

SCRUTINY

NEWSLETTER

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ISSUE 15

JULY 2012

Introduction

The July 2012 edition of the Overview and Scrutiny Newsletter is the fifteenth production and in it we would like to update you on the latest developments on scrutiny here in Northampton. We also want to alert you to reports and meetings, which may be of interest to you.

Chair's welcome

the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to investigate the quality of service provision and other related issues that affect the lives of the citizens of Northampton. There is one Overview and Scrutiny Committee that commissions three time limited Scrutiny Panels that carry out in-depth, important Reviews and where necessary puts forward recommendations for improvement.

I am pleased to say that the work of Overview and Scrutiny at Northampton is continuing to be noted externally as examples of best practice. For example our recent report into an Independent Living Strategy was highlighted by the organisation, Homecare, the Chair of the Panel gave a presentation on how this important Scrutiny Review was carried out to a conference hosted by the Agewell Programme and the Chair of the Panel was invited by the local media to speak about the Review on the radio.

Once again, we asked the citizens of Northampton to suggest topics for Scrutiny Reviews. We were really pleased that over thirty suggestions were put forward which were considered at the annual Work Shop event. From these suggestions, Cabinet's priorities for the year and suggestions put forward by individual non-Executives, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved its work programme for the year at its recent meeting (detailed below). I am delighted to announce that public suggestions for Scrutiny Reviews this year informed the Work Programme 2012/2013 entirely. I look forward to keeping you updated on progress and would urge you to continue to putting your suggestions forward as the Committee really values your input and interest in the Overview and Scrutiny process.

I hope that you find this newsletter useful and informative. Overview and Scrutiny encourages members of the public, groups and organisations to attend its Committee and Panel meetings. Dates of forthcoming meetings are detailed on the last page of this newsletter.



Councillor Les Marriott
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny goes paperless

Overview and Scrutiny commenced on its paperless committees' trial on 28th May 2012.

A paperless meeting is a move away from the traditional format for Councillor meetings, which usually involve the printing and distribution of a significant amount of paperwork. Instead Overview and Scrutiny will be going electronic and Councillors will be viewing all the papers for the meeting on their laptop or tablet.

Participants at the meeting will use technology to access documents. The agenda and supporting papers will be displayed on the media screens in the Committee room.

Paper copies of the agendas will be available at the Council's One Stop Shop, the Central Library and at the meeting.

How are Scrutiny Reviews carried out?

Scrutiny Panel Reviews are selected from issues which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers important to the people of Northampton. Scrutiny Panels are led by non-Executive Councillors.

Often individuals and representatives of organisations, who have expertise or have expressed an interest in a particular subject, are co-opted to the Scrutiny Panel for the life of the Review.

Scrutiny Panels are responsible for managing each Review by gathering and taking evidence. At the end of the Review they present their findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval. The report is then presented to Cabinet for its consideration and feedback.



Scrutiny Activity for 2012/2013

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2012/2013 was recently approved and the three in-depth Reviews that are now underway are: -

Serious Acquisitive Crime/Violent Crime and Community Safety

To investigate, as a benchmark, Northampton's crime statistics in relation to serious acquisitive and violent crime

To identify 'hotspots' in relation to serious acquisitive and violent crime

To identify the impact that serious acquisitive crime and violent crime has on the residents of Northampton

To identify the serious acquisitive crime and violent crime issues that Northampton Borough Council, in partnership with other Agencies, can have an impact upon

Retail Experience

To investigate how NBC can support the town centre business community.

To investigate how NBC can support local businesses throughout the development period of any major building projects in and close by to the town centre (i.e. Grosvenor; bus interchange; university accommodation etc).

To identify and examine good practice from other boroughs

To identify ways to develop greater involvement / engagement with local, regional and national businesses in public land improvement initiatives

Infrastructure Requirements and S106 Agreements

The Scrutiny Panel will set its purpose and terms of reference at its inaugural meeting on 19th July 2012.

What happened in Overview and Scrutiny over the last twelve months?

The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2011/2012 has recently been published and details the good work undertaken by the Scrutiny Committees and its Scrutiny Panels last year.

A short snapshot of the good work during 2011/2012: -

- A number of Councillors, who are not members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee joined the membership of the Scrutiny Panels
- Overview & Scrutiny for Northampton Borough Council continues to show great interest and commitment to Community Safety/Crime and Disorder. The Committee has focused on crime and disorder issues from a public perspective and has worked in partnership with other agencies such as Northamptonshire Police.
- Effective performance management scrutiny
- Two pieces of thorough pre-decision scrutiny

Completed Reviews for 2011/2012 included:-

Councillor Community Fund
Independent Living Strategy
Hate Crime reporting mechanisms
Evaluate all Customer Services

Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Panel dates for your diary:

Overview and Scrutiny meetings are publicly advertised and everyone is welcome to attend. All meetings start at 6pm.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2012 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 July |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 September |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 November |
| 2013 | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 January |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 April |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 June |

Scrutiny Panel 1 Serious Acquisitive Crime/Violent Crime and Community Safety	Scrutiny Panel 2 Retail Experience	Scrutiny Panel 3 Infrastructure Requirements and S106 Agreements
<p>2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 15 August <input type="checkbox"/> 10 October <input type="checkbox"/> 26 November 	<p>2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 8 August <input type="checkbox"/> 18 October <input type="checkbox"/> 5 December 	<p>2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 19 July <input type="checkbox"/> 26 September <input type="checkbox"/> 8 November <input type="checkbox"/> 13 December
<p>2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 10 January <input type="checkbox"/> 4 February <input type="checkbox"/> 21 March <input type="checkbox"/> 8 April 	<p>2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 14 February <input type="checkbox"/> 24 April 	<p>2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 17 January <input type="checkbox"/> 7 March <input type="checkbox"/> 16 May <input type="checkbox"/> 25 July

To find out more



Visit our website:

www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny



Email: ttiff@northampton.gov.uk
to ask for information



Or call the **Scrutiny Officer, Tracy Tiff**,
on **01604 837408**



Copies of all Overview and Scrutiny Review Reports are located at:

www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

