Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 30 September 2015

9.30 am, Colman & Cavell Rooms
South Norfolk House, Long Stratton, Norfolk, NR15 2XE

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

Contact: Sue Elliott on 01508 533943 or democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk
Members of the Scrutiny Committee:

Cllr L Neal (Chairman)
Cllr T Lewis (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr B Bernard
Cllr B Duffin
Cllr D Fulcher
Cllr C Gould
Cllr K Kiddie
Cllr G Minshull
Cllr J Wilby

Group Meetings

Conservatives – 9:00 Blomefield Room
Liberal Democrats – 9:00 Kett Room

This meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed by the public; however anyone who wishes to do so must inform the chairman and ensure it is done in a non-disruptive and public manner. Please review the Council's guidance on filming and recording meetings available in the meeting room.
Agenda

1. To report apologies for absence and identify substitute voting members (if any);

2. To deal with any items of business the Chairman decides should be considered as matters 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 attached page 6)

4. To confirm the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 3 July 2015; (copy attached – page 7)

5. Review of the Work of the Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board; (report attached – page 11)

6. Scrutiny Work Programme, Tracker and Cabinet Core Agenda; (attached – page 16)
Working style of the Scrutiny Committee and a protocol for those attending

**Independence**
Members of the Scrutiny Committee will not be subject to whipping arrangements by party groups.

**Member leadership**
Members of the Committee will take the lead in selecting topics for and in questioning witnesses. The Committee 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 Committee 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 Committee should not feel under attack.

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

**Openness and transparency**
The Committee’s 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 Committee 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 Committee will give impartial and independent advice, recognising the importance of the Scrutiny Committee 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. Members 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 Committee 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.
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

Members are asked to declare any interests they have in the meeting. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates.

- In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote on the matter.
- If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed.
- If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting.
- Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.
- In any case, members have the right to remove themselves from the meeting or the voting if they consider, in the circumstances, it is appropriate to do so.

Should Members have any concerns relating to interests they have, they are encouraged to contact the Monitoring Officer (or Deputy) or another member of the Democratic Services Team in advance of the meeting.
The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 8 April 2015, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
Following a brief introduction by Cllr M Wilby, the Communities and Democratic Services Manager presented her report which sought to assist the Scrutiny Committee in their review of Neighbourhood Grants. The Committee was reminded that in May 2014, Cabinet had agreed to replace the Neighbourhood Board structure with a scheme which would enable members to award grants to support initiatives in their own areas. Officers were pleased to report that much positive feedback had been received regarding the scheme during the first year of the new approach to working, and that local members had worked together with Neighbourhood Chairmen to support many worthy, local projects and had made a real difference in the community. Members were asked to consider the findings in the report and to identify any potential improvements to the current ways of working.

It was noted that the word ‘not’ in paragraph 2.8 of the report under Criteria for funding was an error. This sentence should read, “At present, the ground rules prevent the funding of proposals where the grant recipient has received South Norfolk Council funding for the same activity within the previous 2 year period”.

The Committee discussed the timescales for processing successful grant applications. Officers advised that, in contrast to average turnaround times of 84 days with the old Neighbourhood Fund scheme, Member Ward Grants were mostly being processed within hours of acceptance, and that Community Action Fund (CAF) Grants were taking an average of 15 days to complete. Members learned that this was, in part, due to a change in emphasis requiring members to ensure that the necessary framework was already in place.

The Committee was pleased to note that very few applications for grant funding had been rejected and this was mostly attributed to local members and Neighbourhood Chairmen liaising closely with officers to ensure that the required criteria was being met. Officers commented that in some cases, where potential projects did not qualify under the criteria for Member Ward grants or CAF funding, members were offered help in finding alternative funding from other sources. There was some discussion around the Council’s decision not to support projects or schemes where Norfolk County Council funding had been withdrawn. The Communities and Democratic Services Manager clarified the position, adding that South Norfolk Council could only consider funding projects which are sustainable in the future. One Neighbourhood Chairman commented that requests for funding to pay rents and salaries also did not fit the criteria, but that members would always try to assist those groups in other ways.

Neighbourhood Chairmen, Cllr Overton and Cllr Riches were invited to share their experiences of the scheme during its first year, and the recently appointed Neighbourhood Chairmen for Tas Valley, Cllr Easton and Tiffey Valley, Cllr Broome were asked to advise the Committee of their thoughts and experiences of the scheme so far.

Cllr Overton addressed the Committee and advised of the various projects in his area which had benefitted from grant awards, including the provision of a defibrillator in Shotesham, a footpath link in Beccles, funding to enable the completion of a football clubhouse at Yelverton,
an archive book of Poringland, funding for Brooke Scouts, the archiving and display of 1950’s photographs of Seething Airfield, and an open day at Caistor Roman Town. Members were advised that, although members had promoted the scheme through social media and in parish magazines, it had been difficult to spread the awareness of available funding to local groups during the previous year, but reassured the Committee that word was starting to spread and that local groups were already making enquiries regarding their projects for the current financial year. Cllr Overton stressed the importance of liaising with local members regarding potential projects and also encouraged members to consider the pooling of funds where there was an overlap and where a project might benefit a wider area. He strongly felt that a spread of funding over the neighbourhood area was the best way to ensure fairness.

Cllr Riches spoke of his experiences during the past year, advising the Committee that projects funded for village halls in Starston and Bressingham had been well received and had made a huge difference to local people. Members were informed that although enquiries were considered from Market Towns, these were usually re-directed to instead seek funding through the Market Towns Initiative (MTI). In response to a question regarding the promotion and advertising of the scheme, Cllr Riches advised the Committee that he had made local groups aware of available funding through parish magazines and by word of mouth.

Cllr Easton addressed the Committee and advised members that he had, so far, funded one application in his area for the Saxlingham Scouts’ hut floor, and had received a few other enquiries. He stated the importance of managing the expectations of potential applicants, the need to encourage parishes to work together, and spoke of the varying needs, experience levels and enthusiasm of different community groups and parish councils.

Cllr Broome echoed the importance of local members working together, which had achieved the provision of a defibrillator in his area. Members were advised that several meetings had been arranged and interests had been noted for potential projects, including the provision of equipment for Hingham Village Hall.

Members discussed the need for parish councils and local groups to be made more aware of the funding available for projects. It was suggested that Neighbourhood Chairmen should be encouraged to speak to parish councils directly in order to promote the available funding but, after discussion, it was felt that this was too onerous a task and it was accepted that this should instead be the responsibility of the local members. It was agreed that members should not limit their advertising to parish councils but should speak to community groups and seek out opportunities to provide funding in their local areas. Cllr Duffin advised the Committee that, as an employee of Community Action Norfolk, he was in contact with many local groups and village hall users in South Norfolk, and that he would be happy to assist with the promotion of the scheme.

In response to a member’s query, it was agreed that a document be circulated to members to clarify the details of the Member Budget grants and the CAF. It was also noted that two villages, Ashwellthorpe and Tacolneston had been moved from the Tiffey Valley Neighbourhood Area into the Tas Valley Neighbourhood Area, and officers agreed to amend the map on the Council’s website accordingly.
The Committee questioned the New Homes Bonus (NHB) and asked whether this was still likely to be available to provide funding in the future. The Director of Growth & Localism advised that the future of the NHB was not yet clear but that he thought any response to future consultations on NHB the Council would be supporting options that can demonstrate the relationship between growth and providing benefits to local communities.

The Chairman summed up the discussion and thanked the Neighbourhood Chairmen for their contribution to the meeting. Members of the Committee were pleased with the progress of Neighbourhood Grants and recognised that it was providing a real benefit to local communities. It was felt that no changes or improvements were necessary to the current ways of working.

It was then:

RESOLVED

to note the Neighbourhood Grants Report and its findings.

1145 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND THE CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and the Cabinet Core Agenda and were encouraged to contact the Scrutiny Officer with any ideas for future items.

The Scrutiny Officer stated that, since the introduction of Cabinet Policy Committees, much work regarding the development of policies had been undertaken and that it might be useful for the Committee to look further into this. She advised that she had arranged a meeting for the Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and lead officers of the policy committees to discuss the various work programmes and to identify any areas which might be of interest to the Scrutiny Committee, and any policies which the Committee might want to review in the future.

(The meeting concluded at 10.47 am)
Review of the work of the Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board

Report of the Head of Environmental Services

Cabinet Member:

Cllr. K. Mason Billig
Environment and Recycling Portfolio holder

CONTACT
Bob Wade 01508 533787
bwade@s-norfolk.gov.uk
1. Introduction

1.1 Water management is a complex area of work for this Council in association with a number of other bodies and partners including the Environment Agency, water utility companies and Norfolk County Council. Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Norfolk.

