

Northampton Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Please find enclosed the agenda and supporting papers for the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **Monday, 9 September 2013**

Time: **6:00 pm**

Place: **The Jeffrey Room, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE.**

If you need any advice or information regarding this agenda please phone Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer, telephone 01604 837408 (direct dial), email ttiff@northampton.gov.uk who will be able to assist with your enquiry. For further information regarding the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** please visit the website www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Members of the Committee

Chair	Councillor Jamie Lane
Deputy-Chair	Councillor Brian W Sargeant
Committee Members	Councillor Tony Ansell Councillor Joy Capstick Councillor John Caswell Councillor Michael Ford Councillor Brendan Glynane Councillor Elizabeth Gowen Councillor Phil Larratt Councillor Matthew Lynch Councillor Lee Mason Councillor Nilesh Ramesh Parekh Councillor Suresh Patel Councillor Sivaramen Subbarayan Councillor Winston Strachan

Calendar of meetings

Date	Room
11 November 2013 6:00 pm 27 January 2014	All meetings to be held in the Jeffrey Room at the Guildhall unless otherwise stated

Northampton Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee

7 April 9 June	
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Northampton Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Item No and Time	Title	Pages	Action required
1	Apologies		Members to note any apologies and substitution
2	Minutes	1 - 5	Members to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2013
3	Deputations/Public Addresses		<p>The Chair to note public address requests.</p> <p>The public can speak on any agenda item for a maximum of three minutes per speaker per item. You are not required to register your intention to speak in advance but should arrive at the meeting a few minutes early, complete a Public Address Protocol and notify the Scrutiny Officer of your intention to speak.</p>
4	Declarations of Interest (Including Whipping)		Members to state any interests.
5	Monitoring implementation of the accepted recommendations contained in the Overview and Scrutiny report		<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor the implementation of the accepted recommendations contained in the following reports:</p> <p>Hate Crime Reporting Mechanisms</p>
5 (a) 6.05pm	Hate Crime Reporting Mechanisms		
6 6.20pm	Response of Cabinet to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Report: Retail Experience	6 - 21	The Committee to consider Cabinet's response to the report of Scrutiny Panel 2- Retail Experience.
7	Monitoring implementation of the accepted recommendations contained in the Overview and Scrutiny report		<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor the implementation of the accepted recommendations contained in the Overview and Scrutiny report:</p> <p>Customer Services</p>
7 (a) 6.30pm	Customer Services	22 - 25	

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8 6.45pm	Performance Management Scrutiny	26 - 36	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the following performance measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Measure TC005n - Town Centre Footfall. • Performance Measure ESC02% - Missed bins corrected within 24 hours of notification. • Performance Measure ESCO4% - Household waste recycled and composted. • Performance Measure PP09 - Overall Crime Figures for the Period. • Performance Measure CS13 – Percentage of all calls into the Contact Centre answered.
9 7.05pm	Progress on the implementation of the Tenants' Engagement Strategy	37 - 40	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive a progress report on the implementation of the Tenants' Engagement Strategy.
10 7.20pm	Welfare Reform and the impact on rent income collection	41 - 42	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive an update on the Welfare Reform and the impact on rent income collection.
11 7.35pm	Scrutiny Panels		<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive a progress report from the Scrutiny Panels.</p> <p>In accordance with the Scrutiny Panel Protocol this item is for the Committee's information with no discussion.</p>
11 (a)	Scrutiny Panel 1 - Improving the town's parks	43	
11 (b)	Scrutiny Panel 2 - Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (including	44	

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	HIMOs)		
12 7.40pm	Overview and Scrutiny Excellence Plan 2013-2015	45 - 53	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to approve the Overview and Scrutiny Excellence Plan 2013-2015.
13 7.45pm	Report back from NBC's representative to NCC's Health, Adult Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee		Councillor Matt Lynch to provide an update on the work of NCC's Health, Adult Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (Copy to follow).
14	Potential future pre decision scrutiny	54 - 56	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider any potential issues for future pre decision scrutiny.
15 7.50pm	Urgent Items		This issue is for business that by reasons of the special circumstances to be specified, the Chair is of the opinion is of sufficient urgency to consider. Members or Officers that wish to raise urgent items are to inform the Chair in advance.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 25 July 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair): Councillor Brian Sargeant (Deputy Chair), Councillors Tony Ansell, Joy Capstick, Mick Ford, Phil Larratt, Nilesh Parekh, Winston Strachan and Nazim Choudary (substituting for Councillor Elizabeth Gowen)

Councillor Tim Hadland , Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning (Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Mary Markham, Cabinet Member – Housing (Agenda Item 6)

Steve Boyes, Director – Planning (Agenda Item 5)
Richard Birchett, Interim Head of Landlord Services (Agenda Item 6)
Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Elizabeth Gowen, Matt Lynch, Lee Mason, Suresh Patel and Sivaramen Subbarayan.

Councillor Nazim Choudary substituted for Councillor Elizabeth Gowen.

2. MINUTES

Subject to the removal of the sentence “He requested that officer recommendation of Enterprise Loan Panel was too restrictive and be changed to Enterprise Funding in general” from the preamble in minute item number 9 (c), the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2013 were signed by the Chair as a true record.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

Councillor Joy Capstick declared an interest in agenda item 5 – West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) as a member of the Localisation Programme Board and an interest in agenda item 8(b) – Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (Including HIMOs) as a tenant of a private landlord.

Councillor Brian Sargeant declared an interest in agenda item 8(b) – Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (Including HIMOs) as a landlord of a private property.

Councillor Tim Hadland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning, declared an interest in agenda item 5 – West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) as a member of the Localisation Programme Board.

5. WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION(WNDC)

The Committee considered a briefing note detailing the transition from West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) to Northampton Borough Council (NBC).

Councillor Tim Hadland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning, elaborated on the key points within the briefing note and responded to the Committee's questions:

- Work is on-going regarding an exemplar closure of WNDC and around securing the future of projects, assets and work streams that affect the borough and Northamptonshire.
- WNDC currently has revenue support from the Government and NBC will require funding to take projects forward. There is a need to secure revenue funding post March 2014.
- Future Government arrangements will be discussed by the Project Board.
- Work is currently on-going regarding specific Projects that are on a partnership basis.
- In response to a query regarding assets, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had a preference for a "local home" for assets and this was being investigated by the Project Board.
- It is anticipated that further details regarding the closure of WNDC would be available by the end of October 2013.

The Committee was provided with a brief update on the Projects:

St Johns
Project Angel
Grosvenor/Greyfriars
Avon/Nunn Mills

AGREED: That the Committee receives a further report on West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) at its meeting on 11 November 2013.

6. NBC OWNED STREET LIGHTING

Councillor Mary Markham, Cabinet Member for Housing, provided the Committee with an update regarding outside lighting that is owned by Northampton Borough Council (NBC).

The main points were highlighted:

- Work is on-going regarding the production of a Corporate Asset Register that will identify the location of street lighting that is owned by NBC. It is envisaged that the assessment will be completed by the autumn 2013.
- Inspections are also taking place that are part of a comprehensive assessment of lighting. It will also establish issues such as which street lights are turned off and who has responsibility for the lights – the Highways Authority or the Housing Authority.
- A member of the Committee highlighted an issue regarding the turning off of an outside light in a sheltered housing complex. Residents had campaigned and the lighting was now left on overnight.
- The Committee provided details of soft outside lighting in other sheltered housing complexes and alley ways.
- It was confirmed that the location of some street lighting was available on the Balfour Beatty website.
- The Cabinet Member apprised that work had commenced on plotting the location of lighting onto NBC's interactive mapping and once the Corporate Asset Register was complete, all lighting would be inputted on to the map.
- In response to a query, the Cabinet Member confirmed that it was not an option to "piggy back" onto Northamptonshire County Council's (NCC) Street Lighting Contract.
- In accordance with the contract, if NCC turns a street light back on, a light must be turned off elsewhere.
- A Review of Sheltered Housing is incorporated into part of Phase 3 of the Decent Homes Standards. As part of the Decent Homes Standards, there is a requirement for an outside light to be fitted outside each property in sheltered housing complexes.

AGREED: That the Cabinet Member for Housing provides further details of NBC owned street lighting to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 November 2013.

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the 2012-2013 Out-turn Report and Corporate Performance - All Measures Report.

The main points of discussion were:

- **Performance Measure TC005n** – Town Centre Footfall. The Committee confirmed that it would be useful for the Cabinet Member to provide details of how footfall is

calculated and where footfall counters are located. Councillors were also keen to receive further details regarding the trend across the country and how this is calculated.

- **Performance Measure ESC02%** - Missed bins corrected within 24 hours of notification. The Committee confirmed that it would be useful for the Cabinet Member to provide details to the next meeting on why this measure was below target.
- **Performance Measure ESC04%** - Household waste recycled and composted. The Committee confirmed that it would be useful for the Cabinet Member to attend the next meeting to provide further details on this measure and why it was below target.
- **Performance Measure PP09** - Overall Crime Figures for the Period. The Committee noted that all crime had reduced by 2.2% and suggested that the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) be asked to attend the next meeting to provide a breakdown of the crime figures.
- **Performance Measure CS13** – Percentage of all calls into the Contact Centre answered. The Committee queried resourcing for the Contact Centre and suggested that the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide details of demand to the Contact Centre and resources provided.
- The Committee confirmed that it would monitor, over the next few meetings, the trend of performance measures NI157a % and NI157b% regarding the determination of planning applications.
- The Committee was pleased to note the performance target for re-letting NBC housing.

AGREED: That the relevant Cabinet Members and the Chair of the CSP be asked to attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the performance measures:

- CS13
- ESC02
- ESC04
- PP09
- TC005n

8. SCRUTINY PANELS

8(A) SCRUTINY PANEL 1 - IMPROVING THE TOWN'S PARKS

The Committee noted the report on the progress of the work of Scrutiny Panel 1 – Improving the Town's Parks.

8(B) SCRUTINY PANEL 2 - MANAGEMENT AND REGULATION OF PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING (INCLUDING HIMOS)

The Committee received a report of the Chair of Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing which asked that the scope of the Review is approved.

It was requested that the purpose of the Review be updated to read “To investigate the regulation and management of private lettings, both by landlords and agencies.”

The Committee suggested Eastern European Groups as potential additional witnesses to inform the Review.

AGREED: (1) That the purpose of the Review be updated to read “To investigate the regulation and management of private lettings, both by landlords and agencies.”

(2) That the scope of the Review – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing is approved.

9. URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 19:20 hours

Appendices

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NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET REPORT

Report Title

Northampton Town Centre – The Next Steps

AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	17 th July 2013
Key Decision:	Yes
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning and Customers and Communities
Accountable Cabinet Members:	Councillor David Mackintosh Councillor Tim Hadland Councillor Brandon Eldred Councillor Mike Hallam
Ward(s)	Castle

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To set out the council's strategic proposals for improving Northampton Town Centre, incorporating its response to Overview and Scrutiny Committee's May 2013 Retail Experience report.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Reaffirms the town centre as a major strategic priority for the council and agrees to add it as an improvement project to **Northampton Alive**.
- 2.2 Agrees to establish a **Town Team** to lead the town centre improvement agenda, as per paragraphs 3.1.76/7 to provide the strategic vision and operational management for Northampton town centre and to oversee a detailed plan for implementing the actions arising from this report.

- 2.3 In accordance with the Administration's manifesto commitment to appoint a **High Street Czar**, agrees to appoint local businessman Stephen Church for a period of four months, for the purpose of producing an independent report proposing a strategic and collaborative vision for the town centre and agrees that the position will be known as **Town Centre Summit Chairman**.
- 2.4 Further to paragraph 2.3, agrees to host a **Town Centre Summit**, on 20th September 2013, led by the Town Centre Summit Chairman, to allow partners and stakeholders to actively inform the town centre vision.
- 2.5 Agrees to introduce a regular **town centre newsletter** from the council to town centre businesses to keep stakeholders well informed and up to date about what is going on.
- 2.6 Agrees to a summer trial of **free car parking** all day Saturday and for two hours on week days during the whole of August 2013 in the council's pay on exit car parks (St John's, Mayorhold and St Michaels), with Sundays continuing to be free all day, leading to a reduction in income that could be £180,000.
- 2.7 Further to recommendation 2.6, agrees to review the impact of **car parking reductions** following the August 2013 trial.
- 2.8 In partnership with Northamptonshire County Council (subject to agreement of the detailed business case), approves the utilisation of the £100,000 received by the council from the Town Centre Innovation Fund to implement **pay on exit at the Grosvenor Centre Car Park**, including the option to pay by credit and debit card.
- 2.9 Further to recommendation 2.8, agrees that pay on exit machines are procured from Metric Group Limited for the reasons set out in paragraphs 4.2.5/6.
- 2.10 Endorses the proposals in the council's 2013/14 Capital Programme to install improved **car park signs** on the main entrance roads into the town centre to direct motorists to their most convenient car park and provide up to the minute information on where spaces are available.
- 2.11 Acknowledges the contribution that **Northampton Town Centre Limited** (the Town Centre BID), has made to improving the Town Centre.
- 2.12 Agrees to commence consultation with local businesses on the creation of a **business improvement district for Wellingborough Road**.
- 2.13 Acknowledges the challenge that **empty shops** and **negligent and/or absent landlords** present to the council's ambitions for a vibrant and thriving town centre and requests that an action plan is promptly developed to address the problem with a **public register of landlords**.
- 2.14 Approves proposals for major improvements to the **public realm** in the **Cultural Quarter**, to be delivered in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council, set to be outlined later this year.
- 2.15 Endorses the establishment of a **town centre ranger** post, dedicated to keeping the town centre in pristine condition.

- 2.16 Makes a commitment to try to reduce the blight of **discarded chewing gum** on town centre streets.
- 2.17 In partnership with Northamptonshire County Council, agrees to launch a formal consultation process to determine whether to **re-open the middle section of Abington Street** to vehicles to allow easier access for shoppers and visitors to the town centre.
- 2.18 Further to recommendation 2.17, agrees to relocate the **Francis Crick Memorial Statue** to a suitable location.
- 2.19 Agrees to rollout **free Wi-Fi** across the entire town centre.
- 2.20 Agrees that an exciting **programme of summer events** is developed to bring more visitors into the town centre, including regular performances provided from a town centre bandstand.
- 2.21 Agrees that dedicated **busker spots** are created around the town centre to encourage more and better quality buskers.
- 2.22 Agrees that a review of the town's **night time economy** is undertaken to make certain the council, local businesses, Northamptonshire Police and other partners work together effectively to ensure the town centre is safe, as well as vibrant, and has something to attract a wide cross section of visitors.
- 2.23 Acknowledges the problem of **street drinkers and beggars** in the town centre and requests that an action plan is promptly developed to address the problem.
- 2.24 Endorses the work currently being undertaken, in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council, on a pioneering **urban bicycle-hire scheme**, to be implemented in the town centre during the summer.
- 2.25 Agrees that a public consultation is undertaken on future of the **Market Square fountain** during the summer of 2013.
- 2.26 Accepts all of the recommendations made in Overview and Scrutiny Committee's May 2013 **Retail Experience report** and thanks Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its valuable work.
- 2.27 Endorses the allocation of £195,000 from the New Homes Bonus Reserve, in accordance with the delegations in the Constitution, to fund recommendations 2.6, 2.18 and 2.19 in 2013/14 and, for all of the remaining recommendations that have a financial impact, with the exception of recommendation 2.8, agrees that they will be funded from previously approved revenue and capital budgets.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

Current position

- 3.1.1 Determined partnership working between the council, businesses, the Town Centre Business Improvement District and other partners has enabled Northampton town centre to perform better than many other similar size town centres since the onset of the economic downturn in 2007. Nonetheless, Northampton has not escaped the recession entirely unscathed, evidenced by factors such as a reduction in footfall and a rise in the empty shop rate.
- 3.1.2 A change in political leadership of the town has brought to bear renewed energy and ambition for the future of the town centre. There is now clear recognition of the contribution a vibrant, thriving town centre will make to the economic and social prosperity of Northampton, and the wider county.
- 3.1.3 In the past two years, many improvements to the town centre have been implemented or set in train, including:
- 3.1.3.1 Free and reduced price car parking successfully introduced in the council's town centre car parks in October 2011 to attract visitors to the town centre and to encourage them to dwell longer.
- 3.1.3.2 Designation of the prestigious Waterside Enterprise Zone to promote investment, jobs and growth in the town.
- 3.1.3.3 Redevelopment of Northampton Railway Station on the site of the historic castle, which now forms a heritage gateway to the town.
- 3.1.3.4 Worked with Northamptonshire County Council on developing proposals for the Angel Street office accommodation regeneration project which will bring thousands of office workers into the town centre, having a major impact on the town centre economy.
- 3.1.3.5 Worked with the University of Northampton to enable the construction of student residential accommodation for nearly 500 students on the former St John's surface car park site.
- 3.1.3.6 Supported the University of Northampton's relocation proposals that will see them move in 2018 to a modern new campus at Avon Nunn Mills, within the Waterside Enterprise Zone.
- 3.1.3.7 Secured agreement for a 105 bed hotel at Albion Place, bringing both visitors and jobs to the town centre.
- 3.1.3.8 Designation of a Cultural Quarter in the town centre, encompassing Northampton's key cultural venues.
- 3.1.3.9 Extensively refurbished Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, significantly improving one of the town centre's main visitor attractions.
- 3.1.3.10 Launch of the Love Northampton web site and tourist information guide to encourage more visitors to the town centre.

- 3.1.3.11 Construction underway of a smart, new, fit for purpose, bus interchange, enabling demolition of the dilapidated and outdated Greyfriars bus station.
- 3.1.3.12 Provision of free Wi-Fi on the Market Square.
- 3.1.3.13 Delivered major improvements to Abington Street public realm, giving the town centre a welcome makeover.
- 3.1.3.14 Major improvements proposed to public realm in the Drapery to enhance the appearance of the area around the new bus interchange.
- 3.1.3.15 The creation of a town centre ranger post, dedicated to keeping the town centre in pristine condition
- 3.1.3.16 Resolved the issues caused by skateboarders in the town centre by creating a modern skate park, with café and toilet facilities set to open shortly.
- 3.1.3.17 In partnership with the police and the Town Centre BID, supported the 'Don't Kill with Kindness' campaign, highlighting the dangers of giving money to beggars.
- 3.1.3.18 Addressed the problem of chuggers in the town centre by entering into a voluntary agreement with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) which controls the behaviour of and severely restricts the number and location of chuggers operating in the town centre.
- 3.1.3.19 In accordance with the Administration's manifesto commitment to support the Northampton Arts Collective (now known as NN), worked with Northamptonshire County Council to find them a suitable new home in the heart of the town's recently designated Cultural Quarter.
- 3.1.3.20 Hosted our biggest ever programme of events in 2012, including Godiva, Olympic Torch, Music Festival, bringing thousands of visitors into the town centre.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Retail Experience (May 2013)

- 3.1.4 Between May 2012 and May 2013 an overview and scrutiny panel undertook an in depth review to:
 - Investigate how NBC can support the town centre business community
 - Investigate how NBC can support local businesses throughout the development period of any major building projects in and close by to the town centre (i.e. Grosvenor; bus interchange; university accommodation)
 - Identify and examine good practice from other boroughs
 - Identify ways to develop greater involvement / engagement with local, regional and national businesses in public land improvement initiatives

- 3.1.5 As a result of the retail experience review, Overview and Scrutiny Committee has today made recommendations to this Cabinet meeting. It is proposed that all recommendations are accepted by Cabinet, although it should be noted that virtually all of the recommendations have already been implemented or are currently in the process of being implemented.
- 3.1.6 Information about how the recommendations have already been implemented is provided below:
- 3.1.6.1 Love Northampton is the high profile promotion campaign developed by the council and key partners to market and publicise the town's offer and attractions and what's going on here (O&S recommendations 6.1.1-3).
- 3.1.6.2 There are already busking locations identified in the town centre which are in regular use. There are plans this summer to further enhance the town centre street entertainment offer by raising the profile of busking locations, to encourage more buskers into the town centre (O&S recommendation 6.1.4).
- 3.1.6.3 There are also exciting plans in development to create a town centre equivalent of the successful Bands in the Park programme (O&S recommendation 6.1.4).
- 3.1.6.4 Retailers (other town centre businesses) and residents are routinely notified of major developments through a variety of mechanisms including letters, flyers, emails and notices. A town centre newsletter will be launched later in the year to further improve communication with town centre businesses, residents and visitors (O&S recommendation 6.1.5).
- 3.1.6.5 Free and reduced price car parking has, and continues to be, broadly advertised to residents of the town. Indeed, the offer has been well utilised by the public, leading to a significant increase in ticket sales (O&S recommendation 6.1.6).
- 3.1.6.6 In the past, local artists have utilised empty shops. Various other initiatives have also been implemented to approve the appearance of empty shops (O&S recommendation 6.1.7).
- 3.1.6.7 Funding is currently promoted to local businesses through the council's connections with Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (O&S recommendation 6.1.8).
- 3.1.6.8 The council's planning policies are under regular review to ensure, in so far as the law permits, they support the council's ambitions for a thriving and vibrant town centre (O&S recommendation 6.1.9).
- 3.1.6.9 The council has been involved in and has assisted with the communication of pop up shops and exhibitions (O&S recommendation 6.1.10).
- 3.1.6.10 The intention to appoint a town centre Czar was clearly stated in the manifesto that saw the current Administration elected to power and, indeed, this Cabinet report proposes an appointment to the position (O&S recommendation 6.1.11).

- 3.1.6.11 EMS, the council's environmental services partner, is contractually required to provide a consistent standard of cleansing and maintenance to the town centre and effective monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place to ensure standards are met. EMS works closely with the council, its partners and the Town Centre BID via a variety of mechanisms to understand needs. Robust resources and systems are in place to ensure enforcement action is used as an effective tool in maintaining cleanliness in the town centre and arrangement are in place to allow problems to be reported and dealt with quickly, including an innovative 'report it' app (O&S recommendations 6.1.12-20).
- 3.1.6.12 The council actively works with its town centre partners on an ad hoc basis and in more formal arenas such as the town centre forum and the town centre BID to drive improvements in the town centre on a broad range of matters, including traffic management and improvements to the public realm (O&S recommendations 6.1.21, 22 and 24).
- 3.1.6.13 Through the Northamptonshire Waste Partnership, the council contributes funding to a number of waste education officers who work closely with schools to encourage recycling (O&S recommendation 6.1.23).

Central Area Action Plan

- 3.1.7 The adoption of the Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) earlier this year marks a key milestone in the future development of the town centre, providing a robust, but flexible, planning framework from which further town centre development can flow.

Northampton Alive

- 3.1.8 In March 2012 Northampton Alive was launched, providing an aspirational vision for the regeneration of Northampton, marking the start of a far more coherent and determined approach to the town's future development.
- 3.1.9 Focused around Northampton's major regeneration projects, Northampton Alive has unequivocally set out the town's ambitious regeneration agenda.
- 3.1.10 The new bus interchange is an early success of Northampton Alive. Enabling the demolition of the outdated 1970s Greyfriars bus station and creating space for prime location retail development in its place, the smart new facility will open for business in spring 2014.
- 3.1.11 Under the Northampton Alive banner, the Council continues to work with Legal and General to bring the Grosvenor Centre extension forward, but the proposed large out of town retail development at Rushden Lakes is making progress on this project more difficult.
- 3.1.12 With strong political leadership in place and the planning and regeneration context firmly set, the environment is now considered right for the town centre to be reaffirmed as a major strategic priority for the council and to therefore be added to Northampton Alive.

