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SUMMONS TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE
NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Time/Date 6.30 pm on TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2024
Location Forest Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN
Officer to contact Democratic Services (01530 454512)



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Chief Executive

AGENDA

Item	Pages
PRAYERS	
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, registerable interest or other interest	
3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS	
4. LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS	
Members are reminded that under paragraph 11.1 of part 3 of the Constitution, questions can be asked of the Leader and Cabinet Members without notice about any matter contained in any address. Questions shall be limited to five minutes in total for each announcement.	
5. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION	
To receive questions from members of the public under procedure rule no.10. The procedure rule provides that members of the public may ask members of the Cabinet any question on any matter in relation to which the Council has	

powers or duties which affect the District, provided that three clear days' notice in writing has been given to the Head of Legal and Support Services.

6. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

To receive members' questions under procedure rule no.11. The procedure rule provides that any member may ask the Chairman of a board or group any question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties which affect the District, provided that three clear days' notice in writing has been given to the Head of Legal and Support Services.

7. MOTIONS

To consider the following motion received from Councillor M B Wyatt:

Winter fuel motion

Council notes the recent announcement by the Labour Government to end universal winter fuel payments and restrict eligibility to only those in receipt of Pension Credits and other benefits.

Though many agree that universal Winter Fuel Payments are not necessary, Council is deeply concerned that many pensioners on lower and middle incomes will now not receive the payments. Across England and Wales the number of people eligible for winter fuel payments will fall by 10 million (from 11.4 million to only 1.5 million).

In North West Leicestershire, according to the local press, the number of pensioners affected by the change in eligibility criteria means 18,485 fewer payments, from 20,064 down to 1,579 - a reduction of 92.1 per cent.

Council believes that the Labour Government has set the threshold at which pensioners do not qualify for Winter Fuel Payments far too low.

Only those receiving a pension of less than £218.15 a week (or £332.95 a week for couples) are eligible for pension credits. This is significantly lower than the living wage rate.

Council is also concerned by the low take up of pension credit with only 63% of those eligible nationwide receiving them – and over 880,000 pensioners not doing so.

Council recognises the role we have to play to increase awareness of benefits such as Pension Credit to ensure people are aware of the support they are entitled to. I understand that the Chief Executive has already convened a meeting of relevant officers to discuss how we encourage the uptake of pension credits and I would encourage all councillors to use their networks to raise awareness.

Council further notes that the Energy Price Cap is due to rise by 10% in October, which combined by the removal of Winter Fuel Payments will push thousands of local pensioners into fuel poverty.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for the policy on linking Winter Fuel Payments to Pension Credit

Item	Pages
<p>receipt to be immediately paused and introduce a new threshold to determine eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments. Council further requests the Chief Executive write to all MPs covering North West Leicestershire asking them to give their formal support to halting the changes to the Winter Fuel Payment eligibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request all group leaders within North West Leicestershire District Council sign a joint letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for the new Winter Fuel Payment policy to be suspended and reviewed. • Urgently commence a significant awareness campaign to encourage uptake of pension credits. 	
8. PETITIONS	
To receive petitions in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme.	
9. MINUTES	
To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 June 2024	5 - 10
10. CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT	
Report of the Strategic Director (Resources)	11 - 14
11. SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24	
Report of the Scrutiny Committee Chairs	15 - 32
12. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES	
Report of the Head of Legal and Support Services and Monitoring Officer	33 - 36

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MINUTES of a meeting of the COUNCIL held in the Forest Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on TUESDAY, 18 JUNE 2024

Present: Councillor K Horn (Chair)

Councillors R L Morris, M Ball, A Barker, C Beck, D Bigby, M Blair-Park, R Blunt, R Boam, M Burke, R Canny, D Cooper, D Everitt, T Eynon, M French, J Geary, T Gillard, R Johnson, S Lambeth, P Lees, J Legrys, K Merrie MBE, A Morley, P Moulton, E Parle, G Rogers, N J Rushton, R Sutton, A C Saffell, C A Sewell, S Sheahan, J G Simmons, N Smith, A Wilson, J Windram, L Windram, A C Woodman and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Mr A Barton, Mrs C Hammond, Mr P Stone, Mrs A Thomas, Mrs R Wallace and Miss E Warhurst

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

20. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor K Merrie declared an Other Registerable Interest in item 10, East Midlands Freeport Update, as a Member of Leicestershire County Council and the District Council representative on the Freeport Board.

