

SCRUTINY

NEWSLETTER

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ISSUE 14

SPRING 2012

Introduction

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

Chair's welcome

the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny is always keen to receive the public's input into the work that it does and to make this easier for you all Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings are held in public and anyone is welcome to attend to listen to the proceedings. You can speak on any agenda item for a maximum of three minutes per item. You are not required to register your intention to speak in advance but should arrive a few minutes early, complete a Public Speaking Protocol and notify the Scrutiny Officer of your intention to speak.

Is there anything you would like the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review?

The Committee welcomes suggestions for topics of inquiries and will consider issues put forward by members of the public, interest groups or businesses.

Suggestions for review must meet the following criteria:

- Affect a group or community of people (Scrutiny will not usually look at individual service complaints)
- Relate to a service, event or issue in which the Council has a significant stake
- Not be an issue which Overview and Scrutiny has considered during the last 12 months

Not be a planning issue or other matter dealt with by another Council Committee, except where the issue relates to a process

Overview and Scrutiny will prioritise all suggestions early in March 2012 so please forward your ideas to the Scrutiny Officer by 7th February 2012.

Please download the How to Get Involved in Overview and Scrutiny Form for your future reference.

This issue of the e-newsletter provides a summary of the work of the Scrutiny Panels and I am pleased to report that findings of Scrutiny Panel 3 – Community Empowerment Fund were welcomed by Cabinet at its meeting on 14 December 2011.

I hope that you find this newsletter useful and informative.



Councillor Les Marriott
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

How are Scrutiny Reviews carried out?

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

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

Scrutiny Panels are responsible for managing each Review by gathering and taking evidence. At the end of the Review they present their findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

What's happening in Overview and Scrutiny?

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to make progress on the areas of work identified in the Work Programme at the beginning of the Council year.

Recently completed Review

Councillor Empowerment Fund

The purpose of this Review was to recommend a suitable scheme for a Northampton Councillor Empowerment Fund that enables Councillors to efficiently and effectively allocate money within their ward to make a positive impact on the areas they represent and to empower local residents to be active in their communities.

The Leader of the Council addressed the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programming event for 2011/2012 and informed non-Executives of the Council's priorities and challenges for the forthcoming year. The establishment of a Councillor Empowerment Fund Scheme was recognised as a key priority. This issue was therefore included within the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/2012.

A Scrutiny Panel was established and the Review commenced in July 2011 and the Scrutiny Panel concluded its work in November 2011.

The Panel received both written and spoken evidence from a wide variety of expert advisors including the Portfolio Holders for Community Engagement and Finance, Northampton Borough Council, Officers of Kettering Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council and representatives of the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The recommendations are contained within the report and can be found on page 4 (Executive Summary). The report has been published on the Overview and Scrutiny page on the [Council's website](#).



Current Reviews

Hate Crime

The purpose of this Review is to ensure that the approach to dealing with hate crime is embedded and responded to within Northampton Borough Council (NBC).

Independent Living Strategy

The purpose of this Review is to evaluate the draft Independent Living Strategy for older people and make recommendations for development of this Strategy.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny offers two free days of support to Scrutiny Committees, who are undertaking work in this area. The Chair of the Scrutiny Panel, supported by the co opted member, the Chair of Northamptonshire County Council's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, submitted a bid for this support. The bid was successful and the Panel has been assigned an Advisor. The Advisor met with the Chair and then the Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 7th December 2011. The Advisor will add valued contribution to this important review.

Both of the above Reviews are currently at the mid-evidence gathering stage and are due to report their findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the spring 2012.

Customer Services

The Scrutiny Panel will agree the scope of this Review at its meeting in January which will then be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny and Committee for approval.

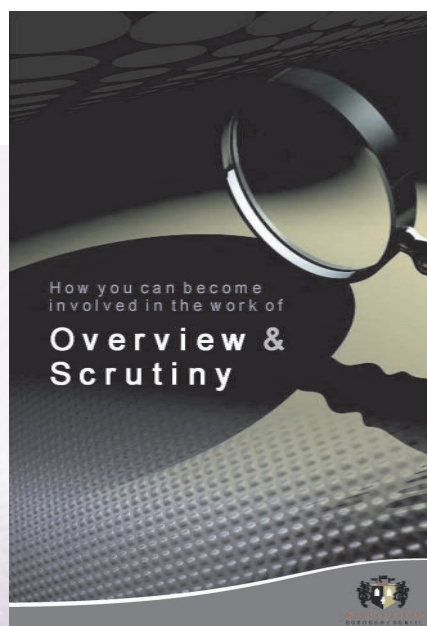
Budget Scrutiny

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a Reporting and Monitoring Working Group that investigates providing scrutiny input early on in the budget process. It also reviews the effects and implications of the budget changes.

The recommendations of this Working Group will be received and discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23rd January 2012.

How to get Involved

There are a number of ways in which you can find out about the work of Overview and Scrutiny which are detailed on the Overview and Scrutiny webpage.



Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Panel Dates for your diary

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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 2012**
- 23 January
 - 26 March
 - 28 May

Scrutiny Panel 1 Hate Crime	Scrutiny Panel 2 Independent Living Strategies	Scrutiny Panel 3 Customer Services
<p>2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 19 January <input type="checkbox"/> 6 February 	<p>2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 11 January <input type="checkbox"/> 15 February 	<p>2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 5 January <input type="checkbox"/> 2 February <input type="checkbox"/> 1 March <input type="checkbox"/> 21 March <input type="checkbox"/> 19 April

To find out more

-  Visit our website:
www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny
-  **Email:** ttiff@northampton.gov.uk
to ask for information
-  Or call the **Scrutiny Officer, Tracy Tiff,**
on **01604 837408**
-  Copies of all Overview and Scrutiny Review Reports are located at:
www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

