Scrutiny Committee

Members of the Scrutiny Committee:

Mrs M Dewsbury (Chairman)
Mr T Lewis (Vice Chairman)
Mrs V Bell
Mr T Blowfield
Mr L Hornby
Mr B McClenning
Mr A Pond
Mrs S Thomson
Mr K Tilcock
Mr K Weeks
Mrs J Wilby

Group Meetings

Conservatives:
Blomefield Room 9.00 am

Liberal Democrats:
Kett Room 9.00 am

If any member of the public wishes to speak on a non-confidential item, they may do so at the discretion of the Chairman

Agenda

Date
Wednesday 25 September 2013

Time
9.30 am

Place
Council Chamber
Please note change of room
South Norfolk House
Long Stratton
Norwich
Norfolk
NR15 2XE

Contact
Caroline Heasley tel (01508) 533685
South Norfolk District Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton Norwich
NR15 2XE

Email: democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance
Large print version can be made available

17/09/2013
A G E N D A

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after
the meeting has been running for approximately two hours.

1. To report apologies for absence and to identify substitute members;

2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter
of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent
business may only be taken if, "by reason of special circumstances" (which will be
recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item
should be considered as a matter of urgency;

3. To Receive Declarations of Interest from Members;
   (Please see guidance form and flow chart attached – page 4)

4. To confirm the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 May 2013
   (attached – page 6)

5. Financial return on the Council’s investment properties; (report attached – page 8)

6. Review of Localism Delivery in South Norfolk; (report attached – page 17)

7. 2012-13 Performance; (report attached – page 37)

8. The Welfare Reform Agenda – The First Six Months; (report attached – page 39)

9. Scrutiny Work Programme, Recommendations Tracker and Cabinet Core Agenda
   (attached – page 43)
Working Style of the Scrutiny Committee

Independence
Members of the Scrutiny Committee and Overview Sub-Committees will not be subject to whipping arrangements by party groups.

Member leadership
Members of the Committees will take the lead in selecting topics for and in questioning witnesses. The Committees will expect members of Cabinet, rather than officers, to take the main responsibility for answering the Committee's questions about topics, which relate mainly to the Council's activities.

A constructive atmosphere
Meetings of the Committees will be constructive, and not judgmental, accepting that effective overview and scrutiny is best achieved through challenging and constructive enquiry. People giving evidence at the Committees should not feel under attack.

Respect and trust
Meetings will be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.

Openness and transparency
The Committees' business will be open and transparent, except where there are sound reasons for protecting confidentiality. In particular, the minutes of the Committee's meetings will explain the discussion and debate, so that it could be understood by those who were not present.

Consensus
Members of the Committees will work together and, while recognising political allegiances, will attempt to achieve consensus and agreed recommendations.

Impartial and independent officer advice
Officers who advise and support the Committees will give impartial and independent advice, recognising the importance of the Scrutiny Committee and the Overview Sub-Committees in the Council's arrangements for governance, as set out in the Constitution.

Regular review
There will be regular reviews of how the overview and scrutiny process is working, and a willingness to change if it is not working well.

Programming and planning
The Scrutiny Committee will have a programme of work, in conjunction with the Overview Sub-Committees. The Committee will agree the topics to be included in the work programme, the extent of the investigation to be undertaken in relation to resources, and the witnesses to be invited to give evidence.

Managing time
The Committees will attempt to conclude the business of each meeting in reasonable time. The order of business will be arranged as far as possible to minimise the demands on the time of witnesses.
Financial return on the Council’s investment properties

To respond to members’ concerns about the way in which the financial return from the Council’s investment property portfolio was calculated and presented in the Annual Treasury Management Outturn report 2012/13 as presented to Cabinet on 17 June 2013. That report provided gross yields and this report provides both gross and net yields, enabling a more detailed analysis of the overall return to the Council from its property investment activities. The net yield is considered satisfactory and there is scope to improve it further over time.

Cabinet member(s):
Cllr Garry Wheatley

Ward(s) affected:
All

Contact Officer,
telephone number, and
e-mail:
C Hewitt, 01508 533951, chewitt@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Scrutiny

1.1. To consider Members’ concerns about the way in which the Council’s financial return on investment properties was calculated and presented in the Annual Treasury Management Outturn report 2012/13 as presented to Cabinet on 17 June 2013.

2. Scope of Scrutiny

2.1. Members have requested that the following information be included within the Scrutiny Report:

2.1.1. Expenditure in the last financial year is added to the table at para 7.2 of the cabinet report referred to above, with additional figures amended accordingly (eg, return on investment).

2.1.2. Details of the expenditure and why this has occurred.

2.1.3. Outline what steps the Council is taking to maximise its return on investment in the long term, whether through increasing occupancy or reducing expenditure. Is there anything outside of the Council’s control? Does the Council need to invest more to receive greater income? What action has the Council taken (or intends to take) to adapt to market conditions and demand? Overall, what is the
benefit of the investment properties, eg, to the economy of the District?

3. Findings

3.1. The table referred to at paragraph 7.2 of the aforementioned Cabinet report presents high level summarised data on the Council’s investment properties and shows the gross investment yield for discrete packages of properties and for the portfolio as a whole. A more detailed presentation of this data has been prepared to include expenditure incurred on each property in the portfolio. This is provided as a spreadsheet contained at appendix 1 of this report. Where it helps to explain any areas of concern or note in relation to a particular property, additional notes are provided at appendix 2.

3.2. It should be noted that a full financial appraisal is undertaken for each property before purchasing it. This includes an analysis of the investment yield together with key risks and potential expenditures, including void and management costs. Properties are only acquired if they meet the target gross yield and all acquisitions are authorised by Cabinet on that basis. Over time, capital values do appreciate, which is good for the Council, but this has the effect of reducing the yield as rental income is set for a specified time, often 5 years. As a consequence, yields reduce over time even though income has remained steady and the property investment is performing as anticipated when the purchase was agreed. An analysis of past performance is a useful check, but the most valuable evaluation is completed before properties are purchased, helping to ensure that the Council only acquires properties that generate an acceptable financial return over the longer term. Members’ concerns would therefore appear to be principally about the way that past performance is reported rather than the investment strategy itself. It should be noted that the Council is now reducing its investment acquisitions and focussing more on property development.

3.3. The gross investment yield reported to Cabinet on 17 June 2013 was 6.01% for the year 2012/13, based upon the most up to date asset values then available. The asset values now reported are the confirmed values as at 31 March 2013 and the calculated gross investment yield based upon those values is 5.7%. This reduced yield is solely due to the revised (increased) capital values used and does not reflect any reduction in income.

3.4. When assessing the net investment yield, it is therefore important to compare it to the 5.7% gross yield for the sake of consistency, rather than the 6.01% previously reported. Once direct expenditure on our investment properties is taken into account, the net investment yield for the portfolio is 5.0%. This is considerably higher than the gross investment yield for cash, which was 1.44% over the same period and would be much lower if direct treasury management costs were taken into account.

3.5. Diss Business Centre is not included within the yield calculations because it is not classified as a capital asset due to the relatively short leasehold nature of the Council’s tenure of the property. Consequently, it has not been valued on a fixed asset basis and is not, therefore, directly comparable with the Council’s other investment properties. For the year 2012/13, rental income at the business centre was £79,949. Operational costs were £54,880 (as shown below), which generates an acceptable net profit of £25,069 (31%). The property was valued
on 1 April 2012 at £429,465 on an investment basis, having regard to the then passing rent. Against that value, the net profit generates a yield of 5.84%, which is above the Council’s required 5% and represents a satisfactory performance. Additionally, the tenants contribute to a service charge account, which is used to fund more major works and cover the cost of maintaining the common areas.

3.6. An analysis of expenditure by property is contained in the spread sheet provided in the appendix. However, in summary, expenditure is incurred for three principal reasons:

3.6.1. Void costs whilst a property is vacant, such as empty business rates, vacant property insurance and non-recoverable service charge and utilities costs.

3.6.2. Marketing costs for vacant investment properties with the specific aim of securing a letting and generating rental income.

3.6.3. Capital investment in a property to maintain and increase its market rent. This is usually done in response to a tenant’s specific requirements and is normally only completed once a tenant has been secured for the property and therefore generates a direct financial return to the Council.

3.7. Members have specifically identified the portfolio of property in Wymondham as being an area of concern, with £12,000 income reported but a corresponding £18,000 business rates expenditure not being presented. The income relates to 21 Penfold Drive, which is fully let and provides a net yield of 7.9%, whilst the expenditure relates to Unit 13 Wymondham Business Park, which has been vacant since acquisition in November 2011 and incurred £18,382 in void costs, including £17,086 in business rates. Void costs are an accepted property holding cost for investment portfolios and need to be considered in the overall context of the longer term letting of the unit.