Councillors T Gillard and N Rushton declared an Other Registerable Interest in item 10, East Midlands Freeport Update, as Members of Leicestershire County Council.

21. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements:

Whilst the Leader acknowledged Councillor C Beck as the new Member for the Snibston South Ward, it was not formally recognised at the last meeting, the Chair apologised and formally welcomed Councillor C Beck to the Chamber.

The Chair announced the recent passing of David Smith who was a key member of the remembrance planning group and civic events for 43 years. Condolences were sent to David's family at this difficult time.

An update was provided on the North West Leicestershire District Council's 50th anniversary plans and Members were encouraged to put forward nominations for the Legacy Awards.

Several events had already taken place in recent weeks including Moira Canal Festival and D-Day celebrations, both with large turnouts. The 125th anniversary of Coalville Park celebrations would be taking place later in the month, further information was to follow.

The Chair's chosen charity was announced as 'Steps'. The Chair invited Rosemary Conley, the patron and trustee of the charity to speak on the work undertaken by the Charity and the support provided to families during difficult times. The Leader said a few words in support of the work of the charity.

22. LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

In relation to the Leader's Executive Arrangements as announced at the previous meeting, the Planning Policy element of Councillor A Saffell's Planning Portfolio had been moved to Councillor K Merrie's Infrastructure Portfolio.

The success of this year's Download Festival held in Castle Donington was celebrated. New plans had been introduced to successfully mitigate the issues experienced last year and officers were thanked for their hard work. Several Members spoke in support and echoed the Leader's comments.

Following cross party discussions, it was announced that during the European Football Championships, the England and Scotland flags would be flown at Stenson House when the national teams were playing.

23. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

24. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were three questions asked which are set out below together with responses. Each Member who asked a question was invited by the Chair to ask one supplementary question which is also set out together with the response.

Question from Councillor J Legrys

"Council has recently made appointments to outside bodies, at its recent Annual Meeting. Could the Portfolio Holder please explain the process which the Council follows in seeking nominations for and making appointments to outside bodies?"

Response from Councillor N Rushton

"Thank you for your question Cllr Legrys. The Council considers and makes appointments to outside bodies each year at the Annual Council meeting. As part of the preparation for the meeting, the Democratic Services Team carry out an annual review by contacting each outside body (either directly or through any Council officer who liaises with the outside body) which the Council appointed to at the previous annual meeting to confirm whether they still require the Council to appoint a member representative to the body and what the details of the appointment are, for example whether the body requires a ward member, portfolio holder, skills/experience required, frequency and location of meetings.

Once the review is complete, Democratic Services contacts Group Whips and other members to seek nominations for the bodies that still require representation. Those nominations are considered and decided by the Annual Council meeting. After Annual Council, Democratic Services writes to those members appointed with the details of the appointment and notify the outside body or the liaising Council officer, of the appointed member and their contact details."

Supplementary question and response

Councillor J Legrys thanked Councillor N Rushton for his response and the Monitoring Officer for her support with drafting the question. He asked for the issue to be kept under review and taken through the Constitution Working Group this year. Councillor N Rushton confirmed it would be included in the annual review of the Consttution.

Question from Councillor J Geary

“Had it not been for the prompt action of the local Police Force travellers would have set up camp on The Scotland’s Playing Field last month. Should they have succeeded this Authority would have once again incurred cost of evicting them along with the costs of cleaning up the site and repairing damage caused to the grounds.

When I submitted a question enquiring when this Council would have a warden-controlled site for the travel community in our district back in November 2018, Councillor Pendleton replied, “The need to make provision for gypsies and travellers is something which the Council is aware of. We have been working to identify potential sites” and went on to say, ‘to date over 500 sites have been looked at’.

This is now the sixth time I have asked this question at Council meetings and am now hopeful of a positive answer.

When will this Council have a warden-controlled site to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers passing through our District?”

Response from Councillor K Merrie

“I recognise the concern raised by Cllr Geary in relation to the time it has taken to deal with the matter of gypsy and traveller sites and I’m sure he will recognise the significant difficulties in finding suitable sites in the district. I can confirm that Officers are currently investigating options for addressing the issue of transit accommodation in respect of both permanent and temporary sites as the Local Plan Review progresses. The intention is for Officers to bring forward a report to members of the Local Plan Committee before the end of the year.

I have asked Officers to keep Cllr Geary updated on progress and to make him aware when the issue is to be reported to Local Plan Committee.”

