

## Appendix B: Health Scrutiny Committee – Annual Activity Update 2023/24

Following its prioritised work programme, Health Scrutiny Committee provided a robust challenge and oversight as a ‘critical friend.’ The activities aligned with its wide-ranging constitutional duties.

The Health Scrutiny Committee operates with a cross-party membership of 10 councillors, ensuring a wide range of perspectives and a robust yet consensual approach. The leadership and members are as follows:

### Leadership and Members:

- Chair: Councillor King Lawal
- Vice Chair: Councillor Charlie Best
- Members: Councillors Scott Brown, Jon-Paul Carr, Bert Jackson, Graham Lawman, Anne Lee, Dorothy Maxwell, Mark Pengelly  
(Councillor Zoe McGhee served until January 2024)

### Terms of Reference

1. To exercise the Council’s statutory role in scrutinising health services for North Northamptonshire in accordance with the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended and associated regulations and guidance.
2. To engage with and respond to formal and informal consultations from local health service commissioners and providers where the Committee wishes to do so. This shall be on behalf of Scrutiny and not on behalf of Council.
3. To scrutinise the commissioning and delivery of local health and social care services to ensure a reduction in recognised health inequalities, improved access to services and the best outcomes for citizens.
4. To hold the Health and Wellbeing Board to account for its work to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of North Northamptonshire and to reduce health inequalities;
5. To respond to referrals from, and make referrals to, Healthwatch North Northamptonshire as appropriate;
6. To appoint a lead health scrutiny councillor for the purposes of liaising with stakeholders on behalf of the Health Scrutiny function, including the Health and Wellbeing Board, Healthwatch North Northamptonshire, and the Executive Member with responsibility for health and social care issues;
7. To have responsibility for scrutinising the Council’s role as an Education Authority.

### In-Depth Reviews

- No Scrutiny reviews have arisen from Health Scrutiny yet however, members have indicated a desire to further explore the issue of substance misuse, particularly following the previous two meetings in January and March 2024. Therefore, a potential avenue for wider future work exists in this form.

### Effective Practices

- The Committee has considered a wide range of topics to date, in line with its Terms of Reference, from both internal and external report authors. Internal reports generally come from the Director of Public Health (Jane Bethea), or the Executive Director of Adults, Health

Partnerships and Housing (David Watts). External presenters have included representatives from the Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board (ICB), Kettering General Hospital (KGH), East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) and The Northamptonshire Children’s Trust (NCT). As a result of this, the primary key achievement of the Health Scrutiny Committee has been its stakeholder engagement. For the first time, Scrutiny has actively engaged with, and held to account, key health partners of the Council.

- Cross-party representation and leadership structure.

## Conclusion

The committee undertook a comprehensive scrutiny programme aligned with its terms of reference and engaged with both key health partners and the wider public (specifically at the March 2024 meeting). This has allowed for members to gain valuable information regarding health service provision within North Northamptonshire.

Health Scrutiny has not been so proactive in making recommendations after considering such topics. While meaningful debate has taken place, members rarely draw clear conclusions from discussion and simply ‘note’ reports with little further action taking place.

It is imperative that moving forward, Health Scrutiny remains targeted and focused in its scope. As a general rule, no more than four substantive agenda items are considered at a meeting, to allow for considered debate and the Chair has supported this ‘less is more’ approach for meetings.