3.8. Whilst it has proven more challenging to let this unit than anticipated, the property is of high quality and has seen good levels of interest, with a number of prospective lettings progressing to very advanced stages but not actually concluding. A prospective tenant has now been found, with contracts being prepared presently. This will generate £39,950 p.a. for the next 10 years, subject to a break option after 5 years, and will remove the Council’s obligation to pay business rates, service charge, buildings maintenance and utilities costs. A small additional capital investment of £12,739 is required as a precondition of the lease commencing, which is typical of the types of transactions being done in today’s property market. Tenants often do not have the expertise or capital available to make alterations to properties to suit their specific requirements, whereas landlords often have access to both resources and can offer such improvements, in a competitive market, to secure the tenant. Conversely, the tenant has agreed to pay the full asking rent and has agreed a fairly long lease term.

3.9. Over the longer term, the Council’s strategy is to maximise net investment returns through maximising occupancy and passing rents, minimising void periods and void costs and closely controlling management costs to ensure the investment portfolio provides value for money. Proactive property management does incur expenditure but is the most effective way of minimising void costs and maximising rental income. This may include the production of dedicated
marketing materials, speculative investment to improve the specification of the property on offer, sub-division, extension and site acquisition activities and tenant specific improvements to close a deal.

3.10. There are many factors outside of the Council’s control that have the potential to affect the Council’s investment property performance. These include market conditions, local competition and legal factors and they differ from property to property.

3.10.1. Where a property is let, the Council is relatively well insulated from these external factors with the income being relatively secure and the tenant picking up legal and financial obligations. The main risk with a let property is that a tenant may fail during the lease term, which would result in a reduction to the income received and an increase in the costs associated with the property whilst it is vacant.

3.10.2. With vacant properties, the Council’s exposure to these external factors is greater as it is responsible for all legal and financial obligations during the void period. So, if market conditions deteriorate, it may be difficult to secure a letting and the Council may either have to cover void costs for longer or reduce the asking rent to secure a letting. Whilst the property is vacant, the Council may be exposed to increases in the NNDR rate and utilities costs, and would potentially be responsible for repairing any malicious damage.

3.11. It is sometimes necessary to invest in a property to maximise its rental value, although such investments are always assessed on a case by case basis against a robust business case. Such capital investment is generally only undertaken when a tenant has been secured so that a direct financial return can be ensured, and the works are undertaken by the Council subject to an Agreement to Lease that commits the tenant to take the lease once the works are complete. This is the case at Unit 13 Wymondham Business Park.

3.12. In terms of investing in the portfolio as a whole, we are gradually increasing the profile of the Council’s commercial property offer in the market place through additional targeted promotional activity. This will help to generate a constant level of awareness about the Council’s commercial property offer within the marketplace so that any void periods can be minimised when properties become available for new lettings. Marketing costs for individual properties are applied direct to the property and generally only become payable upon completion of a new lease, so wouldn’t be considered a speculative investment.

3.13. In terms of responding to market conditions and demand, this is done on a property by property basis and effectively takes the form of ascertaining an appropriate asking rent for the property by reference to comparable evidence, undertaking appropriate marketing activity and negotiating a mutually acceptable deal with prospective tenants. Property investment is inherently market-driven and the Council’s activities are focussed entirely on securing the best return in the prevailing market conditions, with each transaction being individually negotiated to meet the needs of both the Council and the tenant.

3.14. The Council’s commercial property portfolio is held principally for the purpose of generating a financial return. They also provide commercial accommodation for
local businesses, which is a vital component of economic performance and
growth, and the Council’s ability and desire to proactively broker and structure
property deals has enabled at least one local business to expand and remain in
the district (securing over 80 jobs in a high value sector) and attracted others into
the district from outside creating new local jobs. Additionally, the units at Loddon
Business Centre, which are available on flexible terms and at very affordable
rents, helps to provide grow-on space for small businesses during their initial
growth phase, which is often when they take on their first member of staff. Our
business centres therefore play a key role in driving economic growth through
increasing the business start-up rate. The Council’s business support offer,
available direct from the Commercial Property and Conferencing Manager and
through the Enterprise Norfolk programme, helps local businesses to access the
support and assistance they need to grow and survive.

4. Relevant Corporate Priorities

4.1. Promoting a thriving local economy.

4.2. Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

5. Implications and Risks

5.1. Financial

5.2. The information contained within this report relates to the Council’s reported
return on investment for its portfolio of commercial investment properties. The
benchmark gross yield for individual properties is 5% which, with active
management, is being achieved on much of the portfolio. However, the nature of
property investment is such that voids do occur and in these instances the gross
yield, for the void period, is below the 5% target. The portfolio gross yield is
satisfactory, however, at 5.7% and the net yield of 5.0% still meets the target
return of 5%. With new lettings in the pipeline, the net investment yield will
improve further as new income is secured and void costs are eliminated. The net
yield should be considered in the context of the yield achieved on cash
investments, which was much lower at 1.44% for the 2012/13 period. Since the
purpose of this report is to present and explain past performance rather than
propose future actions, there are no direct financial implications.

5.3. Risks

5.4. Property investment is an inherently risky business but is one where the risks can
broadly be identified, mitigated and managed. That is why the Council’s property
investments are able to generate a financial return far higher than its cash
holdings. The risks of property investment are significantly reduced by holding a
portfolio of properties rather than a single asset, as this spreads portfolio risk and
allows longer term value generation through active management of the portfolio
as a whole. By reporting the information as it is now contained within this report,
the Council will be better informed about the relative performance of individual
investment properties within the portfolio and will be better able to identify key
risks and take appropriate action to manage and reduce them. The properties
are held to provide revenue over the longer term and analysis of their short-term
performance is not necessarily a good indicator of their past or future
performance in the longer-term context.
6. Conclusion

6.1. The gross investment yield reported to Cabinet in June for the Council’s property investments was 6.01% against the latest values then available. This exercise has provided the opportunity to recalculate the gross yield, as at 31 March 2013, using more up to date valuations that were being undertaken whilst the June report was being prepared. These updated valuations provide a gross yield of 5.7%, which is above the Council’s target of 5% and is therefore satisfactory. As identified by members, there are property holding costs and these reduce the gross yield, so an analysis of the net yield, after deducting the holding costs, does provide a more accurate reflection of the return on investment achieved. It should be noted, however, that where an asset value increases, the yield will reduce, and that doesn’t necessarily reflect any kind of capital investment by the Council, but rather a paper-based reduction in yield. Overall, the Council’s portfolio generates an acceptable return and new lettings will increase it further whilst costs will be closely controlled to maximise the net return on investment.

7. Action Required

7.1. Members are invited to consider the report and make any appropriate recommendations back to officers for further action. It is also specifically recommended that the revised format for presenting information, as provided at Appendix 1, be used when reporting property returns going forward to aid understanding of the true return generated by the portfolio.
## Appendix 1 - Financial Return on Investment Properties as at 31/03/13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Register Codes</th>
<th>Asset Description</th>
<th>Combined Land and Buildings Value as at 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Rental Income year to 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Business Rates Expenditure year to 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Other Expenditure year to 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Net Income/(Expenditure) year to 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Gross Investment Yield year to 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Net Investment Yield year to 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Note?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIS078A/B</td>
<td>9-11 Mere Street, Diss</td>
<td>£1,001,594</td>
<td>£51,250</td>
<td>£320</td>
<td>£50,930</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS079A/B</td>
<td>Unit 5b, Owen Road, Diss, IP22 4ER</td>
<td>£84,035</td>
<td>£4,063</td>
<td>£44</td>
<td>£4,019</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS077A/B</td>
<td>13 Vincress Road, Diss</td>
<td>£132,517</td>
<td>£1,742</td>
<td>£370</td>
<td>£1,372</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS080A/B</td>
<td>15 Vincress Road, Diss</td>
<td>£160,088</td>
<td>£9,000</td>
<td>£278</td>
<td>£8,722</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS081A/B</td>
<td>9 Park Road, Diss</td>
<td>£123,075</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£5,973</td>
<td>£324</td>
<td>(6,297)</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>(5.1%)</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS082A</td>
<td>Unit B17, Owen Rd, Diss</td>
<td>£92,659</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS083A</td>
<td>Unit B19, Owen Rd, Diss</td>
<td>£92,659</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAR048A/B</td>
<td>Unit 18A, Harleston</td>
<td>£436,528</td>
<td>£17,745</td>
<td>£455</td>
<td>£17,290</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAR049A/B</td>
<td>Unit 19A, Harleston</td>
<td>£205,433</td>
<td>£2,849</td>
<td>£2,849</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KET003A/B</td>
<td>Ketteringham Depot</td>
<td>£184,832</td>
<td>£17,576</td>
<td>£17,576</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDO019A/B</td>
<td>Loddon Business Centre</td>
<td>£659,319</td>
<td>£48,557</td>
<td>£2,666</td>
<td>£6,299</td>
<td>£39,592</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LST041A/B</td>
<td>Swan Lane Office – Saffron</td>
<td>£189,699</td>
<td>£22,000</td>
<td>£22,000</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM094A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£102,858</td>
<td>£6,053</td>
<td>£6,053</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM095A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£39,257</td>
<td>£3,550</td>
<td>£3,550</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM096A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£87,967</td>
<td>£7,000</td>
<td>£7,000</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM097A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£136,388</td>
<td>£4,500</td>
<td>£4,500</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM098A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£77,564</td>
<td>£14,018</td>
<td>£14,018</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM099A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£51,293</td>
<td>£5,125</td>
<td>£5,125</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM100A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£100,196</td>
<td>£9,925</td>
<td>£9,925</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM102A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£50,171</td>
<td>£4,150</td>
<td>£4,150</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM103A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£208,513</td>
<td>£14,790</td>
<td>£14,790</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM104A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£135,193</td>
<td>£10,615</td>
<td>£10,615</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM105A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£60,516</td>
<td>£4,725</td>
<td>£4,725</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM106A</td>
<td>Wym – Ayton Road</td>
<td>£326,355</td>
<td>£26,250</td>
<td>£26,250</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM122A/B</td>
<td>Wym Town Council, Middleton St</td>
<td>£272,934</td>
<td>£25,000</td>
<td>£35</td>
<td>£24,965</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM153A/B</td>
<td>21 Penfold Drive, Gateway 11, Wymondham, NR18 0WZ</td>
<td>£150,000</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
<td>£144</td>
<td>£11,856</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WYM154A/B</td>
<td>Unit 13, Wymondham Business Park</td>
<td>£577,102</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£17,086</td>
<td>£1,295</td>
<td>(18,382)</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

1. Where a "Y" is displayed in the "Note?" column, an explanatory note is provided at appendix 2. These relate to properties where the gross investment yield is below 5%.
2. Diss Business Centre is excluded from this schedule because it is not included within the Council’s asset register due to the relatively short leasehold nature of the Council’s tenure at the property.
Appendix 2 - Notes on properties identified in Appendix 1

Unit 5B, Owen Road, Diss
The gross yield reported for 2012/13 was affected by the then passing rent, which included a 50% first year discount. The rent has now increased to the full amount and provides a gross yield of 7.7%.

13 Vinces Road, Diss
Property acquired along with unit 15 early 2011 with knowledge that the tenant would vacate. Despite marketing through respected local agent, TW Gaze, it has not been possible to secure a further letting at the current time. Marketing activity continues at £13,000 p.a. although a substantial discount could be offered and still achieve the required gross yield of 5%. However, the current asking rent is considered to be the market rent and a reduction is not therefore recommended at this time.

9 Park Road, Diss
This unit was acquired as part of a site acquisition for strategic redevelopment of the land to the south of Park Road rather than to generate an investment return and net expenditure was anticipated and is acceptable given that purpose. The site is, however, being marketed by TW Gaze and some interest is being seen, which may generate some income in the shorter term to help offset the property holding costs for this strategic land holding.

Unit B17, Owen Road, Diss
Acquired 1/10/12 and simultaneously let on a 10 year lease with initial 4 month rent free incentive. Rent became payable at £6k p.a. from 1/2/13 so only £1k rent was received during the 2012/13 reporting period. Current rent of £6k p.a. generates a gross yield of 7.14% and, with stepped increases, generates an average yield of 11.3% p.a. over the term of the lease.

Unit B19, Owen Road, Diss
Acquired 1/10/12 and simultaneously let on a 10 year lease with initial 4 month rent free incentive. Rent became payable at £6k p.a. from 1/2/13 so only £1k rent was received during the 2012/13 reporting period. Current rent of £6k p.a. generates a gross yield of 7.14% and, with stepped increases, generates an average yield of 11.3% p.a. over the term of the lease.

Unit 18A, Harleston Industrial Estate, Harleston
Acquired 8/8/12 so only 8 months’ rent received during the 2012/13 reporting period. Annualised gross yield is 7.8%.

Unit 19A, Harleston Industrial Estate, Harleston
This property actually comprises a terrace of four light industrial units (19A-D) and the data reported on the spreadsheet is for all four units. The property was acquired on 1/10/12 for £195k and has already seen a slight capital uplift to £205k. Unit A was already let, with 6 months’ rent having been received during the 12/13 reporting period. On an annualised basis, this provides a yield of 2.8%. Units B-D were vacant on acquisition and are currently under offer, with terms agreed and completion expected by the end of August 13, with an initial 3 month rent free period.
Once fully let, income for the terrace will rise to £12,425, giving a gross and net yield of 6.04%.

**Unit 13 Wymondham Business Park, Wymondham**

This modern, well located and high quality light industrial units was acquired in November 11 with vacant possession and good rental prospects. We have seen good interest in the unit but a couple of genuine but abortive lettings have caused a delay in securing a tenant for the property. The property is now under offer, with contracts currently being prepared, which will generate rent of £39,950 p.a. and provide a gross yield of 6.9%. Prior works of £12,739 are required and will be undertaken with the benefit of an Agreement to Lease to secure the tenant for the property.

**Ayton Road, Wymnondham**

One property on Ayton Road (known as number 4) provides a yield below the required 5% return. This is a ground rent investment let on a long lease expiring in 2068. The rent was last reviewed in 2010 at £4,500 and the next review is due in 2030. There is very little opportunity to actively manage the property but there is also very little risk of vacancy and voids occurring and this consequently minimises void, maintenance and management costs. This investment is effectively an income bond and the current yield of 3.3% gross is acceptable on that basis, providing a good regular income stream with very little risk.
The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the delivery of localism in South Norfolk including progress against the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Board Task and Finish Group since the last Scrutiny review in February 2012.

The report also provides Members with an opportunity to assess the approach taken through Your Neighbourhood Your Choice, the lessons learned from the pilot year, and the proposed way forward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabinet member(s):</th>
<th>Ward(s) affected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cllr Martin Wilby</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Ian Lambert 01508 533943 or ilambert@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. **Purpose of Scrutiny**

   1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the delivery of localism in South Norfolk including progress against the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Board Task and Finish Group since the last Scrutiny review in February 2012.

   1.2 The report also provides Members with an opportunity to assess the approach taken through Your Neighbourhood Your Choice, the lessons learned from the pilot year, and the proposed way forward.

2. **Activity in Year One**

   2.1 South Norfolk Council (SNC) continues to develop many innovative approaches to Localism within the District. These approaches have seen SNC at the forefront of Localism delivery nationally with particular focus on Your Neighbourhood Your Choice (YNYC).

   2.2 YNYC is the Council’s main tool for delivering localism in South Norfolk. This approach has led to national recognition for our approach and culminated in a Local Government Association funded Peer Review visiting the Council to learn more about our approach and support us in improving this delivery mechanism.
Appendix 1 highlights a number of the recommendations made as a result and the actions taken to implement them. Key amongst these are:

- Undertaking a review of all funding.
- Reviewing the structure of the officer support to form the Communities Team in December 2012
- Producing role descriptions for members of Neighbourhood Boards

2.3 YNYC year one was a pilot and whilst there have been a number of successes there have been an equal number of lessons learned. In year one the consultation focussed very heavily on quantity of returns over quality of the information we were looking to collect. The consultation gave residents very little information on the possible services behind each choice.

2.4 A series of proposals were agreed by Cabinet in July 2012 and funding to deliver them allocated across the Neighbourhood Boards.

2.5 Successes:

- Key to the delivery of Localism in South Norfolk is the work the council does with small community groups. The Locality Officers provide an invaluable service to grass roots community groups and projects. Highlights include:

- Supporting the launch and subsequent work on the Bawburgh Community Led Plan.

- Supporting Hethersett to build capacity in volunteering to a level where they received the first Big Society National Award.

- Supporting Wacton to project manage and secure funding to demolish and rebuild their village hall.

- Establishing and maintaining Community Transport schemes to increase the accessibility of services to residents of rural communities.

- Supporting Flordon and Swainsthorpe to establish community facilities within their local churches when previously they had no community buildings.

- Supporting the sustainability of groups like Wymondham Stroke Support Club who provide vital respite for the carers of stroke victims.

- Working with our communities to ensure we had strong response to the YNYC consultation from each Neighbourhood Area.

