

# SCRUTINY

## NEWSLETTER

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ISSUE 20

OCTOBER 2014

## Introduction

The October 2014 edition of the Overview and Scrutiny newsletter is the twentieth production. 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

Three in-depth Scrutiny Reviews are underway and the Scrutiny Panels have now started their evidence gathering. They are receiving information from a variety of expert advisors, desktop research and carrying out a number of site visits. All three Scrutiny Panels will conclude their findings in March 2015 with the final reports being presented to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scheduled for 23 March 2015. Further details about these in-depth Reviews are given later in this newsletter.

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 meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny committee and its Panels are held in public. 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.

The Overview and Scrutiny newsletter is published three times a year. If you want more details of how Overview and Scrutiny operates at Northampton please contact the Scrutiny Officer who will be very happy to arrange a one to one and provide a full briefing.

I hope that you find this newsletter useful and informative. Dates of forthcoming meetings are detailed on the last page of this newsletter.

**Councillor Jamie Lane**  
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee



## How are Scrutiny Reviews carried out?

Scrutiny 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 a Scrutiny Panel for the life of the Review. All of the current Scrutiny Reviews have co-opted members assigned to them.

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





## Scrutiny Activity for 2014/2015

### Interpersonal Violence

The purpose of this in-depth Scrutiny Review is to review Northampton Borough Council's response in addressing issues around interpersonal violence (domestic abuse, sexual abuse and child exploitation), centring on domestic abuse. Whether it is growing and more generally what are the trends (including migration)

The required outcomes are:

- To clearly identify existing domestic abuse services and partnerships covering Northampton
- To consider and assess the roles and responsibilities of the various organisations involved in addressing domestic violence including the Police.
- To identify any gaps in service provision in order to assess the adequacy for supporting victims of domestic abuse
- To make recommendations for future development of services
- To identify the underlying causes of domestic violence and preventative measures
- To identify the responsibilities of the Local Authority, for example strategic housing
- To identify funding mechanisms and how this could be used to alleviate the problem

This Review is benefitting from the expertise and knowledge of co-opted Members from Northamptonshire Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Scrutiny Panel has just begun its evidence gathering and it is anticipated that it will report its findings to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny on 23 March 2015.



### Keep Northampton Tidy

The purpose of this Scrutiny Review is:

- To undertake a review regarding implementing a 'Keep Northampton Tidy' campaign with an accent on preserving wildlife and encouraging children (and adults) to take an interest in their surroundings, to include Community Clean Ups and 'Northampton in Bloom.'
- A review of the problem of littering and fly-tipping, particularly in un-adopted roads and the gateways into the town.
- To explore opportunities to enhance the gateways into the town.

The required outcomes are:

- To substantially raise people's awareness and appreciation of keeping Northampton tidy and their role in this
- To continue to get community groups involved in keeping Northampton tidy
- To ensure that existing limited resources are utilised fully to raising people's awareness and appreciation of keeping Northampton tidy and their role in this
- To identify areas that have a detrimental effect on the image of the town
- To work with other Agencies to minimise fly-tipping and littering and discourage this taking place, as well as enhancing the gateways into the town

This Review is benefitting from the expertise and knowledge of co-opted Members from the Northamptonshire Waste Partnership.

The Scrutiny Panel has just begun its evidence gathering and it is anticipated that it will report its findings to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny on 23 March 2015.





## Poverty in the Town

The purpose of this important Scrutiny activity is to review poverty in the town to ascertain whether it is a serious issue: Whether it growing and more generally what are the trends (including migration)

- What are the causes of poverty locally?
- What can public services do in this time of austerity?
- What can other groups/individuals do to help?
- What the impact is, if any, is there on the economy, crime, health and education

The required outcomes are to make informed recommendations to all relevant parties on the most appropriate approaches to take to address the causes and mitigate the impact of poverty in Northampton.

The Chair of the Environment, Development and Transport Scrutiny Committee at Northamptonshire County Council has been co-opted to the Scrutiny Panel for the life of the Review.

This Review is also at the early evidence gathering stage. It is expected that the Scrutiny Panel will conclude its work in March 2015.



## 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

- 10 November 2014
- 23 March 2015
- 26 January 2015
- 6 July 2015

Scrutiny Panel 1 – Interpersonal Violence	Scrutiny Panel 2 – Poverty in the Town	Scrutiny Panel 3 – Keep Northampton Tidy
○ 23 October 2014	○ 19 November 2014	○ 22 October 2014
○ 4 December 2014	○ 8 January 2015	○ 26 November 2014
○ 22 January 2015	○ 12 February 2015	○ 15 January 2015
○ 5 March 2015	○ 11 March 2015	○ 9 March 2015

## Welfare Reform Act

The purpose of this Review was to evaluate the effect of the Welfare Reform Act on the public and Council employees. This Review was concluded in September 2014 and the report received and welcomed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report will be presented to a meeting of Cabinet for its consideration.

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

So far the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee this year has been busy. It has looked at the bus station, information relation to the ALMO and the ownership and location of outdoor lighting that is owned by Northampton Borough Council. The Committee has also continued to undertake its performance management scrutiny role and crime and disorder scrutiny role.

A Working Group of the Committee has been set up and this Group will, early next year scrutinise the Council's budget proposals. The Working Group will identify three key budget proposals for the Committee to scrutinise in-depth.

## To find out more



Visit our [website](#)



[Email](#) to ask for more information



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

