

Scrutiny Work Plan 2023/2024

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 MANAGEMENT BOARD

8 29 FEBRUARY 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.		•		

Regular Scrutiny Items

	Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Review of Scrutiny Workplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and update the workplan as required; To consider scrutiny agenda requests and allocate to the relevant Committee if they are approved. 	Head of Democratic Services	
2.	To determine call in requests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To determine any call-in requests requested by members following consideration of relevant key decisions by the Executive. 	Head of Democratic Services, Executive Director of Customer and Governance	

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

4 APRIL 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider and approve the Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24, for submission to full Council. 	Head of Democratic Services, Executive Director of Customer and Governance	
2.	Scrutiny/Executive Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider and approve a Protocol for working relationships between Scrutiny and the Executive, following consultation with the Executive, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs, and CLT. 	Head of Democratic Services	Previously proposed to be considered at February meeting but proposal to delay to allow for informal consultation with the new Chair of Scrutiny Management Board, Leader and Executive.

Regular Scrutiny Items

	Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Review of Scrutiny Workplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To review and update the workplan as required;• To consider scrutiny agenda requests and allocate to the relevant Committee if they are approved.	Head of Democratic Services	
2.	To determine call in requests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To determine any call-in requests requested by members following consideration of relevant key decisions by the Executive.	Head of Democratic Services, Executive Director of Customer and Governance	

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 April 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Customer Service Operations and Out of Hours Service	To include an update on the performance and bedding in of the new telephony system, rolled out in summer/autumn 2023.	Executive Director for Customer and Governance, Executive Member for Finance and Performance	
2.	Children's Trust Update	Quarterly Update	Executive Director, Children's Services/ Children's Trust Executive Member for Children's Services	Requested to be added to Workplan by Scrutiny Management Board on 27/11/23

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Annual Review of Performance Management Framework and Key Performance Indicators	To scrutinise performance management arrangements and key performance indicators to inform the Executive's decision on report for 2024/25.	Executive Director of Finance and Performance Executive Member for Finance and Transformation (Report Author – Tom Barden)	
2.				

Regular Scrutiny Items

	Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Performance Indicators 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide members with an update on the Council's performance across a wide range of services, as measured by Key Performance Indicators, with the aim of informing scrutiny, to include quarterly complaints reporting. 	Executive Director of Finance and Performance Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	
2.	Forecast Draft Outturn 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regular monitoring report setting out the material financial issues identified since the 2023/24 	Executive Director of Finance and Performance	

DRAFT TO BE TABLED AT 29/02/24 SMB meeting

		budget which was set in February 2023.	Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	
3.	Capital Monitoring 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A regular monitoring report setting out the material financial issues identified since the 2023/24 capital programme was set in February 2023.	Executive Director of Finance and Performance Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

June 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Agency/OPUS figures	To scrutinise whether best value is being received from the contract and the impacts of vacancies on the Council.	Executive Director of Customer and Governance, Executive Member for Finance and Performance	
2.	Review of Implementation of Pay and Grading	To scrutinise the implementation of the new pay structure and terms and conditions following approval by full Council on 31 August 2023.	Assistant Director for Human Resources	
3.				

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.				
2.				

Regular Scrutiny Items

	Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Performance Indicators 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide members with an update on the Council's performance across a wide range of services, as measured by Key Performance Indicators, with the aim of informing scrutiny, to include quarterly complaints reporting. 	Executive Director of Finance and Performance Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	
2.	Forecast Draft Outturn 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regular monitoring report setting out the material financial issues identified since the 2023/24 budget which was set in February 2023. 	Executive Director of Finance and Performance Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	
3.	Capital Monitoring 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regular monitoring report setting out the material financial issues identified since the 2023/24 capital programme was set in February 2023. 	Executive Director of Finance and Performance Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Topic Areas Beyond June 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.	ICT Working Party		Assistant Chief Executive, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	Requested to be added to Workplan by Scrutiny Management Board on 27/11/23
2.	Transformation		CLT Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	Requested to be added to Workplan by Scrutiny Management Board on 27/11/23
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HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 March 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	GP Performance and Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To scrutinise GP appointment availability. 	Director of Public Health and Executive Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	Proposal from Health Scrutiny Committee to bring forward from list of future items beyond July 2024.
2.	Substance Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To scrutinise strategies in dealing with substance abuse and effects on rough sleeping. 	Director of Public Health and Executive Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	Proposal from Health Scrutiny Committee to bring forward from list of future items beyond July 2024.
3.	NHS Northamptonshire ICB Five-Year Joint Forward Plan 2023-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To scrutinise the proposals and targets of the Integrated Care Board over the next five years. 	Director of Place, Executive Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	Originally to be considered at November 2023 meeting, however proposed for this meeting due to lack of availability of external officers.