1.2 Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) are one of these bodies also tasked with water management in the district. Each IDB is a local public authority established in areas of special drainage need - in South Norfolk there are two main IDB areas which only cover part of the district – Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland and the Norfolk Rivers in the east and west respectively. IDBs have permissive powers to manage water levels and flood risk within their respective drainage districts and raise income for this purpose from a variety of sources including a special levy on this Council. The special levy on the Council was £58,676 in 2015/16 from the Norfolk Rivers (NR) and £84,556.99 from the Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland IDB. The Council also pays a small special levy of £2,419 to the Broads IDB but has no representation on the Board unlike the previously mentioned. Further information on the work of the IDBs can be found at [http://www.ada.org.uk/about_idbs.html](http://www.ada.org.uk/about_idbs.html) and the Norfolk Rivers in particular - [http://www.wlma.org.uk/index.pl?id=41](http://www.wlma.org.uk/index.pl?id=41). This latter link also provides information on the main river network and further background as context.

1.3 The purpose of this report is to outline the remit of the Norfolk Rivers IDB, introduce its work plan and gain an understanding of its priorities in terms of cost pressures and budget setting. The Chief Executive of the IDB and the Water Management Alliance will present on the work of the IDB including the financing and operations. This will give Members the opportunity to gain an insight into this work and the thinking that is currently going on for the future.

1.4 In particular there is a proposal by the Norfolk Rivers IDB supported by the EA to pilot a catchment approach to water management. Officers have been considering this approach with partners and the Committee has an opportunity to explore this further with the IDB and provide views on this.
2. Background.

2.1 There are 113 IDBs in England – they were abolished in Wales earlier this year. IDBs cover 1.2 million hectares of England (9.7% of the total land area of the country). They play a key role in managing flood risk in their areas by operating and maintaining pumping stations and infrastructure across over 20,000 km of watercourses.

2.2 The work of the IDBs are closely linked with that of the Environment Agency (EA) which has a range of functions providing a supervisory role over them. Watercourses designated as main rivers are the responsibility of the EA. Non main river watercourses (ordinary watercourses) are the responsibility of riparian landowners or the IDB in their areas.

2.3 In terms of local concerns in the district, the main concern is obviously flooding and the work needed to mitigate risk and deliver local and sustainable water management. The body tasked with overseeing and coordinating flood risk management is now Norfolk County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). This role was created following on from the Pitt Review by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA) and requires that the authority develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management in its area. The EA, IDBs, Anglian Water Services Ltd and the district councils have a range of powers and responsibilities to manage water and flood risk and endeavour to work closely together to this end. Surface water flooding management (typically that caused by heavy downpours and constituting local flooding) is not the responsibility of the IDB although the causes of such flooding are often complex and may include fluvial, highway and other influences. The LLFA are primarily responsible for at least the initial response to surface water flooding.
3 Current Position

3.1 The Committee will have the opportunity to understand the work of the IDB and the background drivers by the presentation and follow up questions to the Chief Executive of the Water Management Alliance.

4 Proposals

4.1 It is proposed that the Committee:

- Consider the work of the Norfolk Rivers IDB in the light of the presentation and the general approach to water management across the district by the Norfolk Rivers IDB and others
- Given the above, offer views and proposals about current working and proposals for future working

5 Risks and Implications arising

5.1 Financial – the work of the IDB is supported by the Council via a special levy. The Council is operating in a stringent financial environment and the work of the IDB now and in the future must deliver value for money and avoid placing additional burdens on local taxpayers.

5.2 Legal – water management and drainage law is a very complex area with multiple partners and community needs. The law needs to be applied effectively to deliver the best outcomes

5.3 Environmental – protection of the manmade and natural environment in a sustainable manner is a key outcome across the district.
5.4 Equalities – policies and approaches that are fair to everyone.
5.5 Crime Reduction – none directly attributable

6 Recommendation

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the work of the Norfolk Rivers IDB including proposals for future working and offer views accordingly.
**Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme**

In setting future Scrutiny **TOPICS**, the Committee is asked to consider the following: **T**imely – **O**bjective – **P**erformance – **I**nterest – **C**orporate 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** (particularly from the public)? The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny.