Supplementary question and response

Councillor J Geary acknowledged the difficulties for officers in identifying an appropriate site, however he reminded Members that it was a legal requirement to have a transient site. As he had received a similar response each time he asked this question, he requested that an item be considered by Scrutiny for further discussions. Councillor K Merrie also acknowledged the difficulties and assured the matter would be considered by the Local Plan Committee as soon as possible.

Question from Councillor Moulton

“I would like to ask the leader of the council if he is recommending that Glyn Rennocks ex chair of Coalville Town football club be recognised for all the hard work and dedication in the accomplishment of achieving Football League status at Level 3 in the town of Coalville.

Glyn has over a period of nearly 50 years not only invested a huge sum financially but also he has spent valuable time in building the club from humble beginnings.

Through his vision and forward thinking since moving to the Owen St venue in Coalville, the club has developed facilities off the field including changing rooms, a boardroom but also stands with seating. The club only recently installed a 3G all-weather pitch after raising over £1Million for the project, this has without a doubt raised the profile of Coalville and the wider community. The club achieved great success not least an appearance at Wembley in the final of the 2011 FA Vase final losing narrowly three two and with a modicum of good fortune had one of the two goal efforts which had hit the inside of the post who knows what further achievements could have been achieved on the back of that success. I know that many people from the area were privileged to have been present that day, I know I was.

More recently Coalville Town football club achieved success in the world's oldest cup competition the FA Cup by beating teams with Football League experience like Notts County and Chesterfield also playing teams like Charlton Athletic Grimsby town who are both currently playing in league football.

Glyn leaves Coalville Town F.C. having supported the local community and left a wonderful legacy with the youth and ladies football teams set up which has been run separately, I hope I can count on the leader's support and acknowledge Glyn with the recognition he so rightly deserves.”

Response from Councillor Blunt

“The Council recognises the significant contribution that Glyn has had on Coalville, including helping improve the health and wellbeing of residents, supporting the local economy, putting Coalville on the map because of the level of football and developing the facilities at Owen Street Recreation Ground. I would personally like to go on record to thank Glyn for what he has achieved and brought to Coalville and I hope Cllr Moulton will take the opportunity to encourage the local ward member to nominate Glyn for a North West Leicestershire 50th Anniversary Legacy Award for making such a positive contribution to the community. I would also encourage all councillors to put forward a member of their community for consideration under this award so that we can celebrate their contributions to the district, together.”

No supplementary question was asked.

25. MOTIONS

No motions were received.

26. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

27. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2024.

It was moved by Councillor K Horn, seconded by Councillor R Morris and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 May be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

28. EAST MIDLANDS FREEPORT UPDATE

Councillor K Merrie, the Infrastructure Portfolio Holder, presented the report to Members and moved the recommendations. It was seconded by Councillor A Woodman.

Prior to discussion, a Member commented that due to the nature of the report and that it was the pre-election period for the general election, it was felt that the item should be deferred. The Portfolio Holder explained that the report was not political and it was business as usual at a local authority level.

During discussion, comments were made regarding the risks of fraudulent and money laundering activity and business displacement, and the portfolio holder was asked what measures were being put in place. The Portfolio Holder stated that he would be meeting with the Freeport Board later in the week and would raise these points.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The latest position on respect of the East Midlands Freeport.
- 2) Subject to the approval of the Freeport Business Rates Relief Policy, the finalisation of the member's agreements, articles of association and documents/agreements necessary to facilitate the incorporation of East Midlands Freeport Company, be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

29. ANNUAL MEMBER CONDUCT REPORT

Councillor K Merrie, as Infrastructure Portfolio Holder, presented the report to Members and moved the recommendations. It was seconded by Councillor R Blunt.

Councillor D Everitt was invited to speak to the report as the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee during the period covered within the report.

Several Members commended the work undertaken by the Monitoring Officer with investigating conduct complaints, due to the difficulties of subject and the time required.

During discussion, the lack of detail in relation to the subject matter and learning outcomes was raised. The Monitoring Officer explained that in accordance with the adopted arrangements for dealing with complaints, which was aligned with the Local Government Association's Guidance on complaints handling, details of complaints were not published due to the sensitive nature. However, it was agreed that an explanation to be included in future annual reports to make that clear.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Member Conduct Annual Report 2023/24 be endorsed.

30. AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Councillor N Rushton, as Corporate Portfolio Holder, presented the report to Members and moved the recommendations. It was seconded by Councillor P Moulton.