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	NNC Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To scrutinise the proposed adoption of the new strategy by the Executive on 14th March 2024 following statutory consultation and subsequent amendments.	Director of Public Health and Executive Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	Proposal from Health Scrutiny meeting held on 14 November 2023.

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 May 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – Quality Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To scrutinise the annual report of the Foundation Trust 	Representative of the NHS Foundation Trust, TBC, Executive Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	
2.				

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
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HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

July 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.				
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Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.				
2.				

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Topic Areas Beyond July 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Exclusions			
2.	Family Hubs			
3.	Disabled Facilities Grants			
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PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 February 2024 (additional) 27 February 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Sustainable Urban Extensions	To scrutinise SUEs arising from a concern that these are not moving forward quickly enough (e.g. Rushden, Tresham and Corby West). If these fail to happen in a timely manner it puts more pressure on our housing supply	Executive Director for Place and Economy, Executive member for Growth and Regeneration (Report Author Rob Harbour/Stacey Wylie)	First meeting of Scrutiny Panel has taken place, second one is scheduled for 29 2 2024
2.	Review of progress in relation to the Bus Service Improvement Plan	To consider the impact that grant funding may have on the North Northamptonshire area and outcome of the enhanced partnership	Executive Director of Place and Economy Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets (Report Author: Chris Wragg)	Discussed at meeting on 5-2-2024

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Kettering Leisure Village	Consideration of Business Case prior to Executive decision.	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets (Report Author: Kerry Purnell)	May not be available for this meeting is being discussed at a special CLT meeting w/c 12 2 24. May need an additional meeting in March.
2.	Asset Acquisition Policy	To pre-scrutinise the proposed policy being considered by the Executive on 21/12/23	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets (Report author: Jonathan Waterworth)	JW advised that the report will not be ready no forward date given but moved to April
3.	Surplus Asset Disposal	To pre-scrutinise the proposed policy being considered by the Executive on 21/12/23	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets (RA: Jonathan Waterworth)	Due to be heard on 5 2 2024 but pulled from agenda. Report expected

4.	Workspace Transformation Project	Update in relation to the Asset Rationalisation and Use Scrutiny Panel	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets (RA: Jonathan Waterworth)	Added by JW 7 2 24. Not sure when this will be available so may not go to this committee. May have to go to an additional meeting in March.
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Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Rural Isolation and Accessibility	To scrutinise how rural isolation and accessibility to work and education is being addressed to enable travel to work and education?	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Members for Highways, Travel and Assets and Rural Communities and Localism	Invitations to be extended to Health Scrutiny Chair/Vice Chair and members due to the work being undertaken by Local Area Partnerships around rural isolation. This was incorporate in the Bus Improvement Plan. No additional report to be provided.
2.	How the Council is working towards an integrated transport solution.	To scrutinise the strategic objectives of the Council in achieving an integrated transport solution.	Assistant Director for Highways and Waste,	GK and CW don't know what this relates to so will speak with

DRAFT TO BE TABLED AT 29/02/24 SMB meeting

			Executive member for Highways, travel and Assets	chair to see what is required.
3.	Planning Enforcement	What is the current status of their activities and what are the policy priorities?	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration	May not be required as Planning Enforcement Briefing taking place on 14 December 2023

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.				

PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 April 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Review of Changes to Planning Service	One year follow up to review impact of changes to planning service following LGA Peer review and subsequent changes to service provision.	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration	
2.	Section 106 Agreements	To report back the outcome of the Scrutiny Review Panel taking place between January and April 2024.	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration	First meeting of Scrutiny Panel has taken place, second one is scheduled for 29 2 2024
3.	Sustainable Urban Extensions	To scrutinise SUEs arising from a concern that these are not moving forward quickly enough (e.g. Rushden, Tresham and Corby West). If these fail to happen in a timely manner it puts more pressure on our housing supply	Executive Director for Place and Economy, Executive member for Growth and Regeneration (Report Author Rob Harbour/Stacey Wylie)	Connected with above Scrutiny Panel.

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Asset Acquisition Policy	To pre-scrutinise the proposed policy being considered by the Executive on 21/12/23	Executive Director of Place and Economy, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets (Report author: Jonathan Waterworth)	JW advised that the report will not be ready no forward date given
2.	NNC Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028	To pre-scrutinise the Strategy to be approved by the Executive on 14/03/24, arising from statutory consultation and subsequent amendments	Executive Director – Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing, Executive Member – Housing, Communities and Levelling Up (Report author: Evonne Coleman-Thomas)	ECT has stated this should go to other committees, however terms of reference are clear it falls under Place. Will move to April whilst under discussion Discussions about whether this should go to Scrutiny Committee.

PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

June 2024

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.				
2.				

Pre-Scrutiny of Executive Reports

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.				
2.				

PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Topic Areas Beyond June 2014

Detailed Scrutiny Items

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
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SCRUTINY REVIEW PANELS

Remainder of 2023

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Asset Rationalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To conclude the existing work being undertaken 	Executive Director for Place and Economy, Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets	
2.	Section 106 Agreements	<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 	Executive Director for Place and Economy, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration	<p>The Review Panel and its terms of reference were agreed at the meeting of Place and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 31 October 2023.</p> <p>The Panel is in the process of being established and its first meeting will</p>

DRAFT TO BE TABLED AT 29/02/24 SMB meeting

		<p>combined S106 methodology looking at new legislative requirements of the Council, i.e. biodiversity, carbon offsetting, building in green initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 		<p>take place on 4th January 2024.</p> <p>Second meeting scheduled for 29 February 2024</p>
3.	ICT Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To conclude the existing work being undertaken 	Assistant Chief Executive, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	
4.	Annual Budget and Capital Programme (Regular Panel item)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To scrutinise the proposed budget and capital programme for 2024/25 <p>NB. This will carry over to January 2024</p>	Executive Director of Finance, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	<p>Phase 1 of this Panel concluded on 20 November 2023.</p> <p>Phase 2 will commence in December 2023 and conclude in February 2024.</p>

SCRUTINY REVIEW PANELS

First half of 2024

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Crime and Disorder/Knife Crime		Executive Director for Place and Economy, Executive Member for Adults, Health & Wellbeing	
2.	Annual Review of Outside Bodies (Regular Panel item)	To undertake a regular review of the appropriateness of Outside Bodies sat on by councillors, in accordance with the Outside Bodies Procedure Rules and Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Constitution.	Head of Democratic Services	
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SCRUTINY REVIEW PANELS

Second half of 2024

	Suggested Topic	Reasons for Scrutiny	Officer, Chair and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Annual Budget and Capital Programme (Regular Panel item)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To scrutinise the proposed budget and capital programme for 2025/26 NB. This will carry over to January 2025	Executive Director of Finance and Performance, Executive Member for Finance and Transformation	
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4.				

ITEMS SUGGESTED FOR SCRUTINY TO BE REFERRED TO EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANELS FOR POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION

First half of 2024

	Suggested Topic	Reasons Requested for Scrutiny	Officer and Executive Member	Notes
1.	Green Burials	To inform and develop a green burial policy.	Executive Director for Place and Economy, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration	Suggestions for EAP consideration can be found arising from the minutes of the Scrutiny Commission held 4 April 2023 (minute 74 refers).
2.	Adoption of Roads		Executive Director for Place and Economy, Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration	