

introduction

The **June 2010** edition of the Overview and Scrutiny Newsletter is the eleventh 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 Management Committee

I was recently appointed Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and I am very keen to promote the good work that Overview and Scrutiny at Northampton has undertaken and will continue to carry out over the next year and future years.

Overview and Scrutiny is a vital part of the Northampton Borough Council's responsibility to its residents. It works on behalf of residents to highlight issues of concern and make recommendations for improvement to the Council and local partners.

I will seek to empower residents, Councillors, co-opted Members and Officers by encouraging everyone to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panel meetings. Membership of the Scrutiny Panels is open to all non-Executives and I encourage you all to put your name forward and become involved in these high profile Scrutiny Reviews.

It is important for Overview and Scrutiny to become involved with decisions at an appropriate early stage to apply real influence and therefore play the important role of 'critical friend'. The first piece of pre-decision scrutiny work that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook early in this new Council year was looking at the Delapre Abbey Options Appraisal.

Over the next year, Overview and Scrutiny will be carrying out some very high profile Reviews and this, and future newsletters, will keep you up to date with developments.



**Councillor Christopher Malpas
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 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.

Our Task and Finish Groups have now become Scrutiny Panels but please be assured that this is not just a name change. The main difference is that the Scrutiny Panels will be holding their meetings in public. Public addresses and public attendance is very much welcomed at these meetings, as it is for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Scrutiny Activity for 2010/2011

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2010/2011 was recently approved and the three in-depth Reviews that are currently underway are: -

- **Northamptonshire Alcohol Strategy** - to review the local delivery of Northamptonshire Alcohol Strategy in Northampton
- **Commissioning Framework for the Third Sector** - to investigate the development of a commissioning Framework for the Third Sector
- **Absence Management** - to evaluate the impact that staff absence has upon service delivery.

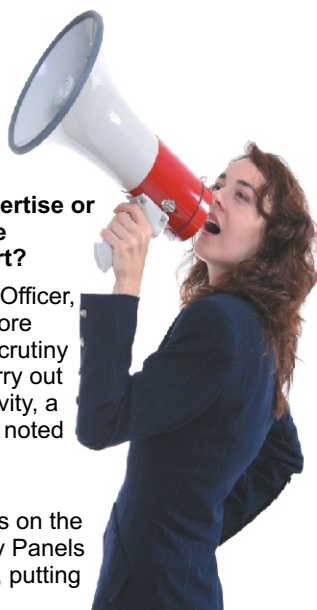


The Scrutiny Panels Need You

Are you a Councillor who is not a Member of the Council's Executive (non-Executive) and do you have expertise or an interest in one of more of the three Scrutiny Reviews that are due to start?

If so, please contact Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer, who will be really pleased to give you more information and add your name to the Scrutiny Panel membership. Scrutiny Panels carry out in-depth, exciting pieces of Scrutiny activity, a number of previous Reviews have been noted as examples of best practice.

Remember Overview and Scrutiny at Northampton is Member-led and focuses on the major issues affecting the town. Scrutiny Panels are one way of making a real difference, putting forward important recommendations.



What happened in Overview and Scrutiny over the last few months

The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2009/2010 has recently been published and details the good work undertaken by the Scrutiny Committees and its Task and Finish Groups last year.

A short snapshot of the good work during 2009/2010: -

- **Praise for Overview and Scrutiny** - A series of Overview and Scrutiny processes, procedures and documents have been commended.
- **Dedicated four year rolling training programme for non-Executive Councillors**
- **Training session on Overview and Scrutiny for Officers**
- **Production of an Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan**

Completed Reviews included:-

- **More Facilities for Older Children** - The Review demonstrated good joint working with local partners and was undertaken as a result of the public's expressing the opinion that this subject matter should be scrutinised
- **Concessionary Fares Appreciative Inquiry** - The Review was undertaken as a result of non-Executive's taking into consideration the public's concerns and comments around this issue.
- **Community Centres** - This Review demonstrated Overview and Scrutiny, as a critical friend to Cabinet, supporting the development of Policy for Community Centres.
- **Sheltered Housing and Housing Options for Older People** - This was a comprehensive Review, which received a huge evidence base. The final report was presented to Cabinet in June 2010.
- **Cost of Consultants** - Another comprehensive Review that reported its findings to Cabinet in June 2010.

Overview and Scrutiny 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

2010	2011
<input type="checkbox"/> 7 June	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 January
<input type="checkbox"/> 16 June	<input type="checkbox"/> 28 March
<input type="checkbox"/> 20 September	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 June
<input type="checkbox"/> 15 November	

Scrutiny Panel H (Northants Alcohol Strategy)	Scrutiny Panel RP (Absence Management)	Scrutiny Panel E (Commissioning Framework for the Third Sector)
2010 <input type="checkbox"/> 21 June <input type="checkbox"/> 4 October <input type="checkbox"/> 29 November	2010 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 July <input type="checkbox"/> 20 October <input type="checkbox"/> 8 December	2010 <input type="checkbox"/> 15 July <input type="checkbox"/> 4 November <input type="checkbox"/> 16 December
2011 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 February <input type="checkbox"/> 20 June	2011 <input type="checkbox"/> 16 February <input type="checkbox"/> 6 July	2011 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 March <input type="checkbox"/> 21 July

To find out more



Visit our website:

www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny



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



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



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

www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