Waterside Enterprise Zone

- 3.1.13 The largest in the UK, the Waterside Enterprise Zone was launched in 2011. It stretches from the western edge of Northampton across to the town centre. Focused on innovation and enterprise, its purpose is to promote investment, jobs and growth in the town.
- 3.1.14 The Enterprise Zone offers a broad range of benefits to attract new businesses to Northampton, as well as the pre-existing advantages of investing in a well-connected dynamic town.
- 3.1.15 Covering more than 20 sites along the River Nene, the Enterprise Zone offers an ideal location to encourage businesses to relocate and grow in Northampton. With the potential to significantly enhance the economic viability of the town centre, the council is confident that it will lead to the creation of a vibrant commercial district, including both small and medium size businesses and major global brands.
- 3.1.16 The University of Northampton has announced that it will relocate to Avon Nunn Mills, a prime site within the Enterprise Zone, bringing more jobs to the town centre and massively increasing town centre footfall when it opens for business in its modern new campus in 2018.
- 3.1.17 Nationwide has also announced plans to look at the potential to relocate to the Enterprise Zone, bringing in excess of 2,000 jobs into the town centre, which will be another large boost to the Town Centre economy.

Cultural Quarter

- 3.1.18 In January 2013 the council designated an area of the town centre as the Cultural Quarter. Located in Guildhall Road and Derngate, the following key cultural venues are located within it:
- The Northampton Museum and Art gallery (the council's main museum)
 - NN (the newly located Northampton Arts Collective)
 - The award winning Royal and Derngate Theatres
 - 78 Derngate (the restored Rennie Mackintosh designed house)
 - The recently opened, Errol Flynn Film House, dubbed 'a film house for film lovers'
- 3.1.19 Emerging opportunities exist for the Northampton Cultural Quarter arising from the Waterside Enterprise Zone and development initiatives such as the Angel Street and St John's regeneration projects.
- 3.1.20 A three dimensional master planning exercise is currently underway which will set out both the physical development of the area and the activities and interactions that will go on there.
- 3.1.21 One of the early successes of the Cultural Quarter will be major improvements to the public realm that will be implemented later this year.

Business Improvement District

- 3.1.22 A business improvement district (BID) is a defined area within which businesses, following a successful ballot, pay an additional one percent business rates in order to fund projects within the levy area to enhance the area and promote business activity.
- 3.1.23 In January 2011, a BID was established for the town centre. Known as Northampton Town Centre Ltd (NTCL), the town centre BID has worked effectively with the council to deliver many improvements, adding to the economic prosperity of the town centre.
- 3.1.24 Northampton Independents Day, held on July 4, is a great example of the type of campaign undertaken by NTCL. It promoted the town centre's independent traders, championing their individuality, customer service and commitment to quality. Part of the third national Independents' Day, NTCL organised a series of events aimed at raising the profile of local traders and putting smaller firms in the spotlight.
- 3.1.25 On the edge of the town centre, Wellingborough Road is a busy and diverse part of the town, comprising mainly small independent businesses, such as bars, restaurants, cafes, high fashion retail and other specialist shops. It is entirely different in character and culture from the area within the boundary of the town centre BID.
- 3.1.26 It was therefore appropriate that it was not included in the town centre BID boundary. It is however an area that potentially could benefit from its own BID and so it is proposed that consultation is undertaken with local businesses on the creation of a separate business improvement district for Wellingborough Road, with a decision to progress to a ballot of those businesses impacted by the end of September 2013.

Town Centre Parking

- 3.1.27 The council understands that convenient and reasonably priced car parking is one of the keys to improving access to the town centre and plays an important part in attracting visitors and supporting the local economy.
- 3.1.28 An approach to car parking is required in the town centre that will support and enable economic growth and which will encourage and enhance the viability and vibrancy of the town centre.
- 3.1.29 Two years ago, the council introduced free first hour and Sunday car parking and reduced price second hour car parking across its town centre car parks.
- 3.1.30 This bold initiative has been a huge success in increasing usage of the town centre car parks generally and, particularly, in encouraging visitors to the town centre on Sundays.
- 3.1.31 Car park ticket sales for all council car parks increased by nearly 29,000 (9%) for the first two months of 2012/13, compared to the same period in 2011/12.

- 3.1.32 Encouraged by the success of this initiative, it is now proposed to extend the free car parking offer during August 2013 to all day Saturday and two hours free on week days in the council's pay on exit car parks (St John's, Mayorhold and St Michaels). Sunday Parking will, of course, continue to be free in all council car parks.
- 3.1.33 An hour of free car parking, for technical reasons, has had to be limited to those multi-storey car parks that have pay on exit machines (St John's, Mayorhold and St Michaels). One of the main shoppers' car parks, the Grosvenor Centre Car Park, therefore had to be excluded from this aspect of the initiative.
- 3.1.34 It is proposed that investment is now made in upgrading the Grosvenor Centre car park to pay on exit so that it can be added to the one hour free initiative in time for the commencement of the Christmas shopping period in late November.
- 3.1.35 The introduction of pay on exit to the Grosvenor Centre car park will also enable shoppers to dwell longer and will facilitate the introduction of credit and debit card payments.
- 3.1.36 As part of this initiative, it is also proposed to introduce credit and debit card payments to the council's existing pay on exit car parks (i.e. St John's, Mayorhold and St Michaels) and to potentially provide pay on exit solutions in the Royal and Derngate Theatre and in the new hotel at Albion Place.
- 3.1.37 It is proposed that the new pay on exit machines are procured from Metric Group Limited, who are the suppliers of the council's existing pay on exit machines.
- 3.1.38 Other imminent improvements to the town centre car parking offer, include already approved proposals in the council's 2013/14 Capital Programme to install car park signs later in the year on the main entrances to the town centre to improve the visitor experience by directing motorists to their most convenient car park and by providing up to the minute information on where spaces are available.
- 3.1.39 It is also likely that at least one new multi-storey car park will be provided adjacent to the town centre to ensure all car parking needs can be catered for.

Empty Shops

- 3.1.40 Empty shops present a challenge to the council's ambitions for a vibrant and thriving town centre.
- 3.1.41 Over the past two years, the council has supported the Town Centre BID to reduce the visible impact of empty shops through the hanging of attractive vinyls in empty shop windows.
- 3.1.42 Empty town centre shops can often be a problem associated with negligent and/or absent landlords. The Portas Review asserts that councils need to be proactive in managing the problem of empty town centre shops, using the powers and tools at their disposal.

3.1.43 Portas also brings new thinking on this issue, putting forward ideas about 'landlord registers' and 'empty shop management orders'. Such ideas are worthy of further exploration.

3.1.44 It is proposed that we introduce a public register of landlords for the town centre and undertake research to establish what else can be done to address this problem in Northampton.

Night Time Economy

3.1.45 The town centre is a vibrant and thriving night time destination. The night time offer comprises a broad range of bars, restaurants, night clubs and other leisure venues, which make an important contribution to the economic viability of the town.

3.1.46 It is proposed that a review of the night time economy is undertaken to ensure the council works as effectively as possible with night time economy businesses, the police and other partners in order to ensure the town centre remains as safe, clean and attractive at night time as it is during the day.

3.1.47 Examples of effective partnership working include Pubwatch and Best Bar None, voluntary schemes, which promote and support good practice in licensed premises, to try to ensure a safe and secure environment.

3.1.48 Alongside its more general responsibilities, the council recognises that it has an important role to play in the town centre as the Licensing Authority.

3.1.49 The council understands that it is important to continue to be innovative and proactive in the way it uses its licensing powers and that it needs to actively consider using all of the authorities and tools available to it to try to ensure that night time visitors to the town centre feel welcome and are kept safe throughout their visit.

3.1.50 Examples of this innovative and proactive approach are evidenced in the work recently undertaken to enable the council's licensing committee to consider progressing to statutory consultation on the implementation of an Early Morning Restriction Order (although the committee, at its meeting on 18th June 2013, decided not to proceed with the proposal).

3.1.51 Other innovative examples include 'Reducing the Strength', a partnership strategy, aimed at reducing violent crime and antisocial behaviour in the town centre associated with the consumption of super strength alcohol. It is an entirely voluntary measure that encourages retailers to agree to stop selling cheap beers, lagers and ciders with 6.5% or more alcohol volume.

Making the Town Centre Safe and Clean

3.1.52 Working with the police and other partners, the council is committed to ensuring the town centre is a safe place to visit, live and work during both the day and night.

3.1.53 Investment in CCTV and the appropriate deployment of staff, such as neighbourhood wardens, environmental crime officers and the new town centre ranger, help to reduce crime and the fear of crime in the town centre.

- 3.1.54 The council is aware that the presence of street drinkers and beggars detract from the attractiveness of the town centre and can make people feel threatened and unsafe.
- 3.1.55 Campaigns such as ‘Don’t Kill with Kindness’ and ‘Reducing the Strength’, along with the provision of outreach workers are some of the ways in which the council has addressed this problem, which continues to be a priority for action.
- 3.1.56 The council, with the support of the Police, implemented a Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) in March 2009 as an additional power to deal with the problem of alcohol related anti-social behaviour (ASB). The DPPO gives Police and other accredited officers the power to confiscate alcohol from those drinking in a public place if it is associated with ASB or looks as though it could lead to ASB.
- 3.1.57 As the order has been in place for over three years, in accordance with best practice, It is now proposed that the council undertake a public consultation on the impact of the DPPO on 17th and 18th July, to coincide with this year’s ‘Don’t Kill with Kindness’ campaign.
- 3.1.58 The council is also committed to high standards of cleanliness in the town centre. Staff such as neighbourhood wardens, environmental crime officers and the new town centre ranger also help to keep the town centre clean and tidy.
- 3.1.59 Chewing gum is recognised as a particular blight on town centre streets. It is proposed that work is undertaken to identify best practice so that the effective action can be taken to address the problem on a sustainable basis.

Britain in Bloom

- 3.1.60 The council, working with Northampton Town Centre Ltd, other partners and local communities, enters Britain in Bloom each year. The colourful floral displays have an impact borough-wide but there is a very strong focus on the town centre and its main entry roads.
- 3.1.61 The rows of jardinières and the cascading hanging baskets that adorn the town centre throughout the spring and summer have become a popular attraction, bringing additional footfall and encouraging visitors to dwell longer.
- 3.1.62 Last year, Northampton was awarded Silver Gilt in East Midlands in Bloom and silver in the national competition. It is hoped to do even better this year, both regionally and nationally, and for the first time Northampton has entered the prestigious International Bloom competition.

The Market

- 3.1.63 In accordance with the Administration’s manifesto commitment, a review has taken place of the market governance arrangements, leading to the establishment of the Market Advisory Group.
- 3.1.64 An independent chair was appointed to the Market Advisory Group, who worked diligently with market traders, elected members and council officers to agree an action plan, the implementation of which is well underway.

- 3.1.65 Until March 2013, the role of independent chair was undertaken by Raymond Overall. It is now Dick Roberts. The council is grateful to them both for their hard work in helping the Market Advisory Group kick start a number of initiatives for the Market Square with market traders and the council.
- 3.1.66 Many improvements to the market have already been delivered, including a rent reduction for stall holders plus new initiatives to attract shoppers and new traders to support the economic viability of the market, which is recognised as an important asset of the town centre.
- 3.1.67 On 25th May 2013, the council, with the support of market traders, took part in the national Love Your Local Market campaign by organising family activities and entertainment on the Market Square.
- 3.1.68 The purpose of the event was to promote the fresh produce and quality goods on sale in order to attract shoppers back to the market.
- 3.1.69 A key feature of the Market Square is the fountain. Installed in 2010, there have unfortunately been on-going problems with its operation associated with water quality. These problems remain unresolved. Work continues to find a solution.
- 3.1.70 Clarity needs to be provided over the future of the fountain, therefore the council will undertake a public consultation on the fountain's future during the summer of 2013.

Bridge Street

- 3.1.71 As well as the general economic situation around the world, other external challenges, outside of the council's direct control, have caused difficulties for local businesses, including the fire at the former Angel Hotel on Bridge Street in January 2012
- 3.1.72 A Listed Building Application has now been submitted to bring about the refurbishment of the former Angel Hotel and, subject to Listed Building Consent, it is hoped the owners will start work shortly.