2.6 The Handy Person Scheme is a positive example of the internal role the Communities Team play in the delivery of services to local communities. Following the first YNYC consultation it became clear that residents favoured an enhancement of the current provision. This resulted in the appointment of a dedicated coordinator for the scheme as well as an increased number of visits being made available and a wider range of services being provided. In terms of
the scheme itself the target number of visits expected between 1 August 2012 and 31 August 2013 was 403, the scheme achieved 585.

2.7. **Lessons learned:**

- As previously mentioned year one of YNYC was a pilot and with hindsight the programme would have been more efficient and effective if more time had been given to work up proposals. If YNYC had been a continuous programme of services enhancements and projects there may well have been larger projects cutting across whole communities. Instead some of the new service enhancements and projects were not explored in enough depth. This led to some initiatives failing to meet unrealistic targets that were set in the absence of a clear rational. Key amongst these were:

  - The targets set for the Community Volunteer Coordinator are unlikely to be met as for SNC to establish these would lead to duplication other provision. Therefore the role should change to one of mapping the existing provision and ensure residents access as many services available to them as possible. The role should also help the Council influence external providers to work closely with their partners to maximise the efficiency and value for money their service can deliver.

  - The Job Clubs have been successful in part however they have been slow to take off. In hindsight the Council may have provided a more effective and efficient service by piloting one or two job clubs for an initial period rather than launch all five new clubs over a few months.

2.8. The YNYC budget was underspent although spend against 12/13 initiatives continue to come through activities such as Job Clubs and the Handyperson Scheme. Considerable work has been done with the Management Accountant to develop new budget reports for use by officers and the Neighbourhood Board Chairs in order to present a clearer picture of the current spend.

2.9. It has been agreed that the Communities Manager will meet with the Cabinet Member and Neighbourhood Board Chairmen every two months so that they are more closely involved in budget monitoring.

2.10. Neighbourhood Boards will give serious consideration as to the merits of appointing staff to deliver certain services and projects. Year one led to the appointment of three new members of staff. The remaining members of staff are still delivering an excellent service however the departure of the Youth Activities Coordinator has meant a number of enhancements for young people have not been delivered and targets may not be met. Appointing a single member of staff does open the Council to the risk of single points of failure. Strong consideration will be given to commissioning external organisations to deliver services on behalf of the Council. This is already the case in respect to Job Clubs.

2.11. Neighbourhood Boards are key components of YNYC and a number of recommendations on how the Council can ensure they represent their communities effectively have been implemented. Many of these recommendations resulted from the Scrutiny lead Neighbourhood Board Review Task and Finish Group. Appendix 2 presents all the recommendations and the current position of implementation. Key amongst these are:
- The appointment of Community Representatives.

- Regular Neighbourhood Board meetings programmed throughout the year.

- Role descriptions for members of Neighbourhood Boards have been created.

The Communities Manager will ensure that Neighbourhood Boards are administered to the same standard as statutory committees.

3. **Your Neighbourhood, Your Choice - Year 2**

3.1. Key to the success of YNYC in year two is engaging with our communities in ever more meaningful ways. While the Neighbourhood Boards and YNYC are key components for the delivery of the effective localism it is recognised that they are conduits to communities who must increasingly be encouraged to develop self-sustaining solutions to local issues particularly as the levels of New Homes Bonus funding are likely to decrease over future years.

3.2. Against this backdrop the Council has recently completed the second YNYC consultation since the initial pilot. Learning a number of lessons from year one this consultation focused on qualitative methods of engagement as well as ensuring a significant quantity of public responses to provide us with a greater understanding of the district, helping us to deliver better services through YNYC.

3.3. The Council’s vision for empowering communities focuses on three themes:

- Ensuring services provided by us and other organisations reflect local priorities.

- That local communities benefit from growth in their area.

- That Communities become increasingly self-sustaining.

3.4. The Neighbourhood Boards, through the Communities Officers, has worked with its strategic partners to ensure we can develop innovative services in response to communities’ needs whilst avoiding duplication.

3.5. YNYC and Neighbourhood Boards are the main mechanism for delivering Localism in South Norfolk and ensuring residents have a say in how public money is spent. This approach has led to a number of initiatives and projects being delivered to ensure aspirations of our communities are met, building on the lessons learnt in year one.

3.6. The approach to year two is to run YNYC as a programme with a number of proposals being recommended to Cabinet in October 2013; only the projects that are ready to go will be presented. Officers will present further enhancements and projects as and when the rational and outcomes have been clearly explained with realistic targets in place.

3.7. This year’s consultation resulted in 2000 responses and a good coverage of all five neighbourhood areas. Some clear priorities have been identified and work on the strategic level proposals is underway and will be first shared with the
Neighbourhood Boards in on 26 September 2013 and ultimately submitted to the October 2013 Cabinet.

3.8. **Needs Assessment Tool Kit** – The Council have developed a Needs Assessment Toolkit which allows it to target services and resources in a more effective way. It utilises data and intelligence from a range of sources on a wide range of indicators (sports participation, health, deprivation, crime, transport, and demographics etc) and shows at a very local level what the issues affecting those geographical areas are. This was considered and agreed at the meeting of the Localism Committee in July 2013. For example:

- There are as many as one in three children in Costessey considered to be living in poverty, allowing us to target some of our family support interventions in this area.

- Over 25% of 10 and 11 year old are considered obese, with that figure being higher in some areas. This will allow us to target future work, such as education for parents and physical activity work in those localities.

- Less than one in five residents of Costessey are undertaking less than the 3 by 30 minute benchmark of sport and physical activity, which provided the rationale for the mobile gym partnership with Active Norfolk and North Norfolk District Council in that area.

3.9. **Partnership Working and Collaborative Approaches** – The Council has dedicated resource, in the form of Communities Officers, to strengthen partnerships with organisations that benefit the Council and enable it to influence the delivery of services to its residents. These include the South Norfolk Clinical Commission Group, Norfolk Police, Norfolk County Council, Active Norfolk and Apprenticeships Norfolk to list a few.

3.10. **Market Towns Initiative** – The market towns initiative aims to take localism at an economic level by focusing on growth within market towns – our service hubs. Through working in partnership with the local community (town councils, businesses and community leaders) we are utilising our many strengths. We are leading the way in developing and delivering a shared vision for all four market towns. Key stakeholders will work together to build the economic and social vibrancy of South Norfolk’s market towns – for the benefit of the District, by making them:

- Vibrant and full of vitality - We want our market towns to play a major role in our local economy and be a significant driver in the creation of jobs.

- Distinct communities - We want to retain and enhance the character of our market towns, emphasising the aspects that make them unique

- Self-sufficient - We want to give the maximum opportunity for residents and businesses to meet their day-to-day needs within the town they are located.

- Strong shopping and service centres - We want to revitalise and re-energise the retail and service industries in our market towns
• Destinations of choice – We want to make the most of the visitor economy (both locally, nationally and internationally) by effectively promoting what’s special about our market towns.

3.11. **Skills and Training for Young People** – South Norfolk Council launched the five new Job Clubs targeted at 16 to 25 year olds. These Job Clubs are run once a week in Diss, Wymondham, Loddon/Poringland (alternate weeks), Costessey and Long Stratton. There is also a Job Club already running in Harleston delivered by Harleston Information Plus (HIP).

3.12 **Community Safety** – through the development of the Speed Awareness Machines (SAM) scheme we have empowered community volunteers to help deal with speeding issues through their villages. We will be looking at ways we can work with partners to take forward future actions once a problem has been established.

3.12.1 Continuing to use restorative approaches to deal with community tensions issues more promptly and more likely have a sustainable solution. By encouraging the community to help resolve their own issues we can avoid costly formal sanctions and avoid escalation of unnecessary tension within the community that affects quality of life.

3.12.2 We are supporting communities to develop their own youth provision, particularly when provision is likely to fail through a lack of coordination/volunteers. By offering professional support for a limited period we can build up the skills and confidence of the communities to run their own provision.

3.12.3 We are supporting Diss, Wymondham and Harleston Town Councils and businesses in the towns to develop CCTV for their town centre. This new approach to CCTV moves away from a state run ‘big brother’ scheme and assists the overall town to become a safer more positive place to live and work. The system will be owned and operated by the community.

3.13 **Sport and Wellbeing** – through the development of the ‘Pedal Up’ project that will look to develop cycling in the district, both as a tourist attraction via the provision of hire bikes in four market town locations and numerous other cycling related activities such as community Sportives.

3.13.1 Management of the service enhancements agreed to be delivered from year 1 YNYC funding, including the hugely successful parkrun has been running over six months attracting 514 individual runners with an average of 58 runners per week. The Community Coach Development Bursary Scheme has committed 31 grants to date. The Family Fun Day at Caistor Roman Town attracted 700 attendees.