Councillor Moulton as current Audit and Governance Committee Chair was invited to speak to the report.

Councillor R Sutton addressed the Committee and requested his comments be recorded. He expressed his opinion that audit matters were not understood by the authority and not taken seriously by the Committee as there were no independent members appointed and

still a vacancy on the Committee. He also had major concerns with the delays in signing off the annual accounts and that this was a risk to the authority.

Some Members expressed concerns that although the scope of the committee was to remain apolitical, this was not the case.

The Portfolio Holder reassured Members that the Audit and Governance function was taken very seriously with no obstructions from the administration, in relation to the delays with the annual accounts, there had been several external and internal factors impacting this and it was the aim to deliver as soon as possible.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report 2023/24 be noted.

31. APPOINTMENT OF PARISH REPRESENTATIVES TO THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Councillor K Merrie, as Infrastructure Portfolio Holder, presented the report to Members and moved the recommendations. It was seconded by Councillor T Gillard.

RESOLVED THAT:

Parish Councillors Mike McIntyre and Ray Woodward be appointed as Parish Council representatives to the Audit and Governance Committee.

32. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor K Merrie, as Infrastructure Portfolio Holder, presented the report to Members and moved the recommendations. It was seconded by Councillor T Gillard.

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) Councillor R Blunt be appointed to represent the Council on East Midlands Council.
- 2) Councillor K Merrie be nominated to submit an expression of interest in being a member of the Regional Employers Board.
- 3) Councillor Woodman be nominated to submit an expression of interest in being a member of the regional Migration Board.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.34 pm

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2024



Title of Report	CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT	
Presented by	Councillor Nicholas Rushton Corporate Portfolio Holder	
Background Papers	General Fund and Council Tax 2024/25 Council – 22 February 2024 2023/24 Quarter 3 General Fund Finance Update Cabinet - 26 March 2024 District-wide Weekly Food Waste Collections Cabinet - 20 August 2024 Supplementary Estimates, Virements and Capital Approvals Cabinet - 20 August 2024	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	The report is to ensure the Council is following good financial governance in line with its Financial Procedure Rules and capital governance arrangements. The financial implications are set out in the report.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The Council is managing its capital budgets in a co-ordinated and effective way since the Capital Strategy Group was introduced and changes were made to introduce the development pool and programme of active projects.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To seek approval for the additions to the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme in line with the Constitution.	

Recommendations	<p>THAT COUNCIL APPROVES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES DETAILED IN PARAGRAPH 2.2 WHICH ARE ABOVE £250K AND ARE EXTERNALLY FUNDED. 2. THE NEW CAPITAL SCHEMES AS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPHS 3.2 AND 3.3.
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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On an annual basis the Council approves its Budget and Capital Programme in February ahead of the subsequent financial year. The Budget is based on the best available intelligence at that point in time.
- 1.2 However, the external environment within which the Council operates is constantly evolving and during the financial year there can be changes in funding, for example the Council being successful in a grant bid for additional Government funding or by securing extra resources through partnership working.
- 1.3 These changes in funding, and therefore spending, are required to be managed in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules which form part of the Constitution. The delegation levels provide clarity regarding the inclusion of additional resources secured during the financial year that were not included when the Council set its annual Budget in February.
- 1.4 This report provides an update on additional funds secured during the financial year since the budget was set and requests specific approval of the new funds secured of £250,000 or more and new schemes for inclusion into the Capital Programme This is in line with the requirements set out in the Financial Procedure Rules.

2.0 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

- 2.1 A Supplementary Estimate is an addition to the Council's approved budget. In line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules a Supplementary Estimate of £250,000 or more requires Council approval to include it in its Budget.
- 2.2 The following Supplementary Estimates of £250,000 or more have been received and requires Council approval to include in the Council's Budget:

Supplementary Estimate	£
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Revenue Grant - Year 2	366,121
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Revenue Grant - Year 3	304,136
Rural England Prosperity Fund Revenue Grant – Year 2	351,818
Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) – Food Waste Weekly Collection Capital Grant – one-off	1,062,066
	2,084,141

3.0 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The Council agreed its Capital Programme as part of the annual Budget in February 2024. The budget report set out enhancements being made to capital project governance to assist in managing schemes through their project lifecycle and mitigate risk. In line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, which form part of the Constitution, any new schemes entering the Capital Programme require Council approval.
- 3.2 As part of the 2023/24 Quarter 3 General Fund Finance Update report presented to Cabinet on the 26 March 2024, it was reported that two new schemes had been added to the capital programme due to urgency. A decision was taken on Health and Safety grounds to proceed with the works and seek retrospective authority from Council. The two schemes are:
- a) Park Depot Storage Facility
A storage building at the Parks Depot had been identified as structurally unsound and in need of urgent demolition and replacement. Due to the need to maintain the parks depot as a safe and active site, a decision was taken on Health and Safety grounds to proceed with the demolition as soon as arrangements could be made. A replacement shed building will also be required to replace the accommodation that will be lost. The scheme was funded by the business rates reserve.
 - b) Hermitage 3G Pitch – Lighting Column
During routine inspections it was identified that a lighting column was dangerous and required urgent replacement. Due to the urgent need to replace the lighting column, a decision was taken on Health and Safety grounds to proceed with the works. There was no budget provision in the capital programme to cover the cost of this work and therefore it is proposed that £20,000 needs to be transferred from the Hermitage 3G Pitch replacement budget in the capital programme for 2024/25 to cover the necessary expenditure.
- 3.3 At its meeting on 20 August 2024, Cabinet approved a report in relation to District-Wide Weekly Food Waste Collections. This report included the creation of a new scheme for the inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme. The total cost of this scheme is £1,154,138, of which £895,542 is in relation to food waste collection vehicles of £895,542 and £258,596 for food waste containers. The scheme is to be part-funded from a DEFRA grant of £1,062,066 and the remaining £92,072 funded from the business rates reserve.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	None
Safeguarding:	None
Equalities/Diversity:	Equality Impacts Assessments are conducted by services by capital schemes where necessary.
Customer Impact:	Customers are likely to be impacted positively by the additional revenue funding and changes to the Capital Programme set out in this report.
Economic and Social Impact:	The Capital Programme includes significant investment in the district.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The Capital Programme includes substantial investment in carbon reduction and investment to increase recycling from households.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Detail any consultation/community engagement undertaken prior to the decision.
Risks:	The Budget and Capital Programme are monitored throughout the year to ensure the Council remains within its funding envelope and planned budget savings are delivered. Key risks to the Budget and Capital Programme are set out in the Budget Reports approved by Council in February 2024. A link to these reports is provided in the background papers.
Officer Contact	Anna Crouch Head of Finance anna.crouch@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2024



Title of Report	SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24	
Presented by	Councillor Keith Merrie Infrastructure Portfolio Holder	
Background Papers	Minutes of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 23 May 2024 and the Community Scrutiny Committee on 27 June 2024	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	None identified.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	None identified.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	None identified.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To present the annual report to Council setting out the work of the Scrutiny Committees over the preceding 12 month period.	
Recommendations	THAT COUNCIL: RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT FOR 2023/24.	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In accordance with the agreed scrutiny process, an annual report is submitted to Council setting out the work of both the Scrutiny Committees over the preceding 12-month period. The annual report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The report has been developed by the Scrutiny Work Programming Group, both Scrutiny Chairs and both Scrutiny Committees. All comments and amendments have been incorporated before being reported to Council.
- 1.3 Comments from both scrutiny committees can be found in the minutes of the meetings linked in the background papers above.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	All
Policy Considerations:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Safeguarding:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Equalities/Diversity:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Customer Impact:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Economic and Social Impact:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Risks:	None identified but regard had to this during the scrutiny process.
Officer Contact	<p>James Arnold Strategic Director of Place james.arnold@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Andy Barton Strategic Director of Communities andy.barton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>

North West Leicestershire District Council

Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

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Foreword

This report provides a summary of work done by scrutiny at North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) during 2023/24 and provides an opportunity to reflect on this work. It also provides a general overview of how scrutiny operates, the impact it has and how public can get involved.

The principal purpose and power of a scrutiny committee is to influence the policies and decisions made by NWLDC in connection with the provision of public services. The scrutiny committee gathers evidence on issues affecting local people and makes recommendations based on its findings. It reviews what the council has actually done and compares this to its stated objectives.

The scrutiny committees are politically balanced so that they can include as many viewpoints as possible. This year both committees have been chaired by members of the opposition. We believe that opposition members play a valuable role as critical friends to the ruling Cabinet. It is our job to challenge decisions so that the public get the best value from their district council.

It can be difficult to know whether or not a new policy or project has actually worked. How can we measure success? We believe that NWLDC should set targets for itself and be able to say if they have been reached. These targets are called Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). They should tell you if the plans are likely to work and, when a project is finished, if it actually did work.

In the last year we have worked hard to make sure that all the council's plans and policies have clear, realistic and sensible KPIs. Where these have not been in place we have made recommendations to Cabinet so that they can be considered in the future.

This document is a record of our progress so far.



Cllr Terri Eynon
Chair of Community Scrutiny
Committee



Cllr Simon Lambeth
Chair of Corporate Scrutiny
Committee

What is scrutiny?

"The role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding an authority's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself. Conversely, poor scrutiny can be indicative of wider governance, leadership, and service failure."

Overview and Scrutiny: Statutory Guidance for Councils and Combined Authorities – by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published 2019

Scrutiny is an important part of the council's decision-making process and allows members who are not Cabinet members to look into areas of local concern and critically examine decisions taken by the Cabinet to benefit local people.

Scrutiny committees cannot make decisions but can make recommendations to Cabinet and other decision-making bodies of the council. Scrutiny can also look at services provided by other organisations and as such can invite them into committee meetings for discussions.

Principles of good scrutiny

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny established four key principles of scrutiny, these are:

- 1 Provides critical friend challenge to executive policy and decision makers**
Constructive, robust and purposeful challenge.
Non-aggressive to create optimum conditions for investigative evidence based process.
- 2 Enable the voice and concerns of the public**
Meetings conducted in public and are webcast.
Innovative, public communication, consultation and feedback.
- 3 Be carried out by independent minded councillors**
Councillors actively engage in scrutiny function to drive improvement.
Areas are reviewed in an a-political atmosphere.
- 4 Drive improvement in public services**
Promotes community well-being and improves quality of life.
Strategic review of corporate policies, plans performance and budgets.

Why scrutiny is important....

Scrutiny is a strategic function of the authority and is a central part corporate governance. It is therefore an important element in decision-making. It also provides councillors that are not in decision-making roles an opportunity to be a 'critical friend' to the Cabinet and publicly hold them to account in relation to the decisions they are making.

The scrutiny role...

The main tasks of the committees are:

- **Performance monitoring** – The council has to meet corporate priorities set out in the Council Delivery Plan and report against those indicators. Scrutiny can examine any aspect of the council's performance, including services that it delivers through partnerships with other organisations.
- **Holding the Cabinet to account** - Decisions made by the Cabinet but not yet put into practice can be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committees and challenged.
- **Policy review and development** - Scrutiny can propose new policies or review existing policies and recommend changes to the Cabinet.
- **External scrutiny** - Any issue directly affecting the residents of North West Leicestershire can be scrutinised by the committees, including services provided by another organisation.

It is through demonstrating the value and impact that effective scrutiny can have in supporting councils and other organisations to deliver better, more cost-effective services, that scrutiny is a valued element of local democracy.

What scrutiny looks like in North West Leicestershire

The scrutiny work is carried out by the two committees – the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Community Scrutiny Committee, with an informal Scrutiny Work Programming Group programming the work. Below is a list of areas of responsibility for each scrutiny committee. Each committee can receive reports and comment on matters of policy or items of business of a similar nature to those listed.

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Asset management
Estates and property
Review of Constitution
Communications
Customer services
Finance
Human resources
Equalities
ICT
Legal services
Revenue and benefits
Shared services

Community Scrutiny Committee

Business / economy
Planning and building control
Tourism
Partnerships
Community safety
Leisure
Health and wellbeing
Waste services
Stronger and safer communities
Environmental health
Licensing
Environmental protection
Statutory crime and disorder committee
Strategic housing – housing strategy
Housing management
Economic development
Regeneration

The scrutiny committees can set up special working parties called task and finish groups when they need to undertake a detailed, in-depth investigation into a particular issue. The work is done by a small group of councillors appointed from the membership of the scrutiny committee. Work takes place for a set period and it is time limited. These focused task and finish groups make recommendations to the parent scrutiny committee before being considered by the Cabinet.

Further information can be found on NWLDC website regarding the scrutiny committee structure and terms of reference at [Part 3, section D of the council's Constitution](#).

Public involvement in scrutiny...

As the scrutiny committees are actively working on matters that affect the residents of North West Leicestershire, involvement of the public is encouraged in the following ways:

- Accessing agendas/work programmes: All work either planned or already done by the scrutiny committees is publicly available on the NWLDC website (unless in relation to a confidential matter). All meeting dates and corresponding information can be found [on the NWLDC website](#).
- Attending meetings: Members of the public can attend any public meeting of the scrutiny committees. Details of meeting dates can be found on [the NWLDC website](#). If you are interested but are unable to attend in person, the meetings are also available to view online both live and after the event. Links to meetings can be found [on the NWLDC website](#).
- Asking a question: Each meeting of the scrutiny committees allows for public questions to be asked at the beginning of each agenda. Information on how to submit a question can be found [here](#).
- Submitting a petition: Scrutiny Committees can receive petitions relating to an area that the council has authority over. It can be submitted by anyone who lives, works or studies in North West Leicestershire and can be submitted in writing or as an e-petition on the NWLDC website. Further details can be found [on the NWLDC website](#).
- Identifying issues which a scrutiny committee might look at (via officers or committee members)
- Contributing to consultations and surveys

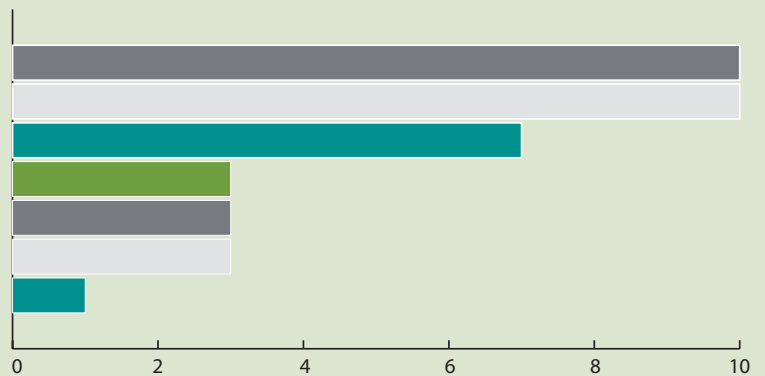
What has scrutiny been doing?

Each scrutiny committee is made up of 10 members, five of which sit on both Corporate and Community Scrutiny Committees. In total there are 15 members out of the 38 elected to represent the district that take part in scrutiny.



Reports received into scrutiny: 34

- For information and update: 10
- Pre-Cabinet review: 10
- Policy reviews: 7
- Performance reviews: 3
- Scrutiny process: 3
- Task and finish group recommendations: 1



Committee meetings held	11
Corporate Scrutiny Committee	6
Community Scrutiny Committee	5
Hours of public debate	17hrs 53mins
Recommendations submitted to Cabinet	11
Recommendations were accepted by Cabinet	7

Scrutiny Work Programming Group

The Scrutiny Work Programming Group is an informal group, made up of councillors and officers, that has been in operation since early 2022 and was established to manage the growing workloads of both committees and to help shape the scrutiny function moving forward. The group's key role is to:

- Consider requests for inclusion on the work programmes of each scrutiny committee;
- Consider whether there are other ways of receiving information
- Consult with members of scrutiny committees, senior officers, Cabinet members for horizon-scanning on policy development
- Look at the corporate priorities, Council Delivery Plan and Cabinet forward plan and identify key issues / topics for investigation / inquiry
- Consider events and decisions in the council's calendar which could require an input / consultation via scrutiny
- Review any follow-up work required after previous scrutiny

Due to the cross overs with scrutiny, the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee along with the lead officer attend each of the Scrutiny Work Programming Group meetings to discuss closely linked matters.

Work programming

The group reviews the work programmes for both scrutiny committees at each meeting, ensuring that workloads are appropriate and identifying future items from the Cabinet's Executive Decision Notice.

Work requests

The group consider any requests for items received from members and if it is felt that value would be added by scrutinising, they determine the best route to take, whether that be a task and finish group, report to committee or information paper. In 2023/24 the group considered 21 work requests which resulted in:

- Four reports
- Ten requests were incorporated within already scheduled reports
- Four information papers
- Three have discussions and scoping still ongoing

Information papers

This year a new approach was introduced to help manage the workloads of the committees - this led to the introduction of information papers' for the group, rather than full reports to the committees when appropriate. In 2023/24, the group received three information papers:

- Download Festival Investigation Update

Outcome: no further report required for Committee

- Ivanhoe Line Update

Outcome: matter was considered by Community Scrutiny Committee

- Section 106 Agreements and Health

Outcome: no further report required for Committee, Information Paper was circulated to all scrutiny members

Annual report

The group were involved in shaping the Annual Scrutiny Report prior to consideration by both scrutiny committees and Council.