Town Centre Vision

- 3.1.73 It is proposed that a High Street Czar, to be known as the Town Centre Summit Chairman, is appointed, for a period of four months, for the purpose of producing a report recommending a strategic and collaborative vision for the town centre.
- 3.1.74 It is also proposed that the council hosts a Town Centre Summit, on 20th September 2013, led by the Town Centre Summit Chairman, to allow partners and stakeholders to actively inform the town centre vision.
- 3.1.75 Once a vision is agreed, the next steps will be to quickly develop both the physical and economic regeneration strategies that are capable of delivering the level of innovation and improvement required to make the town centre vision a reality.
- 3.1.76 Appropriate governance arrangements will also be put in place for the Town Centre in the form of a Portas style Town Team.

3.1.77 The town team's membership will be drawn from senior politicians, leaders from key partner organisations, such as the University of Northampton (including representation from the leadership of the student union), Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Police, Northampton Town Centre Ltd and other town centre partners. The Town Team's purpose will be to drive swift progress and to constantly monitor and re-evaluate what needs to be done.

3.2 Choices (Options)

3.2.1 Cabinet can choose to accept or reject any or all of the 27 recommendations of this report, which provide a raft of major and more minor proposals for improving the town centre.

3.2.2 The main choice for Cabinet to make is to decide if it wishes to determine the town centre to be amongst its key regeneration priorities and to therefore agree that the town centre should be added to the portfolio of strategic regeneration projects that comprise Northampton Alive.

3.2.3 If indeed it does, then it should agree the major recommendations of this report which provide an effective way forward for the council to achieve this aim in collaboration with key town centre partners.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 Northampton Alive sets out the council's policy position on regeneration. The implications of this report would be to add to Northampton Alive the town centre as an additional improvement priority.

4.1.2 The proposed town centre summit will lead to the establishment of a strategic and collaborative vision for the town centre and the subsequent development of both the physical and economic regeneration strategies that will translate the vision into reality.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Most of the financial implications of this report have already been approved through the council's revenue budget and/or its capital programme. There are though some significant financial implications, not yet budgeted for, arising from the car park proposals set out in recommendations 2.6 - 2.8.

4.2.2 The loss of budgeted income arising from increasing free car parking during the whole of August 2013 in the council's pay on exit car parks (St John's, Mayorhold and St Michaels) to all day Saturday and for two hours on week days could be £180,000 which will be met from the council's New Homes Bonus (recommendation 2.6).

- 4.2.3 It should also be noted the review of the car parking changes following the August 2013 trial may have an impact on the Council's future revenue budget position. This impact will be assessed as part of the review (recommendation 2.7).
- 4.2.4 The cost of implementing a pay on exit system at the Grosvenor Centre Car Park and associated enhancements is assessed at just under £200,000. This will be funded using the £100,000 awarded to the council from the Town Centre Innovation Fund and with a £100,000 contribution from Northamptonshire County Council, subject to agreement of the business case (recommendation 2.8).
- 4.2.5 It is proposed that the new pay on exit machines are procured from Metric Group at a cost of approximately £68,000. Metric Group is the supplier of the council's existing pay on exit machines. This way forward will enable a more coherent, flexible and resilient approach to the future management of the car parking system in relation to matters such as information management, asset utilisation, processes and system compatibility, training and development and management maintenance of IT infra-structure.
- 4.2.6 For reasons of best value, due consideration has been given to tendering for the supply of the new pay on exit machines, however it is judged that it would not be practicable to work with a different supplier and the benefits that may be achieved from testing the market would very likely be far outweighed by the dis-benefits.
- 4.2.7 The council's 2013/14 Capital Programme includes investment of £200,000 to fund car park signs that direct motorists to the most convenient car park. This investment was announced in the Budget for 2013/14.
- 4.2.8 The cost of rolling out free Wi-fi across the town centre will be approximately £10,000 (recommendation 18) and will be met from the council's New Homes Bonus.
- 4.2.9 The cost of the summer events programme will be £5,000 (recommendation 19) and will be met from the council's New Homes Bonus.
- 4.2.10 Funding for the town centre ranger post will be met from in year efficiencies achieved in the Director of Customer and Communities revenue budget.
- 4.2.11 All risks arising from proposals set out in this report will be appropriately assessed and managed prior to implementation and on an on-going basis as deemed necessary.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 The main legal implications arising from this report relate to the procurement of pay on exit machines and associated peripheries and changes to traffic regulation orders, arising from the proposed reduction in car park charges.
- 4.3.2 These legal implications will be appropriately addressed if the relevant recommendations of this report are agreed.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.
- 4.4.2 Improvement of the town centre has the potential to bring benefits to all sections of Northampton's communities and the wider county. It will be important for these benefits to be understood and realised.
- 4.4.3 The council has stringent standards in relation to equalities and any changes introduced will be appropriately screened, assessed and addressed to ensure they are fully consistent with these standards.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 Consultation will take place with key partners and stakeholders in the town centre.
- 4.5.2 The key consultation vehicle will be the Town Centre Summit which will be held on 20th September, 2013.
- 4.5.3 Information gathered will be used to inform the vision and strategies that will be used to drive the regeneration of the town centre.

4.6 How the Proposals Deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 One of the council's main priorities is to ensure a successful vibrant town centre economy for Northampton to promote growth and prosperity for the town.
- 4.6.2 Implementation of the proposals contained in this report has the potential to significantly contribute to this priority.

4.7 Other Implications

- 4.7.1 None

Background Papers

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Retail Experience (May 2013)

The Portas Review (available at www.communities.gov.uk/portasreview)

Contact officers:

Steven Boyes (Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
and Julie Seddon (Director of Customers and Communities)
0300 330 7000

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: August 2013

Briefing Note: Customer Service Task and Finish Group

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to give an update to the recommendations set out in the Overview and Scrutiny document constructed between January and May 2012 presented to cabinet 11 July 2012. This paper sets out to give an updated progress on the accepted recommendations (9th September meeting of the O&S Committee).

2. Recommendations

The recommendations were:

- a) That funding for the improved signage both outside and inside the Guildhall is made available, particularly in relation to signs for housing and registrars with particular focus on the improvement of signage around the old building of the Guildhall.

Progress: Funding was provided and external signage has been installed in keeping with the town's other directional signage.

- b) That the floor-walkers located in the One Stop Shop be provided with a uniform that makes them and their role clearly identifiable to customers.

Progress: All One Stop Shop staff wear uniforms. Floor walkers are rota'd every day, throughout the day to greet and assist customers.

- c) That funding for addition uniforms for front line Customer services Officers be investigated.

Progress: The budget for uniforms was increased 2013/14, and as in point b) all staff in the One Stop Shop wear uniforms.

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- d) That the uniforms provided for front line Customer Service Officers identify the corporate image of the council.

Progress: All front facing staff wear their corporate name badges, and each uniform item is tagged with the corporate logo.

- e) That the plasma screens in situ in the One Stop Shop be utilised to broadcast news channels which can be done at no extra cost to the council.

Progress: The plasma screen now runs BBC news throughout the opening hours.

- f) That those departments not currently delivered through Customer Services, such as planning, building control and licensing be brought into Customer Services for “first contact”, to apply customer service skills, to enable the channel shift strategy to be fully applied to calls/visits in relation to these departments.

Progress: Plans are underway to migrate the remaining services into Customer Services. A scoping document has been presented to the Head of Planning and Building Control in the first phase of the roadmap.

- g) That Planning Services is incorporated into the One Stop Shop and the Planning Reception desk is constantly manned during opening hours by a fully trained Customer Advisor.

Progress: Please see response to recommendation f).

- h) That the mystery shopping exercise is repeated, including the Centres under the management of the Northampton Leisure Trust, and that in order to achieve consistency the same questions should be used on a regular basis.

Progress: Customer Services undertake mystery shopping on a quarterly basis. It has not been possible to extend this exercise to the Northampton Leisure Trust as the questions are not transferable. To test quality and accuracy of information, the questions are very specific to the technical and legislative services offered by Customer Services, mainly Housing, council tax, and benefits.

3 Conclusion

3.1 The recommendations are working well and there are no additional financial implications.

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Date

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NORTHAMPTON AND DAVENTRY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CONTRACT

16 AUGUST 2013

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: RESPONSE TO ENQUIRY REGARDING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Scrutiny Committee with details regarding performance against missed bin and recycling performance indicators.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the content of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As part of Enterprise' contract with Northampton and Daventry challenging targets have been set on a number of Key Performance Indicators, (KPIs) including recycling performance and missed bins.
- 3.2 Progress against these targets is reported through the contract governance structure. Enterprise produce a monthly performance report which is reviewed by the Partnership Unit through the contract meetings. The data that sits behind the report is audited by the Partnership Unit at a separate performance monitoring meeting.

4. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 **Performance Measure ESC02 - % of missed bins corrected within 24 hours of notification.**

- 4.2 Enterprise reported a year end performance against target of:

Local Authority	Target	Performance	Variance
Northampton	100%	72.19%	-27.81%
Daventry	100%	54.24%	-45.76%

Table 1

- 4.3 Included within this data are the figures for December and January. During the Christmas period it was agreed that the LPI would be suspended as the Partnership Unit as that Enterprise collect any excess waste that is presented, something outside of contract scope.

- 4.4 Similarly it was agreed the LPI would be suspended during periods of inclement weather, when all collections were suspended.

- 4.5 Enterprise is currently working with the Partnership Unit to review and recalculate the performance following the suspension of the LPIs during these periods.
- 4.6 Enterprise proposed the target in its tender using best practice from a number of its other waste disposal contracts. Enterprise had established a robust means of managing missed bins through the use of in-cab technology. 'Live' data is reported to the call centres and this has allowed them to manage calls and where necessary ensure a resolution within 24 hours.
- 4.7 Unfortunately Enterprise did not achieve this target; the variance is outlined in table 1. Enterprise has formulated a project plan to improve performance. Both the Northampton and Daventry call centres now have access to the in-cab technology and as such are able to challenge customers to ensure that all genuine missed bins are reported.
- 4.8 Enterprise has also, in conjunction with the Partnership Unit, reviewed the business rules to ensure that the SLAs are in line with the contract specification. This review was completed in July 2013 and all parties now understand and effectively apply the correct criteria when recording missed bin data.
- 4.9 Additional in-cab training has been provided to ensure that all appropriate information is recorded. Furthermore service managers are using the in-cab technology to challenge 'unjustified' missed bins.
- 4.10 Enterprise has also reviewed the routes to ensure parity across all rounds. Following this rationalisation there is more robust accountability to ensure the delivery of missed bins within target.
- 4.12 **Performance Measure ESC04 - % of household waste recycled and composted.**
- 4.13 Enterprise reported a year end performance against target of:

Local Authority	Target	Performance	Variance
Northampton	47%	43.38%	-3.62%
Daventry	57%	50.84%	-6.16%

Table 2

- 4.14 The recycling targets were based on a service plan, which currently Enterprise is operating outside of. For those properties on sacks Enterprise has continued with the historic 'clear all' policy. The contract defines that these properties should receive two bags per collection. This equates to 17% of the contract area receiving a collection outside of contract scope. The 'clear all' policy has reduced the need to recycle for these residents which has impacted on contract performance.
- 4.15 Similarly Enterprise has continued with the historic process of collecting side waste and raised lids. Both this and the collection of excess sacks have had a significant impact on recycling performance.
- 4.16 It is proposed following the introduction of the two sacks per property policy in September that Enterprise robustly enforces the no side waste raised lid policy across the contract. A date for introducing this policy is currently being discussed with the Partnership Unit.
- 4.17 Enterprise proposed the contractual recycling targets based on introducing food waste recycling in both authorities. The projected food waste tonnages were based on WRAP's (Waste Resources Action Programme) study.
- 4.18 Unfortunately the anticipated tonnages for food waste recycling have not developed. Whilst over 4,500 tonnes of food waste was collected this was below profile by about 1,800 tonnes. This has obviously had a detrimental impact on the figures.
- 4.19 Similarly those areas that provided bags yielded higher tonnages, bags are not currently provided to residents.
- 4.20 In order to bridge the gap, Enterprise has developed a Communications Plan. One of the key principles of the Communications Plan is to increase participation on the food recycling scheme.
- 4.21 The Communications Plan will re-launch the food recycling scheme. Residents will be advised that they can line their caddies with carrier bags. Similarly a food waste incentive scheme will be developed. Residents will receive discount vouchers for participating in the scheme.
- 4.22 Enterprise is currently undertaking research on such campaigns to identify the impact the proposed Communications Plan is likely to have. It is anticipated that the scheme will help significantly reduce the 'gap' in food waste recycling.
- 4.23 Food waste recycling will also be offered to flats and multi occupancy properties. Whilst research has shown that participation in these

schemes can be limited Enterprise appreciates that there is potential to capture additional tonnages.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Non as a result of this report.

6. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Attainment of the contract targets will help improve the environmental impact of the service in both Northampton and Daventry.

7. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 All communities and neighbourhoods within the contract have equal access to the current waste services.

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Response to enquiry regarding
performance measures**

Contract Managers Comments

The report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee entitled “Response to enquiry regarding performance measures”, is a report produced by Enterprise to explain their performance in 2012/13 relating to two of the performance indicators that are used to monitor the contract.

As the Contract Manager monitoring the contract, I would like to add my comments on the information supplied by Enterprise.

In section 4.3, the performance indicator was not suspended, and the data was still collected and reported. What was agreed was that the application of the Payment Deduction mechanism would be suspended.

In section 4.4, my comment regarding 4.3 also applies. I would also add that there is a mechanism in place for agreeing periods that have been affected by inclement weather.

Mick Tyrrell

Contract Manager

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 9 September 2013, 6pm, Jeffery Room
Performance Measures: CS13

Performance Measure CS13 – Percentage of all calls into the Contact Centre answered. The Committee queried resourcing for the Contact Centre and suggested that the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide details of demand to the Contact Centre and resources provided.

The percentage of calls answered for 12/13 was 84.9%. The total calls received were 358,288 with 304,214 answered. An additional 19,434 calls were handled during 12/13 compared to 11/12.

Volumes of calls over the last 8 months (to July 2013) have had the biggest impact on call handling service with only one month (May 13) showing a decrease (reduction of 654 calls compared to 11/12) The remainder of the months show an increase compared to 11/12 ranging from 330 in February to 6377 in July giving a total increase of **21,661** calls in the first 7 months of this year. This could be a result of Welfare reform.

Extensive training was undertaken by all staff during December 2012 to prepare for the initial change in welfare reform. This training continued during January and February 2013 as the impact of Welfare Reform and the training requirements became known. This had an impact on call answering rates as the extent of the training meant that staff had to come off the phones to receive the training.

Email contact continues to increase and currently requires a minimum of one FTE to keep to our agreed response time. This therefore impacts on the number of staff available to handle calls.

Customer access via the website continues to increase but without a corresponding drop in telephone calls indicating an increased demand.

Welfare reform, training and mailshots hitting around the same time caused a drop in service levels

Investigation into abandoned calls suggests that a customer can call upto 10 times in 1 day if not answered quickly (during busy periods), increasing calls and abandoned rate. Busy periods (Council Tax only) are 2 out of every 4 week period. The mail distribution is spread over a 3 day period and limited to 2000 per day. This is too high a figure to cope with within our existing resources however it is necessary in order to progress with the recovery and collection timetable. The casual worker pool should support us in the future.

Improvements in service made since January 2013

Weekend opening during April/May to try to spread impact of welfare reform

Extended hours through annual billing period including evening opening
Temporary staff employed during peak periods including bin change roll-out.
Casual worker pool started to enable us to use resource as required (mailshots) etc.
Annual Leave restrictions in place for estimated Ctax billing/reminder/summons dates)

Further possible improvement actions:

- Further investment in Channel shift to transfer customer enquiries towards the website and mobile application.
- Revenues and benefits appointments to no longer be available face to face and be telephone appointment based only (This would release 2 FTE to take calls or support customers to self-serve) (Only 24 appointments can be taken for Revenues and Benefits in a day through face to face appointments whereas 75 telephone call appointments could be taken in one day)

It would require 41 FTE to support call answering of over 90% average throughout the year based on 12 months data (August 12 to July13) There are currently 35 FTE

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



NORTHAMPTON
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Overview and Scrutiny Committee September 2013 Briefing Note: All Crime

1. Background

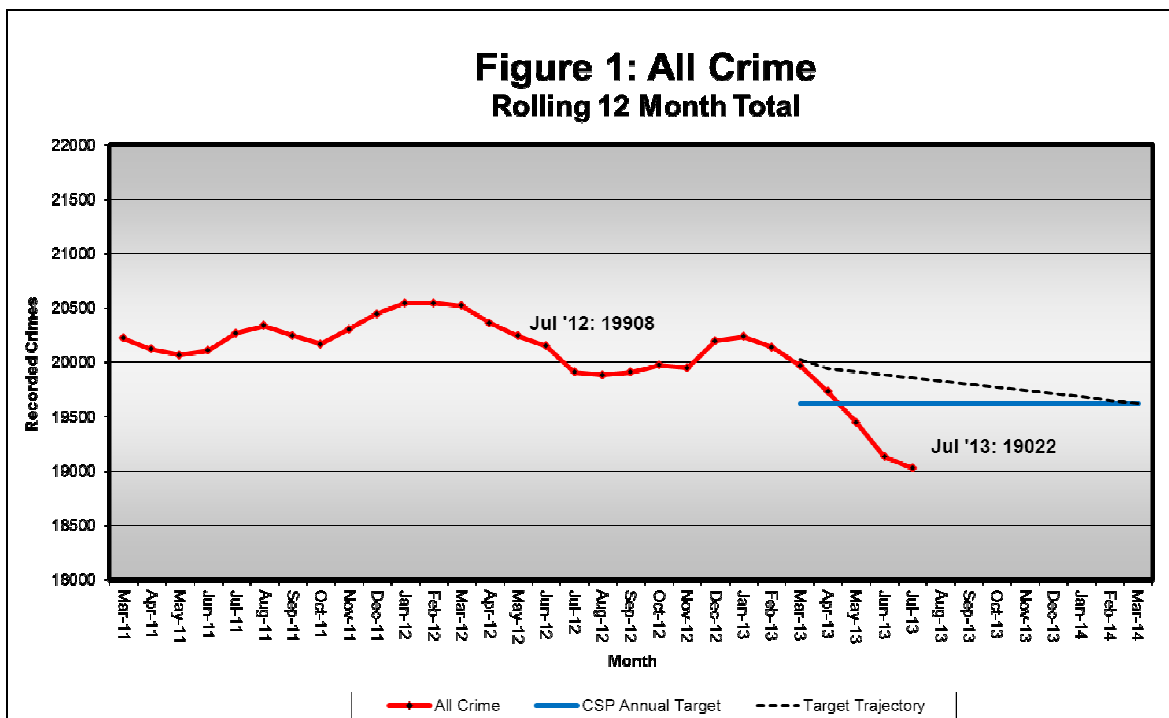
1.1 All Crime has notably reduced in Northampton during 2013-14 to date. This is due to marked reduction in high volume crime types and a change in Home Office recording practices. Similar reductions have been observed across the whole force area.

2. Purpose

2.1 To provide the Committee with a general overview of the All Crime reduction in Northampton.

3. Current Situation

3.1 Performance



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- 3.1.1 The data used within this briefing note is accurate as of August 1st 2013 and includes crime data up to 31st July 2013.
- 3.1.2 The figure above shows the All Crime trend on a rolling 12 month total. Compared to the March 2013 baseline, All Crime has reduced by 4.7%, equivalent to 947 less crimes.

Figure 2: Northampton All Crime - Crime Type Performance Overview

Crime Type	2012-13 Baseline	Volume (Prev 12 Months) Aug 12 - Jul 13	2013/14 YTD Performance (Volume Change)	2013/14 YTD Performance (% Change)
All Crime	19969	19022	-947	-4.7%
Violence Against The Person	3527	3262	-265	-7.5%
Violence With Injury	1812	1657	-155	-8.6%
Violence Without Injury	1715	1605	-110	-6.4%
Domestic Violence	1214	1192	-22	-1.8%
Sexual Offences	349	345	-4	-1.1%
All Stealing Offences	11207	10768	-439	-3.9%
Serious Acquisitive Crime	4080	3911	-169	-4.1%
Robbery	352	348	-4	-1.1%
Burglary Dwelling	1474	1516	42	2.8%
Vehicle Crime	2400	2181	-219	-9.1%
Theft Of Vehicle	420	391	-29	-6.9%
Theft From Vehicle	1834	1656	-178	-9.7%
Vehicle Interference	146	134	-12	-8.2%
Non Domestic Burglary	1196	1139	-57	-4.8%
Stealing Other	3800	3576	-224	-5.9%
Shoplifting	1985	2008	23	1.2%
Criminal Damage (inc Arson)	3090	2952	-138	-4.5%
Arson	85	90	5	5.9%
Fraud & Forgery	238	106	-132	-55.5%
Drug Offences	688	762	74	10.8%
Drug Possession	592	658	66	11.1%
Drug Trafficking	96	104	8	8.3%

Legend	Increase greater than 5%	Increase between 0 & 5%	Reduction between 0 & 5%	Reduction >5%
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****Crime types above are various composites of other crime types and cannot be summed to calculate All Crime.***

- 3.1.3 Figure 2 above shows a breakdown of how the All Crime reduction has manifested. The majority of crime types have reduced since March 2013.

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny

- 3.1.4 The key areas of crime which have reduced and led to a reduction of All Crime are Violence Against the Person, Fraud & Forgery, Vehicle Crime, Criminal Damage and Stealing Other.
- 3.1.5 Fraud & Forgery has taken a dramatic decline because from October 2012 this crime type is recorded by a national agency, Action Fraud, and very few crimes are now recorded by Northamptonshire Police.
- 3.1.6 An increase in recorded drug offences is indicative of a more pro-active approach to this type of offending.
- 3.1.7 Victim based crime (which only includes violence offences, sexual offences and stealing offences) has reduced by 4.6%, equivalent to 840 crimes. This is a more relevant figure for the CSP.**
- 3.1.8 Vehicle Crime was a key performance issue during 2012-13 and a continuous downward trend since the beginning of the calendar year has resulted in a 9.1% reduction since March 2013.
- 3.1.9 Key performance issues in 2013-14 to date are Burglary dwelling and Shoplifting offences.
- 3.1.10 A comparison with Northampton's most similar CSPs nationally is not available currently due to data quality concerns.

3.2 Locations

Figure 2: 2013-14 Crime Reduction

Sector	All Crime		All Victim Based Crime	
	%	Vol	%	Vol
Central	-5.4%	-351	-5.4%	-307
North East	-3.1%	-261	-2.8%	-221
South West	-6.5%	-324	-9.1%	-13

- 3.2.1 Northampton is now divided into three police sectors; Central, North East and South West.
- 3.2.2 Every sector of Northampton has had a reduction in All Crime and all Victim Based Crime.
- 3.2.3 Violence has notably reduced in the Central Sector of Northampton.
- 3.2.4 Vehicle Crime has notably reduced in the South Sector of Northampton.

3.3 Key Activity

- 3.3.1 There is a greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention across the county and within Northampton. Officers are patrolling hotspot areas at key hours of the day, speaking to local residents about crime prevention, and using stop search and 'request to leave' powers when appropriate to disrupt potential criminal activity and anti-social behaviour.

www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Call 01604 837046 or 01604 837408

E-mail: scrutiny@northampton.gov.uk

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny

- 3.3.2 A number of arrests of key offenders have been made in relation to acquisitive offending which has led to a notable drop in vehicle crime volume.
- 3.3.3 A pro-active alcohol harm reduction team has been introduced to tackle town centre violent crime and this is seen to be having positive results.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The CSP will deliver multi-agency plans to tackle acquisitive crime (particularly Burglary Dwelling) in key areas of the borough.
- 4.2 The CSP will continue to support Northamptonshire Police's current predictive policing approach to tackling Burglary Dwelling.
- 4.3 Partners will continue to work together to tackle violence against the person relating to alcohol harm within the night time economy.

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

- 5.1 The update is noted.
- 5.2 A further performance update on All Crime is provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Community Safety Partnership briefing.

Brief Author: Will Finn, Community Safety Analyst, on behalf of Julie Seddon, Chair of Northampton Community Safety Partnership.



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 September 2013

BRIEFING NOTE: PERFORMANCE MEASURE: TC005N

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its recent meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the 2012-2013 Out-turn Report and Corporate Performance - All Measures Report. Councillors asked for further information regarding Performance Measure TC005N, which is provided at section 2 of this briefing note.

2 PERFORMANCE MEASURE TC005N – TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL

To provide details of how footfall is calculated in the town centre.

NBC have 4 footfall counters located in the town centre including Abington Street, Market and The Drapery. The footfall camera's are managed and controlled by an external company called 'Springboard'. Springboard manage and control footfall camera's across the UK and use the latest TST (Target Specific Tracking) software which has a 95% - 98% accuracy rating.

Where are Northampton's footfall counters located

The key footfall cameras are located in Abington Street and Market Square. The Abington street footfall camera was installed in January 2008 and the Market square camera was installed in June 2009. The Drapery cameras were installed in January 2013 to provide footfall data prior to the opening of the new bus interchange, so that changes following its opening can be monitored.

Footfall trend across the country and how they are calculated.

Springboard provide monthly, quarterly and yearly updates on footfall for Northampton, other town and city centres, retail parks and provide comparisons with various regions included the East Midlands. All the footfall cameras across the UK transmit their footfall data to the main Springboard database and all users can access their own town / city's statistics. Springboard work in partnership with the ATCM, NAMBA and other organisations in providing statistical data. Year on Year to the end of July, the East Midlands saw an increase in footfall of around 0.8% with the exception of the North & Yorkshire all other regions (6 in total) showed a decline of between 1.8% – 3.9% in footfall figures.

3 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the update is noted.

Brief Author: Derrick Simpson, Town Centre Manager, on behalf of Councillor Tim Hadland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Date: 2 September 2013



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9th September 2013

BRIEFING NOTE: Progress report on the Implementation of New Tenant Engagement Strategy

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Following cabinet approval of the Tenant Engagement Strategy, O&S requested that a report be presented at the September meeting outlining progress made to date with its implementation.

2 UPDATE

- 2.1 Implementation of the Tenant Engagement Strategy has begun with a number of activities and actions linking engagement and involvement of tenants and leaseholders with the introduction of a more structured performance management framework for the service as a whole.
- 2.2 The menu of opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to get involved in the service ranges from low level engagement such as participation in a reading group that looks at the written media the service intends to produce – tenants magazines, leaflets etc – right up to membership of the Scrutiny Panel and the active scrutiny of the council's Landlord Service.
- 2.3 The overall concept and objectives of the Strategy were put to a formal Tenant Conference in May. This conference outlined the roles that tenants and leaseholders can play in the monitoring and scrutiny of the housing service and introduced the framework for involvement that will put tenants at the heart of the housing management service.
- 2.4 The Tenant Conference was followed by a formal launch of the Tenant Engagement Strategy and the role of tenant scrutiny and a number of workshops and meetings on the introduction and development of Service Improvement Panels. Service Improvement Panels (SIPs) include tenant and leaseholders and officers and look at specific areas of the service. The SIPs then feed up into the overall performance management and scrutiny of the service.
- 2.5 The launch of the SIPs took place in June and tenants and leaseholders at the event requested that we set up 5 SIPs looking at specific service areas and in the first instance concentrate on the service standards customers have a right to expect. The five service areas are i) Neighbourhoods, ii) Repairs and Maintenance, iii) Rents and Welfare Reform, iv) Voids and v) Service Standards. The Service Standards SIP has changed its focus to

look at customer standards and will take an overview of the service standards proposed by the other four SIIPs. The original guidance note agreed with tenants and leaseholders for the formation and operation of the SIPs is at Attachment 1

- 2.6 In parallel with the formal development of tenant scrutiny and active participation in the management and monitoring of the service the Housing Stock Options process has led to the development of a group of tenants who are well informed, articulate and empowered to make decisions about the future of the service. It is important that we don't lose this impetus and this group of individuals and it is intended to encourage the Tenant Panel members to continue to work with the council as an integral part of the overall engagement and scrutiny process once their specific deliberations on the Stock Options process is complete. It is intended to widen tenant representation on the Tenant Panel both geographically and gender, age and ethnicity. It is anticipated that the Tenant Panel will become the reporting body for the SIPs. The engagement model is at Attachment 2.
- 2.7 The Service Improvement Panels are integral to the success of the Engagement Strategy providing the link between the wider tenant body and the more detailed monitoring and scrutiny of the service. The SIPs will need time to develop and membership will fluctuate as the tenants and leaseholders take on more tasks in the monitoring of the service. The service will continue to support the SIPs.
- 2.8 The implementation of the Tenant Engagement Strategy has generally gone well. We have a raft of arrangements and opportunities for people to get engaged with and involved in the service at a range of levels to suit their commitment and their abilities. We continue to provide formal training and formal and informal support for any tenant or leaseholder to become actively engaged with the service.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Committee note the content of this report

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 4.1 None

Report Author – Richard Birchett
Interim Head of Landlord Services
20 August 2013

Attachment 1

BRIEFING NOTE: Progress report on the Implementation of New Tenant Engagement Strategy – Service Improvement Panel Guidance Note, June 2013

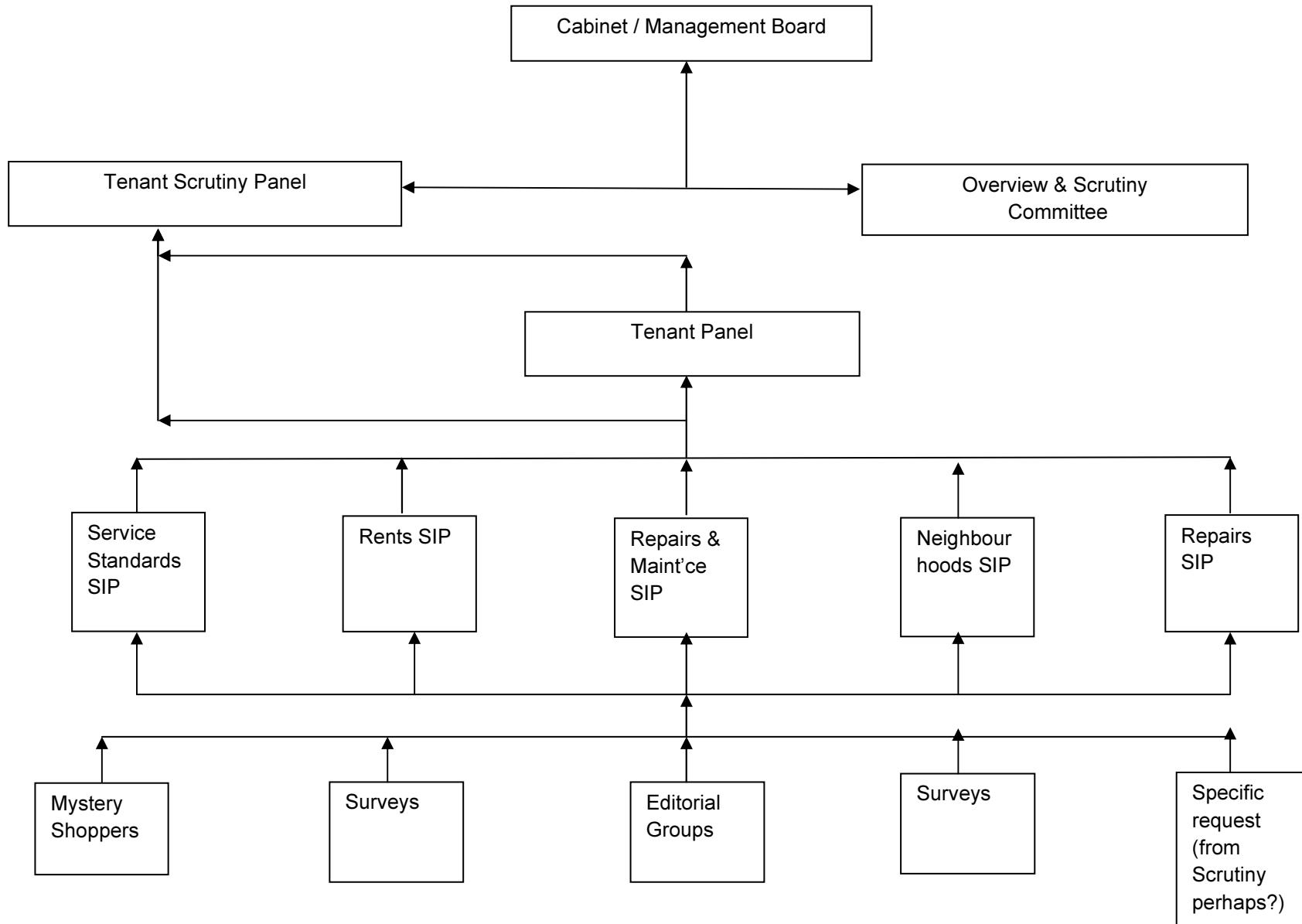
Service Improvement Panels

- 1 The Council and tenants & leaseholders working in partnership to improve the housing service.
- 2 The creation of the Service Improvement Panels (SIPs) was proposed at the Tenant Conference on 16th & 17th May 2013 and agreed with tenants and leaseholders on 13th June 2013.
- 3 The SIPs are another step on our journey towards excellence.
- 4 The SIPs will develop over time to become an integral part of the Housing Service's performance monitoring and improvement functions.
- 5 The formal and informal scrutiny of the housing service will develop over time. The SIPs will be part of the scrutiny of the service.
- 6 Five SIPs were agreed at the meeting on 13th June to look at i) Neighbourhoods, ii) Repairs and Maintenance, iii) Rents and Welfare Reform, iv) Voids and v) Service Standards.
- 7 These SIPs will develop and agree the suite of Service Standards relevant to the specific SIP.
- 8 Once agreed the SIPs will monitor the performance of the service in meeting the agreed Service Standards.
- 9 SIPs will consider and confirm the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets for their service area working from the Performance Improvement Plans for each service.
- 10 The SIPs will nominate or delegate representatives to the formal Scrutiny Panel as part of the agreed Scrutiny Process.
- 11 The SIPs will consider and confirm future arrangements for a wider Tenant Panel.

Attachment 2

BRIEFING NOTE: Progress report on the Implementation of New Tenant Engagement Strategy – Tenant Engagement Strategy structure

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NORTHAMPTON
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NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9th September 2013

BRIEFING NOTE: Rent Collection and Welfare Reform

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Committee requested at a previous meeting that a report be presented to the September O&S detailing progress on issues around rent collection and the impact of legislation changes as a result of welfare reform.

2 UPDATE

1. RENT ARREARS- As at the end of July 2013 total rent arrears were slightly higher than at the same time in 2012, but when consideration is given to the increase in rent debit the position is slightly improved when compared to 2012 with the arrears as a % of the rent debit being 3.4% as opposed to 3.52% at the end of July 2012.
2. There has though been a noticeable increase in Officer activity to ensure that the current position is maintained and structural changes to deal with this are proposed in the Housing restructure which will be implemented during the month of September
3. An indication of the increased activity is illustrated by the fact that 675 notices of Seeking Possessions have been served between April and July 2013 as opposed to 273 during the same period in 2012.
4. There has also been an increase in the number of arrears cases submitted for a court hearing with 84 cases submitted during 2013 as opposed to 47 during the same period in 2012, this is further reflected in the increase of evictions during the period up from 17 in 2012 to 24 in 2013
5. WELFARE REFORM- The two significant changes in legislation that have impacted on NBC are the Under Occupancy charge whereby tenants lose benefit for any bedrooms that they are deemed not to have a use for and Benefit Capping whereby tenants are limited to the amount of benefit they are entitled to.
6. NBC has been proactive in dealing with these issues and has employed three members of staff within landlord services to deal with them, two of these officers are employed as visiting officers and they contact all affected tenants to offer advice and assistance in relation to the welfare reform changes
7. In relation to UNDER OCCUPANCY 85 tenants have moved to a smaller property to avoid any future charges, 19 have moved by way of a mutual exchange for the same reason and a further 138 have indicated a wish to

move and are registered and eligible for priority bidding under the Choice based letting schemes

8. From September we will be employing 2 Mutual Exchange Officers to assist tenants in moving to properties of a size that will not attract under occupancy charges
9. At present any tenants moving for reasons of Under Occupancy are given financial assistance to help meet any moving costs associated with moving to a new property
10. In addition a significant number of the remainder of affected tenants have indicated that they wish to remain in the property and pay the extra charge, currently some 291 are doing this and have no arrears on their account.
11. There are however 450 tenants who to date have not registered for a move and we continue to monitor these cases closely and to date have served 144 NSPs due to the tenant not making payments nor registering for a move.
12. BENEFIT CAPPING – this began to be introduced in Northampton on 15th July 2013 and we are being informed by the DWP of each case as and when they identify them and they have undertaken to inform us of all such cases by the end of September this year.
13. To date we have been informed of 10 cases by the DWP but our own records indicate that we will have 26 such cases and we have spoken to each of the 26 affected tenants to explain the implications of the changes and the requirement to pay any shortfall in rent as a result of the changes.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **That the Committee note the content of this report**

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 4.1 None

Report Author – T Ansell
Housing Services Manager



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 September 2013

BRIEFING NOTE:

SCRUTINY PANEL 1 – IMPROVING THE TOWN'S PARKS

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since the last meeting of this Committee, the Scrutiny Panel has held a further evidence gathering meeting, with another scheduled for 4 September. A number of site visits have also taken place.

2 UPDATE

- 2.1 At its meeting on 5 August 2013, the Scrutiny Panel received information and responses to its core questions from key expert advisors:

- Cabinet Members for Environment and Community Engagement
- Park Rangers' Service

- 2.2 At its meeting on 4 September, the Scrutiny Panel will receive information from further key expert advisors:

- Partnership Manager, Partnership Unit
- Assets Director and Operations Manager, EMS
- Northampton Friends' Group Forum

- 2.3 Site visits to a number of parks in the borough have taken place; the findings will be reported to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Panel on 2 October 2013.

- 2.4 It is envisaged that the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel will present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 27 January 2014.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the update is noted.



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 September 2013

BRIEFING NOTE:

SCRUTINY PANEL 2 – MANAGEMENT AND REGULATION OF PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING (INCLUDING HIMOs)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, there has not been a scheduled meeting of Scrutiny Panel 2.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Panel will embark on its evidence gathering at its next meeting on 17 October 2013.

2 UPDATE

- 2.1 The programme of meetings has been updated, postponing the meeting set for 18 September 2013 to 7 November. The programme of meetings now comprises:
 - 17 October
 - 7 November
 - 4 December
 - 23 January 2014
 - 13 February
 - 30 April
- 2.2 The slight delay in starting the evidence gathering process will not impact on the anticipated date for completion of the Review.
- 2.3 Councillor Nilesh Parekh has joined the membership of this Scrutiny Panel.
- 2.4 It is envisaged that the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel will present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2014.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the update is noted.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Overview and Scrutiny Officer, on behalf of Councillor Joy Capstick, Chair, Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (Including HIMOs)

26 July 2013



Draft Version 1

Northampton Borough Council



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny

Excellence Action Plan 2013-2015

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What is Overview and Scrutiny

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) function was introduced to Local Government over ten years ago as part of the Local Government Act 2000, as means of providing non-Executive Councillors the opportunity to inform policy development and critical friend challenge to the Council's executive policy makers and decision makers (Cabinet). It has played a strong role ever since in promoting the engagement of non-executive councillors in a diverse range of policy development activities, including performance improvement at the Council. The Council's O&S activities are regularly cited by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) and other organisations as examples of best practice. In recent years, O&S has been seen by officers and Councillors as an increasingly important way in which Councillors from all political parties can work together to get to the heart of issues and problems both within the Council and wider community and find effective ways to resolve them. This Excellence Plan seeks to build upon the strong foundations that have been carved for O&S in recent years, and sets stretching targets that would see O&S build upon its success over the next two years. In writing the Excellence Plan, reference has been made to the Centre for Public Scrutiny's four principles of good Scrutiny, as well as drawing upon suggestions made by two mini peer reviews in 2012. The Excellence Action Plan will be monitored and updated regularly by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Our Mission Statement

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“Overview and Scrutiny at Northampton aims to enhance the quality of life of all who live and work in the Borough by ensuring services are delivered effectively and supporting improvement in the Council's services, policies and performance. Scrutiny aims to be objective, evidence-based, transparent and constructive, and to reflect the interests and concerns of local communities.”

Our Vision:-

“By 2015, the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny's contribution to policy development and decision making at the Council is held in high regard by both the Council and the citizens of Northampton, as well as being a national example of best practice”

Our Values and Principles:-

“Taking pride in delivering a quality and value for money Overview and Scrutiny Service

To uphold the four principles of good Scrutiny”

Councillor Jamie Lane
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Specific Objective	Measures (Success Criteria)	Steps to Attain	Timescale (Deadline)	Progress Report
Steps for successful Overview and Scrutiny (O&S)				
A clear mission statement for Overview and Scrutiny (O&S)	Adopt a mission statement for O&S and that it be the focal point of the O&S function; working towards being a nationally noted excellent service	A mission statement has been produced, considered and included within the O&S Toolkit	Excellence Plan to be adopted by the O&S Committee by September 2013	Excellence Plan to be presented to the O&S Committee for adoption.
Internal and external recognition of O&S at NBC 49	To submit an application form(s) and win a Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) Good Scrutiny Award by June 2015 To increase Councillor satisfaction with O&S, year on year (target to be confirmed and measured via feedback forms and Councillor surveys)	Six-monthly reviews of delivery against the Excellence Plan, monitoring of feedback and agreeing any remedial action that is required	Excellence Plan to be adopted by the O&S Committee by September 2013	A number of O&S processes and procedures have been recognised nationally as examples of best practice: Suggest an issue for Scrutiny form Call-in process and procedure Witness Protocol and guidance notes Review process (Scrutiny Panels) Clear O&S Review reports
Effective use of O&S committee time	O&S meetings conclude on time, all agenda items discussed, with effective meeting management	Timed agendas produced for each meeting of the O&S Committee No discussion takes place on 'to note' items	June 2013 and onwards	Good, effective meeting management takes place – Already in place
Principle One: Work Programme				
Encourage greater public input to the O&S Work Programme	Number of public suggestions for O&S Reviews received increases year on year. 20 in 2013/14, increasing to: 25 for 2014/15 30 for 2015/16 and subsequent years	Further development of the current process of inviting the public to forward ideas for future Scrutiny Review Continue to increase the data base of individuals and organisations previously involved in the O&S process Continue to contact the Council's data base of consultees regarding suggestions for future Scrutiny Review A press release from the Chair of O&S is	January 2014 and on-going January 2014	The current form inviting the public to suggest ideas for future Scrutiny Review has been noted as best practice. At each meeting of the O&S Committee and Scrutiny Panels, this form is given to all public attendees A survey via Survey Monkey is produced annually and circulated to all those on the database, inviting them to put forward a suggestion for future Scrutiny Review Press coverage of the O&S work

Specific Objective	Measures (Success Criteria)	Steps to Attain	Timescale (Deadline)	Progress Report
		issued annually inviting the public to put forward suggestions for future Scrutiny Review	subsequent years	programme was given in 2012/2013. The Chair was interviewed regarding the O&S Work programme for 2013/2014
O&S work programme to be less reactive	The O&S work programme has clear links to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and/or performance information	Scrutiny Reviews clearly identifies links to the Council. Cabinet Members inform the work programme event of their priorities	Continuing - June 2013 and subsequent years	Four O&S Work Programming events held. Event for 2014 scheduled for 27 March 2014.
Principle Two: Scrutiny work and evidence gathering				
50 Effective challenge to Cabinet Members to report progress against priorities	Cabinet provides a thorough and considered response to all O&S recommendations within two meetings	The Scrutiny Officer ensures that the rigorous O&S monitoring regime is adhered to and it is reported to the O&S twice a year, with action being taken if it is not adhered to	O&S Committee Meetings – twice a year	O&S Monitoring Work Programme has been in place since 2010. It ensures accepted O&S recommendations are monitored
	Cabinet Members always attend O&S meetings if requested or provide a substitute who is sufficiently briefed on the issues to enable them to answer questions Cabinet Members to provide further details of their priorities, mid-year	The Scrutiny Officer provides induction on O&S protocols and expectations to every new member to Overview and Scrutiny Cabinet is given the opportunity to provide an update on their priorities, mid-year	On-going – annually as required 11 November 2013, and subsequent years	Cabinet attended the O&S work-programming event and reported on their priorities and challenges for the year The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members have been invited to attend the meeting of the O&S Committee on 11 November 2013 to provide an update on Cabinet's priorities
	O&S provides effective challenge and input to the budget process on an annual basis	This is achieved through the annual Reporting and Monitoring Working Group meetings that scrutinises proposals in detail and recommends key proposals for the O&S Committee to consider each year and monitors the implementation of the budget proposals approximately six months after implementation	January 2014 and subsequent years	The Reporting and Monitoring Working Group has met for the past three years and has identified around 3-4 issues from the draft general fund budget that it feels warrants scrutiny input
	Cabinet provides a thorough and considered response to 100% of O&S's concerns regarding the	O&S undertakes performance management scrutiny at each O&S Scrutiny Committee meeting	Continuing from 9 September 2013 meeting and each	The relevant Cabinet Member and Director to attend the meeting of O&S to provide a response to the Committee's queries and

Specific Objective	Measures (Success Criteria)	Steps to Attain	Timescale (Deadline)	Progress Report
O&S Monitoring Regime	monthly performance management reports		subsequent meeting of O&S	concerns regarding specific performance measures
	The O&S Monitoring Regime clearly evidences the progress of the implementation of O&S recommendations	A robust O&S Monitoring Work Programme is produced and updated The Monitoring Regime to be communicated to all Scrutiny Panels at commencement of each Review	June 2013 and subsequent meetings (twice annually) June/July 2013 and as new Scrutiny Panels are convened	O&S Monitoring Work Programme is published on the O&S webpage and circulated to the O&S Committee Scrutiny Officer to apprise each Panel of the O&S monitoring regime at each scoping meeting
Principle Three: Outcomes and impact				
Demonstrable outcomes after Scrutiny Reviews 51	Measurable recommendations (SMART) with details of the impact formally reported to O&S	Rigorous Monitoring system used to examine the implementation of accepted O&S recommendations All O&S Review reports have clear Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timeline (SMART) recommendations Clear Action Plan at the end of each Scrutiny Review and the subsequent periodic monitoring of that Plan by the O&S Committee to guarantee tangible outcomes are delivered	June 2014 (as Scrutiny Reviews complete)	A number of previous Scrutiny Reviews have made a real difference, including Customer Services, Communications, Homelessness, Rough Sleepers, Independent Living for Older People, Hate Crime Reporting
Appropriate Reviews conducted following the 5-D Appreciative Inquiry methodology	Enhanced Scrutiny's Policy and Development role.	The Review operates flexibly with a proactive focus to achieve the outcome together, as opposed to having a holding to account focus.	June 2014 (as Scrutiny Reviews complete)	The Appreciate Inquiry methodology has been used previously for Reviews and details were documented in the CfPS publication "A guide to using Appreciative Inquiry to add value to the Overview and Scrutiny process"
Principle Four: Accountability				
Effective way of working with the Cabinet and Senior Management	All Cabinet Members attend the O&S Work Programming event each year and advise O&S of their priorities and challenges for the year; which in turn informs the O&S work programme.	O&S has a standing item on Cabinet agenda <i>Issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny</i> Cabinet and Senior Management Team attend the O&S Work Programming event	June 2013 and subsequent years Annual report	O&S Toolkit is produced, updated and published on the O&S webpage