3.13.2 Continued delivery of the Holiday Activities programme, including the YNYC-funded Kids Camp at Long Stratton (199 attendees over 14 days), which has taken off after a slow start, Children’s
Outdoor Theatre and national Play Day (over 500 attendees), which continue to attract large numbers of residents

3.13.3 Engagement and development of new relationships and partnerships with potential providers of service enhancements such as Appleseed Care Farm, the Norfolk and Norwich Festival and SeaChange Arts

3.14 **Volunteering** – Year one of YNYC led to the Neighbourhood Boards recommending the appointment of a Community Volunteer Coordinator. Their appointment was initially envisaged as leading of the coordination of volunteering opportunities delivered by this Council. However the combined efforts of the Communities Officers and the Community Volunteer Coordinator (CVC) has realised a need to revise the district wide provision of Volunteering support, training and opportunities.

3.14.1 The CVC is currently mapping the current provision of volunteer support and learning who the target audience is. This mapping work will enable SNC to provide increased volunteering opportunities to those wishing to help out in their communities. It will also ensure that residents who fall within the target groups benefit from the support available through improved promotion. For example this work has already informed us that there are organisations delivering support for vulnerable residents through volunteering.

4. **New Developments**

4.1. Since January 2013 three new posts have been recruited to with the appointment of the Communities and Active Life Manager, the Funding Manager and the Communities Officer – Place.

4.2. The Council acknowledge that it has not supported the Boards as well as it would have liked. However agendas are now published well in advance of the meeting and action notes from the meeting published promptly afterwards in line with the Councils policies.

4.3. **Community “Rights”** - The Localism Act devolves certain powers to a local level to ensure people, community groups and their locally elected representatives can achieve local ambitions to strengthen their communities to achieve Localism. Some of these main measures relate to spatial issues and allow community groups, social enterprises and town and parish councils to have a greater say and influence over the area in which they live. These include:

- New rights and powers for communities and individuals -
  - Community right to challenge
  - Community right to bid

- Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective -
  - Neighbourhood development plans
  - Community right to build
These powers which came into force late in 2012 help communities to sustain and/or develop their areas in a way that meets local needs, and in response support, guidance and processes have been put in place to enable them to do this.

4.4. **Neighbourhood Development Planning** – The Communities Officer (Place) has been working extensively with Diss Town Team and Town Council to support them with their community planning and to ensure that effective relationships are built with SNC and the emerging Market Towns Initiative.

5. **South Norfolk Alliance**

5.1. At the Alliance meeting in April 2013 Members agreed that there was more work to be done outside the meetings to ensure that partners were working together with a strategic, district-wide approach. Looking for opportunities to pool resources and combine budgets with other partner organisations to achieve shared goals was a key role for the Alliance.

5.2. The Alliance Executive Board will establish a ‘lighter touch’ approach, meeting to establish a general strategic steer/direction, and receive feedback on the overall picture, whilst decision-making affecting specific activities, and any other minor matters, will be dealt with via remote, electronic communication between the members of the Alliance.

5.3. Consideration should also be given to the current membership of the Executive Board to ensure that they are able to make commitments on behalf of their organisations. The Alliance is a mechanism that enables the Council to work strategically with its partners something that will become increasingly embedded in our service delivery. Consideration is also being given to how we can work effectively with the County Council to develop shared approaches to working locally together.

5.4. One potential refinement being considered is to bring the chief executives of each of the Alliance partners together, perhaps twice a year, to address a particular theme and empower their respective Alliance Executive Board representative to work together to develop district-wide solutions to issues within that theme.

6. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

6.1. YNYC meets three of the Councils four Corporate Priorities.

6.2. Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in – by providing residents and communities with enhanced services that improve their quality of life.

6.3. Promoting a thriving local economy - by supporting communities and businesses through service enhancements such as the Market Town Initiative.

6.4. Supporting communities to realise their potential – by implementing services that build capacity within communities.
7. **Conclusion**

7.1. YNYC is still continuing to “bed in” as an approach to localism delivery in South Norfolk. Year one led to a number of improvements being made for year two including improvements to the style and content of consultation, the time allowed for interpretation of the results and running it as a rolling programme.

7.2. The Peer Review recommendations have been largely though not fully implemented as well as the recommendations approved by Cabinet in October 2012.

7.3. There is still a need for the Neighbourhood Boards to play a greater role in identifying and prioritising local initiatives.

7.4. The direction of travel is to continue to move away from traditional grant allocation and to ensure that funding is allocated to projects that ultimately build sustainable capacity within communities. This must be reflected in all applications for funding.

7.5. We will develop more robust business cases for new initiatives to ensure that the budget is allocated effectively and that it will be maximised in a way that demonstrated to local communities the benefits of local growth.

8. **Action Required**

8.1. Members are invited to consider the issues raised within the paper and in particular provide any recommendations for future development.

