

Scrutiny Work Plan 2021/2023 (Updated: 25 July 2022)

The Scrutiny Work Programme outlines the areas of work which are expected to be scrutinised over the coming months/year by or on behalf of the Council's Scrutiny function and any Panels/Task and Finish Groups convened for review work.

Topics added to the work programme will have expected outcomes to add value to the services delivered by the Council and its partners and/or improve the quality of lives of North Northamptonshire residents. It is recognised that there is a need for flexibility in the work programme so as to allow relevant issues to be dealt with as and when they arise.

Numerous sources of information can help to inform topic selection, including:

- Concerns that have been raised by the public/stakeholders (whether they are Council service specific or wider national/local issues)
- Issues relating to Councils outcomes, objectives and priorities
- Consultations and interviews
- Underperformance
- Executive recommendations about the pertinent issues that are emerging and any opportunities or threats on the horizon
- Central government priority changes
- Forward Plan
- Budgetary analysis

Scrutiny should always link back to the Council Corporate Plan so that it is scrutinising whether the Council is meeting its strategic aims.

Scrutiny should use effective processes to select topics that will contribute towards the best possible work programme for Scrutiny. This means looking at the sources of information that may help and using them to choose the right topics. A Scrutiny Conference was attended by Scrutiny members to develop this workplan where they reviewed information to inform the workplan and then prioritised the topics.

Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members will need to be selective whilst also being able to demonstrate clear arguments in favour of including or excluding topics. A common pitfall for Scrutiny can be the inclusion of topics on the work plan that are unmanageable, of limited interest to the community, purely for informational purposes, have few outcomes and fail to 'add value' to the work of the Council or the wellbeing of the community. As such the selection and prioritisation of topics is critical to the effectiveness of Scrutiny as such processes can ensure clearer focus, particularly in poor or weak areas of performance or major issues of concern to the wider community. It is not possible to include every topic suggested as Scrutiny has limited time and resources and therefore workplans need to be manageable.

SCRUTINY REVIEWS

These are dealt with through a combination of specific evidence gathering meetings that will be arranged as and when required and other activities, such as visits.

There should be a limited number of reviews considered annually and review topics may be changed throughout the year as topical issues arise. Once considered, these issues will be subject to further development and scoping. Should there not be sufficient capacity to cover items which are brought to the attention of Scrutiny they could instead be addressed through a “one-off” item at a scheduled meeting of the Committee.

| Suggested Topics | Officer and Member and Chair | Date Commenced | Date to be Completed | Notes | Date added to the Workplan |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Levelling Up | David Watts Cllr Zoe McGhee | August 2021 | Final Report – July 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations to Executive/Council • To provide initial recommendations to feed into the budget review process. | 24 August 2021 |
| Asset Rationalisation and Use | George Candler Jonathan Waterworth Cllr Graham Lawman | January 2022 | TBC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the Council's assets and ensure they are being utilised appropriately. • Develop methodologies around the use and cost of assets against the value those assets bring to the community. • Understand how cost efficient the council's buildings are • To provide recommendations on the commercial use of our assets and opportunities • To understand whether buildings should be rationalised | 25 January 2022 |

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| Grant Maintained Nurseries | AnnMarie Dodds Cllr Scott Edwards | July 2022 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of finances, provision and performance arrangements of maintained nurseries. | 29 March 2022 |
| Outside Bodies | Adele Wylie | Annual | | Standing Panel to annually review appointments to outside bodies. | 24 August 2021 |
| Knife Crime | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine knife crime and the associated risks factors present before serious knife crime takes place. | |
| Section 106 Monitoring | George Candler Rob Harbour Cllr David Brackenbury | Suggest the work to scope out the review starts once the internal review/audit of S.106 has concluded (likely to be December 2021) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine whether S106 monies are being fully utilised Whether members have access to S106 information for their wards. Identify where S106 money was not effectively used. Review how effective the S106 policies have been in each area Understand where and why there have been slippages against the programme and Develop a consistent and combined S106 methodology looking at new legislative requirements of the Council, i.e. biodiversity, carbon offsetting, building in green initiatives. To provide recommendations on procedures to ensure that S106 money is always put to good use in time, before entitlement lapses. | |

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| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide recommendations on recording of S106 spend that is transparent and accessible | |
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ONE OFF ITEMS/ ANNUAL ITEMS/RECURRING ITEMS

These are dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Committee. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled.

There will be some items that will be recurring at each meeting or annually. There will also be some items that will be one off items on a topic that members are particularly interested in scrutinising but they do not warrant a full review.

| Suggested Topics | Committee/ Commission | Format | Meeting Date | Notes | Date added to the Workplan | Recurring Item |
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| Budget Monitoring | Finance and Resources | Report | Each Meeting | To undertake budget monitoring | | Each meeting |
| Performance Reports | Commission/ Finance and Resources (corporate services) | Report | Each Meeting | To scrutinise performance of services using performance data | | Each Meeting |
| Review of Executive Forward Plan | Commission/ Finance and Resources | Document | Each Meeting | To review upcoming matters and determine if there are any matters which require scrutiny input | | Each meeting |
| Performance of Special Educational Needs "SEND" | Commission | Report/Presentation | 2 August 2022 | Review of performance of Special Educational Needs (SEND). | | One-off |
| Children's Trust Finance Scrutiny- Mid Year Review | Finance and Resources | Report/Presentation | 16 August 2022 | Detailed review of finance of Children's Trust (additional to usual budget monitoring) | | Annual Recurring invitation three times per year |
| Highways and Transport | Commission | Report/Presentation | 6 September 2022 | Review of the delivery of the Bus Services Improvement Plan and | | Recurring |