Specific Objective	Measures (Success Criteria)	Steps to Attain	Timescale (Deadline)	Progress Report
	<p>Number of Call In Hearings is reported in the O&S Annual Report.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member, or their representative, always attends and provides the requested information when asked to attend meetings of the O&S Committee</p>	The relevant Cabinet member is invited to attend the specific meeting of O&S	<p>2012/13 and subsequent annual reports</p> <p>Contact made at least one month prior to the meeting of O&S</p>	Emails are sent on behalf of the Chair to the relevant Cabinet Member, inviting them to attend a future meeting of O&S, containing details of the purpose of their required attendance
Effective challenge to Cabinet Members to report progress against priorities	Cabinet provides a considered response to all O&S recommendations within two meetings			
52	<p>The rigorous O&S monitoring regime is adhered</p> <p>O&S monitoring regime reported to the O&S Committee twice annually</p>	<p>June 2013 and onwards</p> <p>June 2013/November 2013/June 2014/November 2014 and onwards</p>	Monitoring work programme is communicated with all Councillors and published on the O&S webpage	
Effective pre-decision scrutiny	Cabinet is given the opportunity to provide an update on their priorities, mid-year	November 2013	The Leader of the Council has confirmed that Cabinet will attend the meeting of the O&S Committee on 11 November 2013	During 2012/13 three pieces on in-depth pre-decision scrutiny were undertaken
Demonstrable rationale of accepted and implemented O&S recommendations	Evidence of scrutiny recommendations shaping policy and making a difference	An Action Plan for completion following the conclusion of each Review will be compiled and completed	June 2014 onwards	Action Plan will be drafted by June 2013
Enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities				
Champions of value of Overview and Scrutiny as a vehicle for public accountability (promoting public understanding of the Scrutiny role)	<p>1 positive press release on O&S activity reported in 2013/2014, increasing to :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 in 2014/2015 3 in subsequent years 	Original use of communications with the public and Community Groups promoting the Scrutiny role, for example, Annual report, Review Reports with a covering statement from the Chair using the Overview and Scrutiny Media Protocol	Promotion of O&S Annual report – June 2013	O&S Media Protocol to be completed following the publication of each Scrutiny Review/Annual report and issued via the Corporate Communications Team.

Specific Objective	Measures (Success Criteria)	Steps to Attain	Timescale (Deadline)	Progress Report
		<p>"Testimonials" to be published in the annual report</p> <p>Log of press coverage to be produced</p>		
Public engagement and attendance at O&S meetings and process	<p>Direct involvement of the public in the O&S process and consideration of O&S issues: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings of O&S • O&S Work Programme 	A dedicated Overview and Scrutiny page on the Council's website has been produced and fully operationally since early 2009	June 2013 and on-going	Information for co-optees is available. Around nine suggestions were received from the public on issues for scrutiny during 2010/2011, one of which was included in the Work Programme 2010/2011, for the O&S Work Programme 2012/2013 there were more than twenty suggestions and the O&S Work Programme was totally influenced by public suggestions.
53	<p>Hits on the O&S Webpage: in 2011/12, increasing to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65 for 2013/2014 • 90 for 2014/2015 and subsequent years 	Database of all individuals and Groups previously attended meetings/involved in O&S previously to be sent a copy of the O&S Newsletter, highlighting the work and outcomes of O&S	July 2013 onwards	<p>Scrutiny Officer held discussions with ICT. Data detailing the hits on the website will be produced on an annual and monthly basis – June 2013 onwards</p> <p>There have been 703 views on the website since its inception, of which 525 were unique page views</p>
	<p>Public participation/observing at O&S Committee/Scrutiny Panel meetings:- 10 during 2011/2013, increasing to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 for 2013/14 • 20 for 2014/15 and subsequent years 	Data base of all individuals and Groups previously attended meetings/involved in O&S previously is compiled	June 2014 and subsequent years	Database currently compiled and will be further developed.
Representation and engagement with diverse Communities	Clear sample of diverse communities engaged in the O&S process	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment (Screening) is undertaken shortly after the scope for each O&S Review</p> <p>An Equality Impact for the Overview and Scrutiny function to be produced and monitored on a regular basis</p>	Commenced in April 2012 – on-going	<p>Relevant community organisations have been asked to provide an input into previous O&S Reviews.</p> <p>The Review - Commissioning Framework with the Community and Voluntary Sector has a number of co-opted Members who</p>

Specific Objective	Measures (Success Criteria)	Steps to Attain	Timescale (Deadline)	Progress Report
54		<p>Scrutiny Officer trained on E-FECT</p> <p>Use existing contacts/links, where appropriate, to ensure equality and diversity and community cohesion is embedded within Scrutiny activity</p>		<p>are experts in this field. Witnesses representing diverse communities have provided evidence to this Review.</p> <p>All EIAs for Scrutiny Reviews are publicly available.</p> <p>Scrutiny Officer, trained and uses E-FECT</p>
	Promoting public understanding of the Scrutiny role	High profile of Scrutiny is promoted	June 2013 and on-going	<p>“spreading the word of O&S” through various activities and events::</p> <p>E Newsletter – 3 times a year Regular press releases Public Participation in the O&S process leaflets available on:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The O&S Webpage • CAB website • One Stop Shop • Every O&S Committee/ Scrutiny Panel meeting
Effective way of working with the Cabinet and Senior Management	<p>Clear communications with Cabinet:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O&S’s recommendations are given due consideration by Cabinet, and a detailed response provided to the O&S Committee immediately following the Cabinet meeting • Cabinet continues to report to O&S on the implementation of accepted recommendations as per the schedule identified in the O&S Monitoring Work Programme. 	<p>O&S has a standing item on Cabinet agenda <i>Issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny</i></p> <p>Cabinet and Senior Management invited to attend annual O&S Work Programming event</p> <p>Rigorous Overview and Monitoring Work Programme</p> <p>Senior Management Teams assists O&S in its work</p>	December 2010 onwards	The steps to attain this objective have been in place for some time

Specific Objective	Measures (Success Criteria)	Steps to Attain	Timescale (Deadline)	Progress Report
Effective use of O&S Committee meeting time	O&S meetings conclude on time with all agenda items discussed, with effective meeting management. (Timed agenda produced for each O&S Committee meeting) No discussion takes place on 'to note' items	Chair and Scrutiny Officer to have dialogue regarding the circulation of 'to note' information and the setting of an overarching criteria for agenda items	March 2011	Items that are for noting are not discussed at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – A protocol is in place
Inclusion of non-Executives, not Members of the O&S Committee, in the O&S process	At least one non-Executive, who is not a Member of the O&S Committee, included on the membership of Scrutiny Panels.	O&S Inclusion of Non-Executive in the O&S Process Protocol produced. Scrutiny Officer, on behalf of the Chair, contacts all Non-Executives, when Scrutiny Reviews are set up, encouraging Non-Executive participation	On-going	All O&S Reviews have had at least one non-Executive, who is not a Member of the O&S Committee, included on the membership of the Scrutiny Panel
Principle Four: Drives improvement in public services				
Promote Community well-being and improve quality of life	One effective scrutiny of external services Review to take place each Municipal year		June 2013 onwards	A number of external scrutiny reviews have taken place e.g. contaminated water incident in Northamptonshire, partnership working with WNDC, homelessness, rough sleepers and serious acquisitive crime, violent crime and community safety
Engage in joint scrutiny with other Authorities on Reviews of common interest where economies of scale would be beneficial	Where appropriate, one joint Scrutiny Review to take place per Municipal year	Discussion regarding the feasibility of joint Scrutiny Reviews takes place at the scoping stage of each Review	June 2013 and on-going	Joint Scrutiny Reviews have been undertaken previously

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 September 2013

Briefing Note: Northamptonshire County Council's (NCC) Health, Adult Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

1 Background

- 1.1 Councillor Matt Lynch is Northampton Borough Council's representative to Northamptonshire County Council's (NCC) Health, Adult Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 A meeting of NCC's Health, Adult Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee was held on 5 September 2013.
- 1.3 The Health, Adult Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has the overview and scrutiny function responsibilities for scrutiny of health, adult social care and Public Health.

2 Update

- 2.1 Details of the main issues discussed at the meeting held on 5 September 2013 are detailed below:
- 2.2 The agenda included the following substantive items:

The Committee considered and commented on the consultation proposals issued by the Department of Health: Caring for our future: consultation on reforming what and how people pay for care and support

The Committee considered an overview of the development and operation of East Midlands Ambulance Services (EMAS): East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust – service development and priorities. A presentation was given to the Committee detailing the priorities.

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Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny

The Committee noted the decisions by NHS Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups concerning:

- Respite services for people with neuro-degenerative conditions
- Access to community podiatry services

The Committee considered an overview of the operation of the NHS 111 urgent care telephone service in Northampton.

The Committee also considered its work programme for 2013/2014, which includes:

Delivery and funding of mental health services in Northamptonshire
Operation of Healthwatch Northamptonshire
Comments on NHS Trust Quality Accounts
Healthier Northamptonshire: future delivery of acute hospital services in the county

3 Conclusions

- 3.1 That the update is noted.
- 3.2 That regular updates of the work of Northamptonshire County Council's Health and Adult Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee be provided by Councillor Matt Lynch to this Committee.
- 3.3 The next meeting of Northamptonshire County Council's Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 6 November 2013 commencing at 10:00am.

Brief Author: Tracy Tiff, Overview and Scrutiny Officer, on behalf of Councillor Matt Lynch

5 September 2013

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Northampton Borough Council

(Section 5 & 9 of The Local Authorities – (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012)

Decision Maker: Cabinet

Directorate:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Report of:	Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Public or Private	PUBLIC
Expected Date of Decision:	11 September 2013
Title of Expected Decision	Designation of a Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum for Growing Together (Northampton East) for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning
Record of the expected decision to be made:	Designation of Neighbourhood Area; Designation of Neighbourhood Forum

Directorate:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Report of:	Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Public or Private	PUBLIC
Expected Date of Decision:	11 September 2013
Title of Expected Decision	Designation of a Neighbourhood Area for Duston
Record of the expected decision to be made:	Designate Duston CP as an area for Neighbourhood Planning.

Where indicated a decision or part of a decision may be made in Private – details regarding this can be found by [clicking here](#). Anyone wishing to make representations that this matter should be discussed in public, should do so by not later than 12 Calendar Days prior to the meeting, using the details below:
 The Monitoring Officer c/o The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE or
 email: democraticservices@northampton.gov.uk

Directorate:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Report of:	Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Public or Private	PUBLIC
Expected Date of Decision:	11 September 2013
Title of Expected Decision	Land at Midsummer Meadow - dedication of land for highways purposes
Record of the expected decision to be made:	Approval to dedicate land designated as public open space for highways purposes, to facilitate access to proposed new Campus of University of Northampton.

Directorate:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Report of:	Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Public or Private	PUBLIC
Expected Date of Decision:	11 September 2013
Title of Expected Decision	Acquisition and disposal of property within Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone
Record of the expected decision to be made:	Approval in principle to acquire and dispose of property to support Enterprise Zone objectives.

Directorate:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Report of:	Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
Public or Private	PUBLIC
Expected Date of Decision:	11 September 2013
Title of Expected Decision	Maple Buildings, Ash Street - proposed grant of lease
Record of the expected decision to be made:	Approval to grant long lease of property at nominal rent to Northampton Hope Centre.

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