### Appendix B1: Health Scrutiny Committee – Table of meetings, scrutiny activities and outcome

Topic	Date	Details	Scrutiny Type	Outcome
Health Scrutiny Work Plan	All meetings	Considered the work plan and potential areas of interest, in line with the Committee’s ToR.	Internal – Monitoring	Identified areas of future work for the Health Scrutiny work plan.
Background to new Scrutiny arrangements	11 July 2023	Consideration of new Scrutiny arrangements and Terms of Reference for the Committee.	Internal – Overview and Monitoring	Better understanding and learning to improve scrutiny function.
Introduction to the Integrated Care System in Northamptonshire	11 July 2023	Scrutinised the Integrated Care System and its aims and ambitions.	Internal – Overview and analysis	Comments made - Report noted.
Children and young people’s short breaks and respite – New model and engagement	12 September 2023	The Commissioning Manager of the NCT presented work and public engagement carried out regarding the development of a new model for short break for children with disabilities.	External – Scrutiny and Monitoring	Feedback provided.
NHS Foundation Trust Joint Work Community-Bed Approach	12 September 2023	The Group Director of Strategy and Partnerships of the NHS Foundation Trust presented its joint-work and the ‘community-bed’ approach around this work.	External – Reviewing details and providing feedback	Feedback provided.
Kettering General Hospital Annual Report	14 November 2023	Representatives from KGH were in attendance to present	External –	Reviewed and feedback provided.

		the annual report for 2022/23.	Monitoring and feedback	
Dentistry Availability and Performance	14 November 2023	Representatives from East Midlands ICBs attended to present information regarding NHS primary care dental services in North Northamptonshire.	External – Scrutiny and Monitoring	Feedback provided.
Update on Kettering General Hospital Rebuild	9 January 2024	Scrutinised the progress of the planned KGH rebuild.	External – Monitoring and Scrutiny	Reviewed and feedback provided.
Health Integration – Progress from the Local Area Partnerships/Community Wellbeing Forums	9 January 2024	Provided an update regarding how key local partnerships, arising from Integrated Care in Northamptonshire, were performing and meeting their outcomes.	Internal – Monitoring and Scrutiny	Reviewed and feedback provided.
Specialist Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services for individuals rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping	9 January 2024	Scrutinised NNC's use of Public Health Reserves to fund activities up to £600,000 for specialist drug and alcohol treatment services for people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping until 31st March 2026.	Internal – Monitoring.	Recommendations referred to Executive meeting held on 18 January 2024 – Executive approved use of PH reserves (£600k) to fund services.
EMAS Annual Report	9 January 2024	Scrutinised EMAS's annual report, published on 21 June 2023.	External – Review and Monitoring.	Reviewed and feedback provided..
Short Breaks and Respite for Children with Disabilities	9 January 2024	Provided an update regarding work and public consultation completed to date to develop a new model for short breaks and respite for children with disabilities.	Internal -	Comments made – Report noted.
Substance Misuse	12 March 2024	Scrutinised strategies in dealing with substance misuse.	Internal (with external speakers also in attendance from local substance misuse organisations)	Comments made – Report noted.

NHS Health Checks	12 March 2024	Provided an update regarding the NHS Health Checks programme and contract (hosted by NNC).	Internal – Monitoring	Comments made – Report noted.
Adult Social Care Strategic Framework	14 November 2023	Pre-decision scrutiny of the report being considered by the Executive on 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2023.	Internal – Input into policy making or decision.  Pre-decision scrutiny.	Executive approved proposal to remove reference to Department of Work and Pensions DS1500 Certificates from the Adult Social Care Fees and Charges Policy and not extend the exemption to charging to the SR1 Form.
NNC Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28	12 March 2024	Scrutinised the proposed adoption of the new strategy by the Executive on 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 following statutory consultation and subsequent amendments.	Internal – Pre-decision Scrutiny	Executive approved that the allocated spend of Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP) funding.

#### Future Work Plan:

Topic	Date	Reasons for Scrutiny
Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – Quality Report	14 May 2024	To scrutinise the annual report of the Foundation Trust.
NHS Northamptonshire ICB Five-Year Joint Forward Plan 2023-28	14 May 2024	To scrutinise the proposals and targets of the Integrated Care Board over the next five years.
GP Performance and Availability	14 May 2024	To scrutinise GP appointment availability.
Beyond April 2024, to be reviewed and confirmed as part of annual work programme development 2024-25 and agenda planning:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children’s Health checks (particularly around mental health issues service provision and waiting lists).</li> <li>Performance of Kettering General Hospital – Update</li> <li>Exclusions</li> <li>Family Hubs</li> <li>Disabled Facilities Grants</li> </ul>	TBC	TBC