

Scrutiny Work Plan 2021/2023
(Updated: 26 September 2022)

The Scrutiny Work Plan 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 plan 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 plan 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 plan 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 work plan where they reviewed information to inform the work plan 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
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
Grant Maintained Nurseries	AnnMarie Dodds Cllr Scott Edwards	July 2022	October 2022 (Review at this time)	<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. • To provide recommendations on recording of S106 spend that is transparent and accessible 	
Levelling Up Communities	David Watts Cllr Zoe McGhee	August 2021	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

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
Budget Monitoring	Finance and Resources	Report	Each Meeting	To undertake budget monitoring		Each meeting
Performance Indicators	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	Document	Each Meeting	To review upcoming matters and determine if there are any matters which require scrutiny input		Each meeting
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report	Commission	Report	4 October 2022	To review the Annual Report from the LGO and determine if there are any matters which require scrutiny input		Annual
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	To approve the annual budget process and agree to T&F Groups to scrutinise budget proposals.		Annual

			for their meeting on 9 February 2023.			
Youth Justice Plan	Commission	Report	01 November 2022	To scrutinise the Youth Justice Plan.		Annual
Mental Health Strategy	Commission	Report	29 November 2022	To consider the Mental Health Strategy.	25 March 2022	One-off
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
Highways and Transport	Commission	Report/Presentation	TBC	Review of the delivery of the Bus Services Improvement Plan and outcomes of the Enhanced Partnership.		Recurring
Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) Annual Report	Commission	Report	TBC	To scrutinise the NSAB Annual Report.		Annual

Children's Trust Finance Scrutiny- Mid Year Review	Finance and Resources	Report/Presentation	TBC	Detailed review of finance of Children's Trust (additional to usual budget monitoring)		Annual Recurring invitation three times per year
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 Social Landlords	Commission	Report/Presentation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand how NNC are supporting homeless people. • 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. 		One off
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. How is the funding for the Trust decided and divided? 		Recurring invitation three times per year
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
Performance of Special Educational Needs "SEND"	Commission	Report/Presentation	2 August 2022	Review of performance of Special Educational Needs (SEND).		One-off
Garden Waste Future Service Provision	Finance and Resources	Report	16 August 2022	Pre-decision scrutiny of Executive Decision. Recommendations to Executive.	15 July 2022	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 pending items – 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 pending items – 05 July 2022
Staff vacancies, including the cost of agency staff	Commission	Scrutiny Commission	Added to pending items – 05 July 2022
Housing repairs service (length of time for repairs and what are the delays)	Commission	Scrutiny Commission	Added to pending items – 05 July 2022
Pay and Grading Proposals – to consider proposals prior to Council.	TBC	Director of Governance and HR	Added to pending – 02 August 2022