework' and are able to justify the challenge in accordance with the Constitution. We have been honoured to serve as Chairs since May 2021 and would like to thank all members of the committees for their hard work and dedication.

This year has been particularly challenging as we transform as a new Council, and we continue to embed services as a new authority.

As Chairs of the Scrutiny Commission and Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee we have worked well together and would like to thank our Vice Chairs, Members and Officers who have been instrumental in helping with the Scrutiny function. We look forward to a busy year in which scrutiny continues to play its vital role as part of the success of North Northamptonshire Council.

## MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEES

### Scrutiny Commission



Councillor Wendy Brackenbury (Chair)



Councillor Kevin Watt (Vice Chair)



Councillor Matt Binley



Councillor Robin Carter



Councillor John Currall



Councillor Mark Dearing



Councillor Jim Hakewill



Councillor Philip Irwin



Councillor John McGhee



Councillor Gill Mercer (from January 2022)



Councillor Elliot Prentice (until January 2022)



Councillor Simon Rielly



Councillor Geoff Shacklock



Councillor Lee Wilkes

### Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee



Councillor Mark Pengelly (Chair)



Councillor Richard Levell (Vice Chair)



Councillor Valerie Anslow



Councillor David Brackenbury (until September 2021)



Councillor Scott Brown



Councillor Jim Hakewill



Councillor Ken Harrington



Councillor Larry Henson



Councillor Ian Jelley



Councillor David Jenney (until November 2021)



Councillor King Lawal



Councillor Steven North (from September 2021)



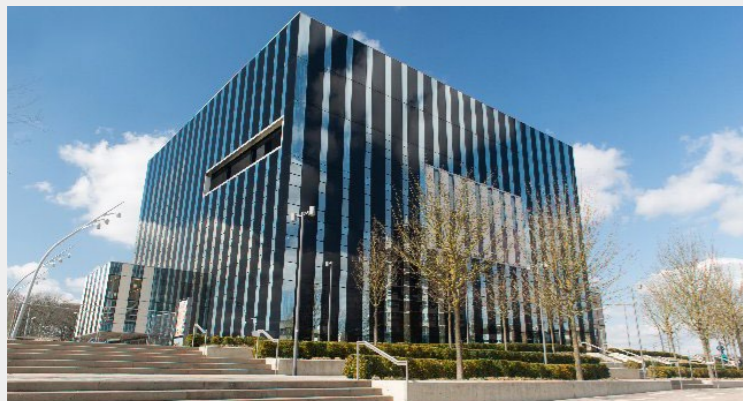
Councillor Malcolm Ward

# SCRUTINY IN NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Prior to transition, NNC approved a governance model and Constitution which was legally a Leader and Executive model but is referred to as "hybrid arrangements".

Scrutiny is a key part of the democratic process of NNC and enables those members who are not part of the Executive to engage with and influence the decision-making of the Council.

The model of scrutiny adopted by the Council is of two committees:



An overarching **Scrutiny Commission** who can establish task and finish groups to complete work on the agreed work plan. This means that not only does the Commission take on its own substantive work, it also provides co-ordination of several task and finish groups for matters that have been identified as important within the organisation.

This model of fewer committees and more task and finish groups, focussing on specific pieces of work, is intended to reflect a modern and flexible approach to Scrutiny which shows clear outcomes and impact.

The Executive created Executive Advisory Panels, which support and encourage cross party involvement to develop policy and provide advice and recommendations to the Executive to support their decision making. The Panels do not take away from the legitimacy of Scrutiny or the important role that it plays. They do not prevent Scrutiny from looking at issues that are important to residents and that it can make an impact on. Instead, they support the inclusive decision-making culture that the Council wants to achieve, and scrutiny will continue to review matters that require the different skills of Scrutiny and should quite rightly be considered by it.



**A Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee** to specifically scrutinise and monitor the finances of the Council.