**C** Will the review assist the Council to achieve its **Corporate Priorities**?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of meeting</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Organisation / Officer / Responsible member</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Method(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Nov 15</td>
<td>Corporate Plan</td>
<td>Chief Executive &amp; Cllr J Fuller</td>
<td>For members to review and assess the draft Corporate Plan 2016-2020 before it is considered by Cabinet on 7 December. Members to make any suggested amendments or recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Nov 15</td>
<td>Market Towns Initiative</td>
<td>Head of Economic Growth and the Market Towns Co-ordinator &amp; Cllr J Fuller</td>
<td>For Members to receive an update on the Market Towns Initiative and evaluate forward planning of the Scheme. Representatives of the Town Teams to be invited to allow members to gauge success of the Scheme from the perspective of the Teams themselves. Scrutiny Committee to make recommendations as appropriate.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Nov 15</td>
<td>Council run Public Conveniences</td>
<td>Director of Community Services &amp; Cllr J Fuller</td>
<td>Members to receive an update regarding the new public conveniences installed throughout the District’s towns. Members to analyse feedback received from the public, particularly complaints. The Committee to also learn how much income has been received since the new toilets have been in operation and receive a general update regarding progress so far with the programme of refurbishment and the public opinion.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2015</td>
<td>Thematic Plan Member Workshop</td>
<td>All SLT &amp; Senior Managers and All Cabinet members</td>
<td>Members to review the draft Directorate Plans 2016/17 and make recommendations to officers in an informal workshop environment. This is a great opportunity for members to find out what work is planned for the coming year and influence the direction of the Council and where resources are allocated.</td>
<td>All-member workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Dec 15 (Mon)</td>
<td>No items scheduled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 2016</td>
<td>2016/17 Budget</td>
<td>Director of Business Development &amp; Cllr M Edney</td>
<td>For Scrutiny Committee to consider the Council’s 2016/17 budget and the recommendations of Cabinet and further for the Committee to make its own recommendations to Council regarding the budget for consideration at its meeting at the end of February 2016.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
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<td>Date of meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>Health and Wellbeing Strategy review</td>
<td>Housing and Public Health Manager and Cllr Y Bendle</td>
<td>For the Committee to review the Council’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy that was adopted in June 2014. Members to assess the impact of the Strategy and outcomes achieved and consider making any recommendations as appropriate as a result of the review.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>Scrutiny Annual Report</td>
<td>Scrutiny Officer &amp; the Scrutiny Committee Chairman</td>
<td>For members to consider the Annual Report of Scrutiny Committee ahead of consideration at the Council AGM.</td>
<td>Officer report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Responsible Officer &amp; Committee</td>
<td>Resolution and Recommendations</td>
<td>Progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 July 2015</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Grants</td>
<td>Leah Mickleborough</td>
<td>RESOLVED: to note the Neighbourhood Grants Report and its findings.</td>
<td>No action required</td>
</tr>
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## CABINET CORE AGENDA 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decisions: Key, Policy, Operational</th>
<th>Key Decision/Item</th>
<th>Lead Officer</th>
<th>Cabinet Member</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Nov</td>
<td>Performance Risk and Revenue Outturn Report Quarter 2</td>
<td>M Fernandez-Graham/ W Salmons/ E Goddard</td>
<td>M Edney</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>Capital Outturn Report for Quarter 2</td>
<td>M Fernandez-Graham</td>
<td>M Edney</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>Treasury Mgt Report Quarter 2</td>
<td>M Fernandez-Graham</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>IT Strategy</td>
<td>M Sage</td>
<td>M Edney</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Statement of Licensing Policy</td>
<td>A Cox</td>
<td>L Hornby</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Statement of Gambling Policy</td>
<td>A Cox</td>
<td>L Hornby</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Environment Policy</td>
<td>B Wade</td>
<td>K Mason Billig</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Local Plan Review Update</td>
<td>A Nicholls</td>
<td>J Fuller</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Dec</td>
<td>Proposals for A11 Growth Corridor</td>
<td>N Cunningham</td>
<td>J Fuller</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Economic Strategy</td>
<td>J Munson</td>
<td>J Fuller</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Food Enterprise Zone</td>
<td>J Munson</td>
<td>J Fuller</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Leisure Pricing</td>
<td>S Goddard</td>
<td>M Wilby</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Corporate Plan 2016</td>
<td>S Dinneen</td>
<td>J Fuller</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Housing Strategy</td>
<td>L Pickering</td>
<td>Y Bendle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Council Tax Support Scheme 2016/17</td>
<td>A Adams</td>
<td>Y Bendle</td>
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</tbody>
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Key decisions are those which result in income, expenditure or savings with a gross full year effect of £100,000 or 10% of the Council’s net portfolio budget whichever is the greater which has not been included in the relevant portfolio budget, or are significant (e.g. in environmental, physical, social or economic) in terms of its effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.