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| | | | | outcomes of the Enhanced Partnership. | | |
| Annual Budget Process | Finance and Resources | Report followed by T&F Groups | 18 October 2022 Budget sessions to take place during January and feedback provided to the Executive for their meeting on 9 February 2023. | To approve the annual budget process and agree to T&F Groups to scrutinise budget proposals. | | Annual |
| Mental Health Strategy | Commission | Report | 29 November 2022 | To consider the Mental Health Strategy. | 25 March 2022 | One-off |
| Property Annual Report | Commission | Document | 4 April 2023 | To annually review property (note to review Manchester Scrutiny report) | | Annual |
| Scrutiny Annual Report | Commission Finance and Resources | Report | 18 April 2023 for Finance & Resources and 9 May 2023 for Commission (to be reported to July 2023 Council) Chairs to sign off. | Report detailing the work of the Scrutiny Committees over the previous 12 months | | Annual |
| Health Scrutiny (Integrated Care System (ICS)) | Commission | Report/Presentation | 9 May 2023 | Scrutinising the impact of the ICS over the last 12 months. | | Annual |
| Highways and Transport | Commission | Report/Presentation | September 2023 | Review of performance of the new highways contract providers following the first year of service. | | Recurring |

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| Crime and Disorder | Commission | Report and Presentation | TBC (Looked at by Levelling Up Scrutiny Review Group – consider once report received) | <u>Crime and Anti-social behaviour, including knife crime and county lines</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain a better understanding of the issues and how they are being addressed, including reducing knife crime and associated violence and drug related crime and safeguarding vulnerable children and young people. • Provide crime figures to councillors per ward, split the current figures that are combined for violent crime and sexual offences. • Map out how many police officers are actually on duty at any time and check whether it is enough for the workload. • Determine if a quarterly, time limited (Zoom or in person) meeting with police teams to ask questions could be delivered. • Understand if a multi-agency approach to youth provision could work building and enhancing on the good work of the community sector, using asset-based community modelling. | | Annual |
| Climate Change | Commission | Document | Place to confirm | Scrutinising the implementation of the Climate Action Plan and whether it is progressing adequately | | One off |
| Homelessness, including Registered | Commission | Report/Presentation | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand how NNC are supporting homeless people. | | One off |

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| Social Landlords | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the Council's knowledge of hidden demand including sofa surfing, domestic violence, marital breakdown, mental health • To understand if a collaborative approach with partners is being utilised and if so if it provides ideas for solutions to help families needing temporary accommodation. • Find ways to expand Supporting Tenancies to help tenants who face crisis. • Review the rough sleeper's initiative after it has had the opportunity to embed and show results. | | |
| Public Transport, including bus services & strategy and rail services | Commission | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of progress against the Bus Service Improvement Plan. • Understand about how the Council is working towards an integrated transport solution. • Understand how rural isolation and accessibility to work and education is being addressed to enable travel to work and education. | | One-off |
| Highways and Transport | Commission | Report/Presentation | 29 March 2022 | Scrutiny session on major highway capital works and how they are prioritised for implementation within existing budgets. | | |
| Children's Trust | Commission (all invited) | Presentation | 25 November 2021 | Introductory Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relationship between the Trust and Council • the governance, improvement plan. | | Recurring invitation three times per year |

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| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the funding for the Trust decided and divided? | | |
| Children's Trust | Commission | Report/presentation | 17 May 2022 | Performance and inspection readiness | | Recurring invitation three times per year |
| Health Scrutiny - Kettering General Hospital | Commission | Report/Presentation | 5 July 2022 | To receive a briefing on the proposed redevelopment of Kettering General Hospital. | | One-off |

PENDING ITEMS

These items are awaiting further discussion or additional research before being added to the work programme

| Suggested Topics | Committee/Commission | Suggested by | Notes |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Customer Services Operations (To consider issues and actions around the customer service centres) | Commission | Scrutiny Commission | Added to Work Plan – 25 March 2022 |
| Adoption of Roads (Does the Council have a strategy and if yes, what is that strategy?) | Commission | Scrutiny Commission | Response received from Assistant Director of Highways and Waste. |
| Social Housing (Does the Council have a strategy for social housing and if yes, what is that strategy?) | Commission | Scrutiny Commission | Response received from Executive Member for Housing and Community. |
| Keyways (Information on Keyways including waiting times, bands of eligibility, priority needs) | Commission | Scrutiny Commission | Added to Work Plan – 05 July 2022 |
| Staff vacancies, including the cost of agency staff | Commission | Scrutiny Commission | Added to Work Plan – 05 July 2022 |
| Housing repairs service (length of time for repairs and what are the delays) | Commission | Scrutiny Commission | Added to Work Plan – 05 July 2022 |