## Scrutiny Commission Terms of Reference

- To review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any function (other than those outlined in the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee terms of reference).
- To ensure that Scrutiny directly responds to corporate and public priorities, is used to drive service improvement, provides a focus for policy development and engages members of the public, key stakeholders and partner agencies. They should do this by ensuring that they review key documents at each meeting and regularly reviewing their workplan, following which they should set up Task and Finish Groups on behalf of the Commission.
- To make reports or recommendations to Council or the Executive as appropriate with respect to the discharge of any function (other than those outlined in the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee terms of reference).
- May recommend that an executive decision that is either a Key Decision or a decision which has been entered onto the Forward Plan made but not yet implemented, be reconsidered by the Executive through the Call In Procedure.
- To fulfil all the functions of the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee under the Police and Justice Act 2006.
- To fulfil all the functions conferred on it by virtue of regulations under the National Health Service Act 2006 (local authority scrutiny of health matters).
- Provide responses to Councillors Call for Action.

## Finance and Resources Committee Terms of Reference

- To review and scrutinise regular monitoring reports on:
  - a. The Revenue Budget; and
  - b. The Capital Programme
  - c. The Housing Revenue Account
- To develop a budget review process and ensure that budget proposals are subject to rigorous challenge.
- To consider organisational performance for corporate support services (ICT, legal, financial and HR services)
- To consider reports on issues identified and on which further information has been requested.
- To make reports or recommendations to Council or the Executive as appropriate.
- May recommend that a Key Decision or a decision which has been entered onto the Forward Plan made but not yet implemented, be reconsidered by the Executive through the Call In Procedure.

In May 2019, the Government published Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local Authorities which is and continues to be considered in administering scrutiny.

# SCRUTINY WORK PLAN



The Scrutiny Work Plan is owned by the Scrutiny Commission. The Scrutiny Commission Chair and Vice Chair are responsible for setting the Annual Work Plan for Scrutiny and in doing so it shall consult with other parts of the Council as appropriate, including the Executive.

The Scrutiny Work Plan is owned by the Scrutiny Commission. The Scrutiny Commission Chair and Vice Chair are responsible for setting the Annual Work Plan for Scrutiny and in doing so it shall consult with other parts of the Council as appropriate, including the Executive.

The Work Plan is a living document and is reviewed at each meeting of the Scrutiny Commission. It is informed by any concerns raised by members, public and/or stakeholders, the Council's Risk Register, the Forward Plan and published decisions.

In adding items for review to the Work Plan, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Commission shall consider;

- Which Corporate Priority the item links to?
- If the item is of significant community concern?

- If the issue is significant to Partners and/or Stakeholders?
- What the added value is of doing the work? (It must have an impact)
- What evidence there is to support the work?
- If the Scrutiny work can be completed within a proportionate time to the task identified?
- If the work is being done somewhere else?
- What will be achieved?
- If the Council has the resources to carry out the work effectively?

The Scrutiny Commission responds as soon as possible to requests from the Council and the Executive to review particular areas of Council activities. Indeed, this has been the case with a request from Council on Levelling Up and the Executive on Maintained Nurseries Funding.

## Scrutiny Conference

To develop the Work Plan, members of both scrutiny committees agreed that a North Northamptonshire Scrutiny Conference be organised to facilitate the drafting of the Work Plan. The Conference was facilitated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and members welcomed the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive who showed their support for an effective and impactful Scrutiny function.

Prior to the Conference, a survey was opened to understand the important issues that North Northamptonshire wanted Scrutiny to include in its Work Plan. It was sent to various contacts including stakeholders, partners and staff and was also regularly pushed out on the website and social media. The survey was also sent by the Scrutiny Chairs to all NNC members to ensure that there was engagement with a wide range of elected members, including the Executive.

The results of the survey were presented at the Conference to assist members in identifying key topics to include in the Work Plan. Most responses received were from those people working or living in North Northamptonshire. It was also noted that around 50% of respondents were either "not aware" or did not provide a substantive response to if they were

aware of what the Scrutiny function was. The Scrutiny Chairs are keen therefore that greater promotion of Scrutiny is undertaken, particularly considering that Scrutiny should be a public facing function.

Members were asked in advance of this workshop to provide ideas for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Plan 2021/22 to the Scrutiny Chairs.

Members identified the key issues that they considered were important to include on the Work Plan and a simple scoring methodology was used to prioritise the topics into a long list of topics. Following the conclusion of the Conference, this list of topics was sent to all Scrutiny members to identify specific outcomes. As many of the topics identified were generic and wide ranging, it was important to narrow them down and understand what outcomes members wanted to get from scrutinising them.

Any topics added to the Work Plan will be expected to have outcomes which add value to the services delivered by the Council and its partners and/or improve the quality of lives of North Northamptonshire residents. Topics were categorised into being one off items or reviews depending on what Scrutiny wanted to achieve from their input.

The Work Plan was formally approved by the Scrutiny Commission at their meeting on 23 November 2021.

# SCRUTINY COMMISSION

## SUMMARY OF ITEMS

### CONSIDERED IN 2021/22

The Scrutiny Commission held six meetings and established three task and finish groups during the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

The task and finish groups involved an additional nine meetings. The reviews were in relation to Outside Bodies, Levelling Up Communities and Assets Rationalisation and Use.

Topic	Date	Brief Details	Outcome
Performance Indicators 2021/22	All meetings	Consideration of the Council's performance across a wide range of services.	Identified areas of future work for the Scrutiny work plan.
Executive Forward Plan	All meetings	Consideration of the Executive's Forward Plan.	Identified areas of future work for the Scrutiny work plan.
Scrutiny Work Planning	22 June 2021 24 August 2021	Introduction to work planning to assist development of work plan.	Development of work plan. Establishment of Outside Bodies Scrutiny Panel.
Levelling Up Communities Scrutiny Review	24 August 2021 23 November 2021, 25 January 2022 and 17 May 2022	Setting up a Scrutiny Review Group following motion from Council. Update on the work of the Scrutiny Review Group.	Establishment of Scrutiny Review Group.
Review of the Planning Service	23 November 2021	Update on the work that has been done and continued to be undertaken to review the planning service within North Northamptonshire.	Identified areas of future work for the Scrutiny work plan.
Scrutiny Work Plan	23 November 2021	Considered draft work plan for Scrutiny.	Agreed the Scrutiny work plan for 2021-2023.
Assets Rationalisation and Use	25 January 2022	Consideration of initial scoping document for a possible scrutiny review.	Establishment of Scrutiny Panel.
Draft Transformation Plan 2022-2025	29 March 2022	Development of the draft Transformation Plan.	Comments made and considered by the Executive.
Major Highways Capital Works	29 March 2022	Introduction into how major highways capital works were prioritised.	Identified need to invite the new contractor to a future meeting.

Topic	Date	Brief Details	Outcome
Corporate Plan Indicators 2022/23	29 March 2022	To review and provide feedback on the proposed Capital Plan Performance Indicator set for 2022/23.	Comments made and considered by the Executive.
Scrutiny Annual Report	29 March 2022	To consider the draft Scrutiny Annual Report.	Annual Report agreed to be forwarded to Council.
Northamptonshire Children's Trust – Performance and Inspection Readiness	17 May 2022	To scrutinise the Children's Trust's Annual Self Evaluation.	Comments and challenge made.
Integrated Care Systems	17 May 2022	To consider the progress in establishing an Integrated Care System across Northamptonshire.	Comments made on progress.

# SCRUTINY COMMISSION

## SCRUTINY REVIEWS

### Outside Bodies Scrutiny Panel

The purpose of this review was to ensure that appointments to Outside Bodies on behalf of the Council are regularly reviewed and add value to the organisation and to ensure that proper governance is adopted in relation to appointments.

#### Membership:

- Councillor Jim Hakewill
- Councillor Ian Jelley
- Councillor David Jenney
- Councillor Simon Rielly
- Councillor Geoff Shacklock

The Panel met once and considered whether the Council should make appointments to the organisations on the Outside Bodies list. The Outside Bodies were also categorised into Key Strategic Partnerships and Community Partnerships. Those identified as Key Strategic Partnerships are appointed by the Leader of the Council and Community Partnerships appointed by Council.

A review of Outside Bodies will be undertaken each year by a Scrutiny Panel. Those Members appointed to Outside Bodies will also be asked to complete an annual review submission to assist the Scrutiny Panel in their review.



### Levelling Up Communities Scrutiny Review

The following motion was agreed at Council in July 2021:

“North Northamptonshire Council notes that Kingswood in Corby, Avondale Grange in Kettering, and Queensway in Wellingborough are among the neighbourhoods identified across the country by an All-Party Parliamentary Group as ‘left behind’. This motion calls for the Scrutiny Commission to review the underlying data and associated report relating to areas highlighted as “left behind”. Working with our communities and partners to propose an approach on the way forward, including learning from the Big Local Programme in Kingswood, in order to develop a plan on how we can level up - as per the government’s levelling up agenda - those left behind neighbourhoods here in North Northamptonshire in an appropriate and agreed timeframe. This may involve specifically targeting health inequalities, youth unemployment and new skills, and improving housing in these areas.”

In response, the Scrutiny Commission established a Scrutiny Review Group, from which there was at least one member from each of the wards which covered the neighbourhoods mentioned in the motion.

The agreed outcomes of the Review are to:

1. Tackle issues of direct relevance to local people;
2. Engage with a wide range of people, drawing

them together and building consensus around developing levelling up plans;

3. Consider how approaches could challenge the accepted ways of doing things and act as a champion for developing a culture of improvement in multiple areas;
4. Deliver a positive impact on the geographical areas identified as “left behind” and on associated population indicators and performance; and
5. Arrive at clear conclusions to deliver tangible outcome improvements through clear recommendations to develop a Levelling Up plan.

#### Membership:

- Councillor Zoe McGhee (Lead Member)
- Councillor Valerie Anslow
- Councillor Robin Carter
- Councillor King Lawal
- Councillor Anne Lee
- Councillor Paul Marks
- Councillor Kevin Watt

The Scrutiny Review Group has met on six occasions and has also held walks and community meetings in each of the three neighbourhoods.

The Scrutiny Review Group is due to report back to the Scrutiny Commission early in 2022/23.

### Asset Rationalisation and Use

As part of the Scrutiny Work Plan, in January 2022 the Scrutiny Commission established a Scrutiny Panel to consider the Council’s assets and ensure that they were being utilised appropriately.

The agreed outcomes of the Review are to:

1. Gain an understanding and awareness of the asset management challenges and priorities for the Council’s estate;
2. Provide assurance over the current and developing management arrangements;
3. Support the development of a clear roadmap for the next steps in developing the Council’s Asset Strategy;
4. Support the delivery of the Council’s carbon reduction plan.

The Scrutiny Review Group is due to report back to the Scrutiny Commission during 2022/23.

#### Membership:

- Councillor Wendy Brackenbury (Lead Member)
- Councillor Jon-Paul Carr
- Councillor Robin Carter
- Councillor John Currall
- Councillor Gill Mercer
- Councillor Simon Rielly

The Scrutiny Panel has met twice, to review its scoping document and to consider how to take this work forward. The Scrutiny Panel will also undertake site visits to a number of the Council’s assets to understand how they are being utilised.



# FINANCE AND RESOURCES

## SCRUTINY COMMISSION

### SUMMARY OF ITEMS

### CONSIDERED IN 2021/22

The Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee has held seven meetings and established one task and finish group during the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

The task and finish group involved an additional eight meetings.  
The review was in relation to the Budget 2022/23.

Topic	Date	Brief Details	Outcome
Budget Monitoring 2021/22	All meetings	Consideration of the Council's budget monitoring position.	Comments and challenge made.
Capital Monitoring 2021/22	All meetings	Consideration of the Council's Capital position.	Comments and challenge made.
Performance Indicators 2021/22	All meetings	Consideration of the Council's performance across a wide range of services.	Identified areas of future work for the Scrutiny work plan.
Capital Approval Process	13 July 2021	Consideration of the proposed new Capital Approval Process.	Comments made.
Scrutiny Work Planning	13 July 2021	Introduction to work planning to assist development of work plan.	Issues identified for the Work Plan.
Budget Strategy Process 2022/23	2 November 2021	Overview of the budget strategy for 2022/23.	Agreed the scrutiny process for the proposed budget 2022/23.
Revenue and Benefits Performance	2 November 2021	Performance of the Revenue and Benefits Team between April to September 2021.	Set up an informal Council Tax Summons Process Sub-Group to examine issues regarding Council Tax summonses.
Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2022/23	2 November 2021	Consideration of the proposed Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2022/23.	Recommendation to the Executive to continue the current Scheme.

Topic	Date	Brief Details	Outcome
Northamptonshire Children's Trust Budget Monitoring	30 November 2021	Scrutiny of the Children's Trust Budget.	Comments and challenge made.
Budget 2022/23	1 February 2022	To consider reports from the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups.	Recommendations made to and considered by the Executive.
Corporate Plan Indicators 2022/23	5 April 2022	To review and provide feedback on the proposed Capital Plan Performance Indicator set for 2022/23.	Comments made and considered by the Executive.
Scrutiny Annual Report	5 April 2022	To consider the draft Scrutiny Annual Report.	Annual Report agreed to be considered by Council.

## FINANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - SCRUTINY REVIEWS

At its meeting on 2 November 2021, the Committee agreed the scrutiny arrangements for the budget setting process for 2021/22. The process was to meet with the Executive members and officers of each directorate in eight task and finish groups (two per directorate) in January 2022. The initial four meetings included summary presentations

which set out the activities each directorate undertook, and which went on to explain the budget numbers which were included in the draft budget report which was presented to the Executive on 23 December 2021. The Committee were able to ask questions and request additional information to be supplied at the four follow-up meetings.

A detailed submission on the budget was submitted to the Executive on 10 February 2022 which referenced several aspects of the draft budget and made a number of recommendations. The detailed submission can be found here.

### CALL-IN

The scrutiny committees have a key power to review decisions of the Executive which have been made but not yet implemented.

Any key decision and/or a decision which has been entered onto the Forward Plan is subject to call-in.

There have been no call-in of Executive decisions during the year.

### SCRUTINY REPORTS TO EXECUTIVE

In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedures Rules, the scrutiny committees may report to the Executive. The Chair of the Scrutiny Commission has not formally reported to Executive on behalf of the committees; however, the Chairs of both committees have attended Executive regularly and have kept an active dialogue with the Leader of the Council and Executive Members. This has included Executive Members attending meetings of the committees.

## REPORTING

The committees are keen to ensure that the Scrutiny function at NNC remains outcome focused and that following implementation, the impact of its recommendations are monitored and reported back to the committees and all Members.

Scrutiny has established four Task and Finish Groups during 2021/22. Scrutiny are committed to reviewing actions in relation to recommendations/feedback provided through meetings and reviews to ensure that the positive impact of the Scrutiny function can be evidenced.

Following a number of budget workshops, the Finance and Resources Scrutiny Committee formally provided their response to the Budget proposals to the Executive meeting held on 10 February 2022.

## TRAINING

All new Members to the scrutiny committees received induction training. Induction training was delivered on 16 June 2021.

The Chairs have agreed that more comprehensive training for Scrutiny Members should take place in the autumn of 2022, and this is also being considered by the Member Development Working Group.

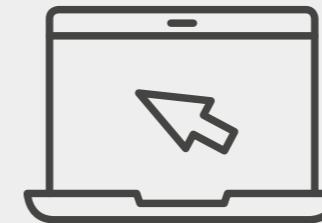
## LOOKING

## AHEAD



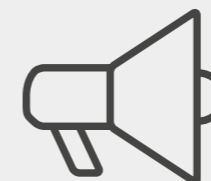
### Annual Work Plan 2023/24

The Work Plan has been regularly reviewed and discussed throughout 2021/22 but was only approved mid-way through the municipal year. A Scrutiny Workshop will be arranged in advance of the first meeting of the 2023/24 Municipal Year to establish priorities for the committees.



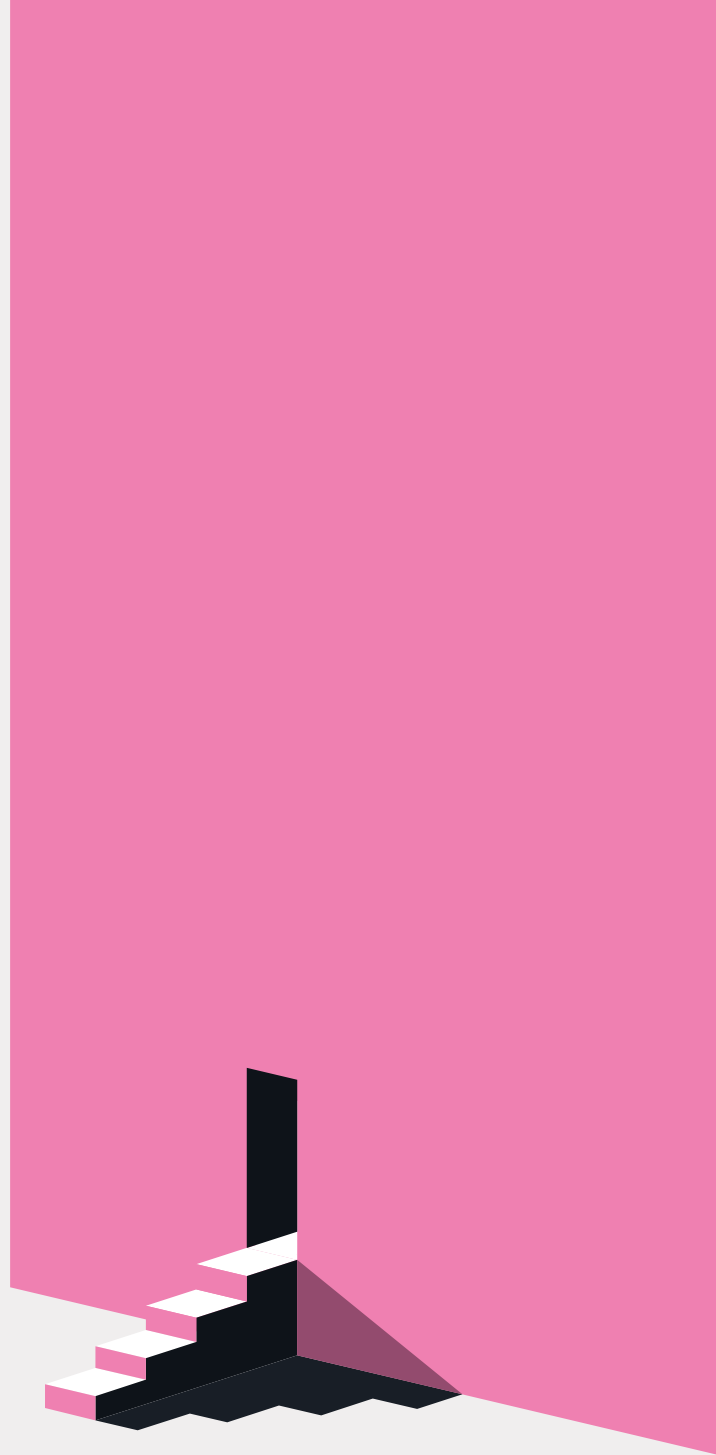
### Increased Media and Consultation with the Public

The survey for the Scrutiny Conference identified that there was work required to improve public knowledge of scrutiny. It is hoped that this aspect of scrutiny will be further developed in 2022/23 with the exploration of different media to involve the public to ensure the voice of the community is heard.



### Additional Resource

Whilst the scrutiny function has received excellent support throughout the year, the Democratic Services Team have undergone a re-structure and the importance of dedicated and specialist advice and support has been recognised and will be implemented.



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