8.2. That members endorse the Council’s approach to Localism moving forward.
## Appendix 1 - LGA Keep it Real Project – Lessons from Swale & South Norfolk
### Actions to progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue identified</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Important practical decisions to be made about participatory budgeting include the sources and amounts to be allocated locally, the means of apportioning local budgets (e.g. allocation formulae), and the governance and accountability arrangements (e.g. individual councillors v neighbourhood boards; pre-qualification testing).</td>
<td>We will review the mechanism to proportioning the funding this year ready for year three. Although there is a clear link needed to new builds and the new homes bonus we will consider additional criteria such as poverty figures to determine allocation. Picked up as part of the Funding Manager’s review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The amount to be distributed locally needs to be large enough to feel meaningful, but not so large as to put wider strategic council commitments to be undermined.</td>
<td>Picked up as part of the Funding Manager’s review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In terms of what local budgets are used for, a shift from ‘who shouts the loudest’ to effective needs analysis is needed to support evidence-based decision-making e.g. through strengthening local appetites for neighbourhood plans. It is easy to overlook the role that local councillors can play in this process.</td>
<td>Work has already started with the Communities Officers focusing on an evidence led approach. Engagement will concentrate on engaging with hard to reach groups to ensure that all members of the community are represented. Through the officers in the Communities Team we need to actively support Members to engage will all residents and businesses in their Wards. The Locality Officers to programme regular meetings with all Members in their Neighbourhood and information the Members provide recorded, to help identify areas for support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The weighting given to social value in decision-making about priorities is important, raising questions about criteria for its identification and its measurement. However, this needs to be balanced against opportunities to grow the local economy, particularly in the current financial and economic climate.</td>
<td>This will form part of the review of proportioning funding identified in point 1, and will identify the key areas we want to develop such as allocating more funding to areas that need economic growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Effective engagement of the VCS is also key, notwithstanding capacity issues and current tensions around the shift from grant-giving to commissioning frameworks. Given the diversity of the voluntary and community sector, the local knowledge and engagement networks of local</td>
<td>Picked up as part of the Funding Manager’s review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong> Communications to promote engagement are a challenge and traditional approaches need to be supplemented by more innovative methods (e.g. ‘beauty parades’, flash meetings, Twitter). There is, however, a need for a sensitive balance between the use of traditional and modern communication methods – the ‘high-tech’ skills of local people – including vital local members – vary considerably.</td>
<td>This is an ongoing part of the Marketing and Engagement strategy with a particular focus on reaching out to older people, young people and middle age working population who were under represented last year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong> Specific investment in capacity building is essential.</td>
<td>New team structure will help deliver part of this, and we have dedicated staff resource to increase the number and skills of volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong> Review the role of officers to ensure that they reflect a more local focus, and recognise that this will take time if a sustainable culture change is to be realised. It is also important that officers recognise and embrace the role of local members. A different, more collaborative relationship between local members and officers needs to be developed, which supports member leadership and helps to develop community leadership for those members who need it.</td>
<td>New structure has reviewed roles and has addressed the point. Members’ development will form part of the corporate approach. We will be working on ways to develop Members understanding of their role and skills to deliver the role which included ‘job descriptions’ for Neighbourhood Board Chairman and Members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.</strong> Although they are often seen as an unnecessary bureaucracy, neighbourhood plans can be an effective means of establishing a shared local vision and delivery strategy.</td>
<td>Working with communities to identify local needs is an integral part YNYC and the new Growth and Localism Directorship will help to improve the link between the Communities and Planning functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The role of councillors</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.</strong> The relationships between county, district and parish councillors – in terms of roles, governance, communication and support – need to be reviewed, to ensure that they are appropriate to the context of localism within the region and that the capacity of separate elements is not overstretched. Are current parishing structures, governance and communications arrangements fit for purpose? How do these fit with the LSP and, where they exist, Neighbourhood Boards?</td>
<td>We will be working in year two to improve the links, and join up thinking and strategy between County, District and Parishes as well as working more closely with other strategic bodies such as the new Clinical Commissioning Groups and Police and Crime Commissioners office to understand need to deliver services. Potential role for the South Norfolk Alliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.</strong> Mechanisms for supporting and strengthening the role of councillors is critical to effective localism e.g. through mentoring, support in understanding role shifts; ward visits – but this needs to be rooted in practical on-the-ground settings and examples rather than through room-</td>
<td>As point 8, we will be reviewing how we can enhance the definition of the role for Members and how we can develop Members which will include exploring a mentoring scheme between Councillors. The JDs for Board Chairmen and members will help set a base line for roles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is scope for the Locality Officers to work more closely with Members on the ground to support them which will actioned this year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Consider ways of developing and enhancing the roles of elected Members as social entrepreneurs and as the “eyes and ears” of the council. This supports the monitoring and evaluation of the on-going viability of projects, and also the identification of new opportunities for local development. For obvious reasons, the main drive for localism in councils often comes from lead members. Although the development of local member leadership is usually identified as a key localism priority, establishing the necessary relationships, networks and development is often difficult in practice. This is not an easy area for development, but we believe it is key to the delivery of effective localism and to the identification and nurturing of the enthusiasts who are to become the local entrepreneurs who are so important to developing genuinely successful local projects.</th>
<th>Formed part of the review in points and 11.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. District and parish councillors have important roles in providing local leadership and building and developing effective local networks for gathering the widest range of views and informing decisions. These roles need to be defined and developed.</td>
<td>Formed part of the review in points 8 and 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The operational arrangements for localism need to be manageable and within the capacity of the parishes. What support do parishes need to enable them to engage more effectively in shaping local services, and how might these needs vary over time? There is unlikely to be a single model that fits all. Officers and members will have to think in a creative and innovative manner, in identifying how to meet the needs of parish councils of different sizes, with different demographics and geographies. The development of a response to this challenge may have to be phased if it is to be effective, and some parish councils will have to be patient and understanding as they wait their turn.</td>
<td>Developing an evidence based model (point 3) will help us understand the areas we need to focus on which will enable us to target support and capacity building those parishes that we have identified as potential areas for enhancements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Development of the clerk’s role must be supported and promoted. This might include the potential for pooling arrangements – to ensure that the parishes have the capacity to manage the potentially increased workload arising from localism. The traditional model of a part-time clerk serving a single council might be varied with some facilitation to develop a role where a clerk serves several councils, sharing IT equipment, formats and procedures to create an attractive whole time job with the ability to develop greater expertise.</td>
<td>This needs to be part of a wider review, including all parts of SNC. For this year we will be working with parish clerks in areas we have identified as potential areas of enhancements to see how we can support capacity building with the parish council structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Localism and asset and service transfer and commissioning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Risk analysis around asset and service transfers needs to include clear contingency plans to cover the political as well as the risks of project failure in asset and service transfers. Are risks to the long term viability of local projects – including such factors as the degree of dependency on volunteers, as well as the sustainability of the business model – incorporated into planning and risk analysis, What is the bottom line for the local authority if transferred assets and services prove unsustainable? A problem thought to have been solved can easily come back to ‘bite’ the council. Strong relationships and networks between local members and/or officers and the transferred asset are important in anticipating this danger.</td>
<td>Assessing the risk of services and social action projects is part of the current system of agreeing service enhancements / SAPs. We need to review the model we have to ensure it is robust enough meet the issues raised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Appropriate models for outcomes and value analysis need to be developed, which include social benefits and value – to ensure that the resources channelled through localism are delivering the best possible outcomes, represent value for money and provide the best balance between local and area needs. In the current economic and financial climate especially, models for local development will need to focus on supporting the local economy, as well as on financial viability and social benefit. It is never easy to balance these aims, but a positive economic impact may be as important as social benefit in securing local community support.</td>
<td>The focus in year 1 has been on developing services. Clear lead from last Board that year 2 of YNYC should focus on helping people into work (jobs clubs, skills and training, transport etc.). This links YNYC back to the growth agenda.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. The drive and enthusiasm of one or two individuals can be critical in bringing a project alive and sustaining it. These are often identified through personal contact and networks and are motivated by personal interest. Councils might explore how more such ‘community leaders’ might be identified and supported. This would appear to be a role for local members, which a straightforward development programme might help to embed effectively.

A strategic approach to volunteering will help to ensure that it is used to maximum effect. The ‘mapping’ of local volunteering, for example, will help to provide a clear picture of its scale and range across parishes (informal, everyday voluntary support between neighbours, as well as more formally structured volunteering), its capacity for development and support needs, while analysis of the risks and needs of volunteer-dependent projects, and of the demands likely to be made on volunteers, helps to plan effectively for sustainability. The scale of volunteering we now need to develop as a society demands a degree of professionalism and planning for failure as well as success, and recognition that expectations of volunteers cannot be the same as for paid staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting volunteering is currently part of the communities team resource. However the Community Volunteer Coordinator is currently a service enhancement to deliver specific outcomes and we will be looking at this role to see if this learning can be embedded into service enhancements and developing community capacity to deliver future services.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

19. Commissioning and procurement arrangements must be accessible, minimise bureaucracy and reflect the importance of social value. Do potential bidders have the capacity to respond, what support do they need, and how far are phased, iterative transfer arrangements appropriate?

As part of the Funding Manager’s review we will be working with the Commissioning Manager to look at how we procure and commission services to ensure it does not deter groups from working with us.
## Appendix 2 - Cabinet recommendations from 29 Oct 2012

### Action grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Membership of Board</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 The role and responsibilities of Board Chairmen will be defined by a “role description”.</td>
<td>New Job Description developed and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The role and responsibilities of all Board members will be defined by a “role description”.</td>
<td>New Job Description developed and implemented during the appointment of Community Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Membership and contact details will be displayed on the Council’s website.</td>
<td>Current neighbourhood web pages amended and contact details of Locality Officers added. Each Member of the Board is listed and picture of the Locality Officer and Neighbourhood Chairman has been added. (example <a href="http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/haveyoursay/5218.asp">http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/haveyoursay/5218.asp</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4 One County Councillor will be a member of each Board, to be nominated by the County Council. | NCC has nominated their Councillors. As of the 8 August 2013 they are as follows:  
**Mr Roger Smith**  
Tas Valley -  
**Mr Adrian Gunson**  
Northern Rivers Valley -  
**Miss Judith Virgo**  
Waveney Valley -  
**Mrs Jennifer Chamberlin** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Number of community representatives to remain at six, but representation has to cover a broad range of age, experience, expertise and relevant agencies.</td>
<td>The process of appointing Community Representatives has taken place there are still vacancies within all but one Neighbourhood Board area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Community Representatives will be entitled to claim travel expenses for attendance at Board meetings.</td>
<td>Agreed mechanism and budget with Committee Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7      | One community representative place will be filled from the town and parish councils in the neighbourhood, and will be elected through the Norfolk Association of Local Councils. | The Norfolk Association of Local Councils has nominated representatives on all five Neighbourhood Boards. They are as follows:  
Tas Valley – John Pennell  
Tiffey Valley - TBC  
Waveney Valley - TBC  
Northern River Valleys – TBC  
Eastern River Valleys - TBC |
| 8      | Community representatives should be nominated from within their community and elected to their position by the District Council Board members. They will hold a two-year term of office beginning in May 2013. Any vacancies that should arise within the two-year term of office will be the subject of a by- | A process for appointing Community Representatives was presented to the Localism Committee in March 2013. The approach was supported and recommended. The initial appointment process has been completed and the Current Community Reps are:  
**Tas Valley:**  
Ian Butler |
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Quorum to be increased to 5 Board members (three District Councillors and two Community Representatives).</td>
<td>To be incorporated in the Ground Rules (appendix 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A continuous programme of training and development will be provided to Chairmen and all Board members, eg presentation skills, chairing skills. Consideration to be given to mentoring.</td>
<td>A Training schedule to be created working with committee services. All new Community representatives will be asked to attend an induction session. To be held before the next formal Neighbourhood Boards in November 2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Implementation Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The power to take decisions on expenditure for urgent items should be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio holder and the relevant Neighbourhood Board Chairman.</td>
<td>Implemented. However the Delegated Authority for the Chief Executive has been passed to the Director of Growth &amp; Localism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Portfolio holder will have observer status at all Board meetings</td>
<td>Implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>No substitute members will be allowed.</td>
<td>Implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The number of meetings will be increased to six per year, three of which will be public as currently and three will be non-public meetings. Consideration will be given to a joint meeting of all Boards once or twice a year, under the auspices of the South Norfolk Alliance.</td>
<td>6 meetings in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>A programme of meetings will be fixed for a year in advance.</td>
<td>Meetings booked, making clear to Board Chairman that these should only be changed in exceptional circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Meetings should be held with variable days of the week and times to allow for evening and daytime sessions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Venues will be fit for purpose in terms of acoustics, car parking, DDA compliance and size. Venues should be selected to allow an inclusive layout suitable for the purpose of the meeting, eg workshop break-out</td>
<td>Locality Officers visit any new venues not previously assessed for their suitability for public meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Meetings should be held in venues across the neighbourhood. Consideration should be given to the time of year, eg avoid rural settings in the winter.</td>
<td>Locality Officer and Neighbourhood Chairman ensure the venue changes from meeting to meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Ideally, meetings will be limited to two hours, with a timed agenda to allow for networking. Agendas will have specific slots for the police and county council matters. Consideration should be given to themed meetings, with presentations from relevant agencies.</td>
<td>New agenda created to including slot for police and county council. Board Chairman instructed to manage meetings to ensure timed to 2 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>All necessary information for the meeting will be made available to all Board members at least a week before the meeting.</td>
<td>Locality Officers now send out Agendas and associated information at least 5 days before any Neighbourhood Board meeting. The information is also available on the Councils website at the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>A summary of the actions/outcomes from the meeting will be provided at the end of the meeting by the Chairman.</td>
<td>To be actioned at each meeting by each Chairman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Action notes of all meetings will be published on the Council’s website within 10 working days of the meeting. Action points will be written and distributed within 5 working days of the meeting.</td>
<td>Locality Officers circulate action notes for each meeting within this timeline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Marketing and Promotion**

<p>| 23 | Neighbourhood Boards to be marketed strongly using a variety of techniques, such as: Link Magazine – in a prominent position. “My South Norfolk” Social media, eg, twitter, facebook | The Communities Team are producing Neighbourhood Brochures to highlight various success that have been delivered in each area. Each Link magazine has contained a number of pages relating to Neighbourhood Boards and this will continue to happen. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Action points and date of next meeting to be circulated to relevant agencies and individuals to display locally. This is now in place although all information is now promptly placed on the Councils website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Board achievements and successes to be celebrated by use of plaques, certificates, posters and promotional material. The Communities Team are producing Neighbourhood Brochures to highlight various successes that have been delivered in each area. A number of posters and other promotional material are now in circulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Boards should have a clear identity. Consideration should be given to a logo. Each Neighbourhood Board now has distinct colours assigned to it. A logo will not be introduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Board members should be clearly identifiable at meetings, eg badges. Badges have been produced for existing members (pre-appointment of Community Reps). New badges will be supplied to new members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Displays at meeting to include map of neighbourhood area, photographs of members of the Board and achievements. Locality Officers erect displays before each Board meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Recommendations</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 Boards to ensure appropriate consultation is carried out with community groups, schools, voluntary bodies and other interested parties outside of meetings</td>
<td>The Communities Team have recently consulted with a broad cross section of residents during the six week YNYC consultation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Clarity of the role of the Boards and funding</td>
<td>While decisions of funding are not taken by Neighbourhood Boards themselves in all cases funding will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>streams is required.</td>
<td>only be approved if that particular project has the support of the local Neighbourhood Board.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2012-13 Performance

Throughout the year, Cabinet receives quarterly reports on the performance of the organisation, demonstrating delivery against performance targets, financial performance and management of risks. This report provides Scrutiny an update on the year-end organisational performance, demonstrating how the Council has delivered against its 2012-13 objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabinet member(s): David Bills</th>
<th>Ward(s) affected: All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Warren Salmons (Performance) – <a href="mailto:wsalmons@snorfolk.gov.uk">wsalmons@snorfolk.gov.uk</a>; 01508 533682</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Purpose of Scrutiny**

1.1. Scrutiny are receiving an update of the end of year performance report in order to scrutinise performance, ensuring that the performance monitoring is adequate and that by achieving performance targets that the Council is meeting its corporate priorities.

2. **Findings**

2.1. At the end of the performance year the Council had only one red indicator: BV012: Working days lost due to sickness absence.

2.2. Although higher than expected levels of sickness were reported at year end there was long-term sickness for a number of employees and nearly 40% of staff had no sickness at all our year end figure is on par with the public sector national average.

2.3. Reviewing the latest information at the end of Q1 (Cabinet report 22/07/2013) it is encouraging to see that we have reduced the level of sickness at South Norfolk Council in fact at the end of Q1 2013/14 it is 0.87 days per FTE lower that the same period last year and so is now reported as a green indicator.

2.4. Initiatives have been made and are being put into place, this will assist us to manage sickness absence, this includes sessions to be devised for staff at the leisure centre after work, a weight loss class for in lunchtime periods. Unison are developing the Health and Wellbeing week linked to the European Health and Safety Week, and are planning a day on exercise, food, road safety, the body and Unison is looking at ways to reduce staff sickness together with Staff forum.

3. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

3.1. Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.
3.2. Promoting a thriving local economy.

3.3. Supporting communities to realise their potential.

3.4. Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

4. Conclusion

4.1. Performance is an evolving cycle and Performance data is available to all members on line.

4.2. Performance indicators are set in conjunction with staff and members to ensure that they are challenging and realistic. Directorate planning workshops in the October/November for the next performance year for all staff across the authority sets the journey in motion.

4.3. All staff, with managers discuss performance against targets at regular team meetings. Measures are updated each period by managers into the Corvu system which is where the data is used to map performance activity. At the end of Qtr 1 this year we have displayed performance data on the performance wall to show progress against targets under the green, amber and red symbols for all to see.

4.4. Performance each quarter is reported to Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet and Portfolio holders are made aware of any amber and red targets to discuss trends and interventions. Each quarter the performance against targets is presented to Cabinet.

5. Action Required

5.1. Scrutiny Committee to note the performance recorded in 2012/13 and that the October/November Directorate planning workshops will be starting shortly for staff to input into the Plans for 2014/2015. The member workshop is currently scheduled to take place on 18 December 2013.
The Welfare Reform Agenda – The First Six Months

Revenues & Benefits Manager/Housing & Public Health Manager

To outline the impact of the Welfare Reform Agenda on our residents, review the outcomes so far and look ahead at how the Council intends to minimise the impact on residents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabinet member(s):</th>
<th>Ward(s) affected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yvonne Bendle</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Amanda Adams/Martyn Swann 01508 533773 aadams@s-norfolk.gov.uk mswann@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. **Background**

**Benefits changes from April 2013**

1.1. This year has seen significant change in many areas in welfare benefits. Those significant to us have been:

1.1.1. reduction in Housing Benefit (HB) for those in social housing who are deemed over occupied (aka the 'Bedroom Tax')

1.1.2. the replacement of Council Tax Benefit with Council Tax Support (CTS)

**Further changes since July 2013**

1.2. A Cap has been introduced (through cuts in Housing Benefit) for:

1.2.1. families in receipt of total benefits over £500 per week

1.2.2. single people in receipt of total benefits over £300 per week

1.2.3. Some of these changes have had an adverse and cumulative effect for many of our residents, particularly those who do not work.

2. **Impact on our residents (first 6 months)**

How many are affected?
2.1. We have around 4,500 households on HB that are Social Housing tenants of which:

2.1.1. 638 tenants have had HB reduced by 14% (average of £10.96 per week) due to over occupation

2.1.2. 78 tenants have had HB reduced by 25% (average of £19.58 per week) due to over occupation

2.2. Our local Council Tax Support Scheme affected 3599 residents.

2.2.1. 2161 were asked to pay council tax where they were not paying previously

2.2.2. Some of these were asked to pay for the first time

2.2.3. The average council tax bill for these residents on council tax support is £75.96 for the year

2.3. Prior to July the DWP identified 34 families who potentially were to be capped and therefore would have Housing Benefit reduced. Currently we are applying the Cap to 16 families who have lost benefit as follows:

2.3.1. 6 have had benefit reduced by less than £20 per week

2.3.2. 3 have had benefit reduced between £20 and £40 per week

2.3.3. 1 has had benefit reduced between £40 and £60 per week

2.3.4. 3 have had benefit reduced between £60 and £80 per week

2.3.5. 3 have had benefit reduced between £80 and £100 per week

Outcomes so far

2.4. The over occupation rules have affected rent collection figures for our largest social housing provider (Saffron) who are reporting that 27% of those affected had not made any payments for the extra rent by the end of Q1. However, many of these were waiting outcomes from their applications to us for Discretionary Payments. We have seen a significant increase in applications for this money this year; 606% increase so far.

2.5. Council Tax Collection is marginally down compared to this time last year (by 0.377%) which may be partly due to the new scheme. However, 85% of those people who were not used to paying any council tax are now paying towards their liability with 320 having yet to make a payment.

2.6. Of the original 34 families identified (by the DWP) who were to be affected by the Cap; 5 have started work, 1 has moved to more affordable accommodation and 6 were incorrectly identified. A further 6 have yet to have the Cap imposed.
3. **The initial response from South Norfolk Council**

3.1. Working across the Council we have adopted a framework approach to working with those affected. This work helped to pre-empt some of the adverse effects of Welfare Reform and has meant that we have not seen an increase in homelessness. Specifically, we have:

3.1.1. used analysis of categories to target specific groups to encourage people to pay regular amounts of council tax where previously they were not used to paying

3.1.2. worked hard to use the Discretionary Hardship Payments (funded by DWP) in order to get meaningful outcomes

3.1.3. made best use of SNC’s Home Options Scheme to give additional priority to existing tenants who are under occupying and who wish to downsize

3.1.4. revised our housing register and housing allocation scheme to target help to those most in need resulting in 39% of the housing register being housed throughout 2012/13.

3.1.5. proactively identified the need at an early stage for the provision of smaller affordable housing units through new developments to meet housing need, and help prevent under-occupation

3.1.6. maintained an emphasis on homelessness prevention

3.2. This is in addition to partnership working with Registered Social Landlords and the local Job Centre Plus where we have delivered the following:

3.2.1. undertaken detailed communication exercises for all affected by any aspect of the new legislation throughout the period January to July 2013

3.2.2. held workshops and shadowing sessions with Job Centre Plus to enable staff to work up joint approaches to customers thus reducing double handling

3.2.3. held joint visits with RSL staff in order to deliver an end-to-end service for customers affected by the Cap thus covering benefit, housing and employment issues in one hit. Of those who we have visited jointly 100% are either paying something towards their rent or all their rent.

4. **Going Forward**

4.1. The corporate framework approach utilises staff from housing and public health, revenues and benefits, community safety and the communities team.

4.2. Through this approach, we will continue to work closely with our partners - as this is clearly having a positive impact on our customers – with a view to developing a more preventative approach.
4.3. For example, by identifying erratic (council tax and rent) payment behaviour at an early stage and using resources to intervene earlier than the more traditional recovery processes (where contact is made after a more serious problem occurs) could prevent significant debt for the customer and save costs of recovery action and/or ultimately action from housing options.

4.4. Similarly, early intervention for those who become unemployed will be less resource intensive if we succeed in getting people back to work quickly (and off benefits).

5. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

   5.1. Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.

   5.2. Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

6. **Implications and Risks**

   6.1. Financial – There is an implication that collection rates may be adversely affected.

7. **Conclusion**

   7.1. The welfare reform agenda is committed to changing behaviours. Our approach supports that through working jointly within the council and with our external partners in a preventative framework.

8. **Action Required**

   8.1. Scrutiny is requested to note the work done by the Council in supporting our residents; and the plans to strengthen this work further still. Members also to make recommendations as appropriate, with a view to identify areas which may require further monitoring and review by the Scrutiny Committee.
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme

In setting future Scrutiny TOPICS, the Committee is asked to consider the following:

T  timely – O  objective – P  performance – I  interest – C  Corporate Priority

T  Is this the right time to review this issue and is there sufficient Officer time and resource to conduct the review? What is the timescale?
O  What is the reason for review; do officers have a clear objective?
P  Can performance in this area be improved by input from Scrutiny?
I  Is there sufficient interest (particular from the public)? The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny.
C  Will the review assist the Council achieve its Corporate Priorities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of meeting</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Organisation/ Officer/ Responsible Cabinet Member</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Method(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 13</td>
<td>Policy Committee Review</td>
<td>Compliance and Risk Manager and all Cabinet and Deputy Cabinet members</td>
<td>For members to assess the effectiveness of the Cabinet Policy Committees in delivering their role. Matters considered will include the role of Portfolio Holders and Deputy Cabinet members; interaction between Cabinet and Policy Committees, the sharing of best practice amongst policy committees and the development of member skills to support policy committees.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 13</td>
<td>Review of nplaw: update</td>
<td>Compliance and Risk Manager &amp; Cllr G Wheatley</td>
<td>For members to consider a review of nplaw since the last scrutiny review in December 2012, including the performance of the service received from nplaw, satisfaction levels, savings achieved, impact on resilience and the reliance on legal advice from Solicitors.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov 13</td>
<td>Engagement and Marketing review</td>
<td>Engagement and Marketing Manager and Cllr J Fuller</td>
<td>For members to assess the value added by engagement and marketing activity with customers through the different marketing channels (eg, web, social media, printed material such as the Link Magazine, consultation, etc).</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Dec 13</td>
<td>Individual Electoral Registration (IER)</td>
<td>Electoral Services Team Leader &amp; IER Regional Delivery Manager for the East of England and London, and Cllr J Fuller</td>
<td>For members to receive a presentation from the Electoral Commission’s IER Regional Delivery Manager for the East of England and London regarding individual registration. Members to learn of the changes to electoral registration and how they will impact on the council and on residents. Members to make recommendations as appropriate based on how the Council will implement and manage the new system.</td>
<td>Officer report &amp; external witness presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Dec 13</td>
<td>Draft Directorate Plans</td>
<td>All Directors and all Cabinet members</td>
<td>For members to ensure the alignment of the 2014/15 Directorate Plans with the Corporate Business Plan and Budget priorities; particularly the big picture and strategic measures.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of meeting</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Organisation/ Officer/ Responsible Cabinet Member</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Method(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Dec 13</td>
<td>Volunteering in South Norfolk</td>
<td>Communities Officer – People and Volunteer Co-ordinator &amp; Cllr M Wilby</td>
<td>For members to review how the Council is encouraging volunteering and assisting organisations that support volunteering throughout the District. Members to also gain an overall picture of volunteering in the District, with contributions from the voluntary sector. This review is scheduled a year into a two-year temporary post (Volunteer co-ordinator) that has been established to support volunteering in the District. Members to be in a position to make recommendations as appropriate.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Dec 13</td>
<td>Council Funding review</td>
<td>The Funding Manager and Cllr M Wilby</td>
<td>For members to consider the level of funding the Council has attracted in the last 12 months. The review to include the success rate of applications made, what has been delivered/gained from funding, who the funding has assisted, the funding multiplier and intervention rate. Members to also consider how the Council has assisted partners to become more self-sufficient in relation to obtaining their own funding. Members to also consider the outcome of the work undertaken regarding Service Level Agreements and Social Action Projects.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>CNC Building Control Review</td>
<td>Deputy Chief Executive and Cllr D Bills</td>
<td>Members to review the transition of CNC Building Control to South Norfolk Council; including the outcomes from the ICT investment and savings delivered, how risks have been monitored and mitigated, and how customers are responding to the new arrangements.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14</td>
<td>Review of SNC funding schemes</td>
<td>The Funding Manager and Cllr M Wilby</td>
<td>For the Committee to receive an update regarding the implementation of the new structure for the management of Council funding schemes. Members to receive details of the number of applications received and grants awarded, the decision-making process, the effectiveness of the promotion of the funding available and the clarification given to Councillors of all tiers of local government. This should enable members to assess the first 12 months of the implementation of the schemes and make recommendations as appropriate.</td>
<td>Officer review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Responsible Officer &amp; Committee</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 10 April 2013 | New funding schemes | Nina Cunningham and Cabinet | **Recommendation to CABINET:** Recommend that Cabinet agree the recommendations in the report. Additionally Scrutiny Committee recommends that:  
  - The outcome of the work to be undertaken regarding SLAs and SAPs is presented to the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 December 2013 as part of the Council Funding Review.  
  - The Scrutiny Committee reviews the new structure for the management of South Norfolk Council’s Funding Schemes in March 2014.  
  - District and parish councillors are briefed once funding schemes are implemented to advise of the structure, channels of communication and contacts within the Council | Cabinet accepted all the additional recommendations of Scrutiny Committee. | This work is in progress  
A briefing took place at the Parish Clerks’ Consultation meeting on 20 June 2013. District members were advised of the changes in an email on 13 September 2013. | Members at different levels understand the various funding streams and are able to advise community groups on how to access such funds. |
| 10 April 2013 | QDJ Community Champions | Oliver Hill | Scrutiny Committee **endorsed:** The Award Scheme is currently under review. |                                |                                                                         |
| 22 May 2013 | **Awards** | 1. the plans to run the South Norfolk Community Champion Awards 2013 as detailed in the report, which will replace last year’s awards  
2. that the process of short-listing nominations and deciding winners remain the same as last year. | Options being considered are:  
1. the scheme to remain the same; or  
2. the awards to operate like the pub of the year competition, with a winner in each neighbourhood area and an overall winner. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Pension Reform</strong></td>
<td>Jackie Foglietta</td>
<td>The Chairman suggested that changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) should be positively promoted to both reassure existing scheme members and to encourage new and existing employees to join the pension scheme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>