Membership	Attendance				
	6 Jul 23	6 Sep 23	6 Dec 23	20 Mar 24	%
Morgan Burke	N	N	N	N	0%
Terri Eynon (Chair of Community SC)	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Simon Lambeth (Chair of Corporate SC)	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Paul Lees	Y	Y	N	Y	75%

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Set out below are the key topics the Corporate Scrutiny Committee has scrutinised in 2023/24. All agendas and full details of the committee's work can be found on the [NWLDC website](#).

Council's budget setting

The committee thoroughly examined the draft budgets for 2024/25 as part of the budget consultation process and it was acknowledged that the council was facing a range of financial pressures and challenges. The committee:

- Recommended that all work on the Stenson Square project be paused pending further assessment
- Recommended that the cut in grant to Ashby Museum not be taken forward, this was taken on board and implemented
- Asked for further information from officers on several budgetary matters for clarification purposes
- Suggested that the final HRA budget include proposed fleet replacement for future years
- Recommended that Cabinet review the new housing supply programme.

Council Delivery Plan

The committee was involved in the development of the Council Delivery Plan and was consulted twice during the drafting process both in the early stages and prior to consideration by Cabinet and approval by Council. The committee:

- Submitted its views on the draft Council Delivery Plan for consideration by Cabinet
- Suggested that political groups be consulted on the plan prior to the draft document being presented back to the committee, which was taken on board and implemented.
- Challenged the choice of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used.
- Questioned the form and content of the plan.

Performance monitoring

One of the roles of scrutiny is to examine and monitor the council's performance by using the priorities as set out in the Council Delivery Plan. The Corporate Scrutiny Committee looks at the overall performance and the financial performance on a quarterly basis.

Due to the change in political leadership at the NWLDC elections in 2023, the approval of the Council Delivery Plan was delayed and therefore performance information was not available until the end of quarter three 2023/24. The financial performance continued to be reviewed on a quarterly basis and comments fed back to the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

The committee:

Submitted its views on the quarterly financial performance updates

- Sought clarity on several financial matters
- Questioned staffing plans and budgets and requested a report for more information
- Challenged the performance reporting process.

Housing services

The committee have been regularly scrutinising the Housing Repairs Service following performance concerns raised by members in recent years. In 2023/24 the committee received a performance update and set up a task and finish group to look specifically at damp and mould issues. The committee:

- Welcomed the work undertaken to date and progress made
- Shared concerns about staffing resources
- Requested a further update in 2024/25.

Task and finish groups

Damp and Mould Task and Finish Group

In 2023/24 the committee established one task and finish group to look at the work currently being done to tackle mould and damp issues in council-owned properties.

The group made several recommendations that were endorsed by Corporate Scrutiny Committee and presented to Cabinet. The report detailing the work and recommendations of the group in full can be found [on the NWLDC website](#).

The group made the following recommendations that were all agreed by Cabinet:

- A stand-alone policy on damp and mould be produced
- Steps be taken to improve the documents provided to tenants about damp and mould based on best practice
- NWLDC participates in benchmarking of damp and mould cases, and associated repairs and works, and to proceed to procure a preferred contractor
- The Housing Service be instructed to scope a specification to use external contractors to supplement the inhouse workforce capacity to specifically address mould and damp cases.

Committee meetings held	6
Reports considered	19
Recommendations submitted to Cabinet	9
Recommendations accepted by Cabinet	6
Comments submitted to Cabinet	5
Hours of public debate	9 hrs 36 mins
Questions submitted by public	0

Membership	Attendance						
	11 Jul 23	31 Aug 23	23 Nov 23	4 Jan 24	20 Feb 24	21 Mar 24	%
Simon Lambeth (Chair)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Mike Ball (Chair)	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	33%
Dave Bigby	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	83%
Murrae Blair-Park	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	83%
Morgan Buke	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	83%
Kenny Horn	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	50%
Alison Morley	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Ray Morris	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	50%
Sean Sheahan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Jake Windram	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%

Community Scrutiny Committee

Set out below are the key topics the committee has scrutinised in 2023/24. All agendas and full details of the committee's agendas can be found [on the NWLDC website](#).

Ivanhoe Line

Following the debate on a motion to Council on the progression of the Ivanhoe train line, the matter was brought to the committee for further discussion. A representative from the Campaign to Reopen the Ivanhoe Line (CRIL) attended the committee meeting following an invitation from the chair, to assist with further lines of enquiry.

The committee:

- Acknowledged the ongoing work of Network Rail, CRIL and officers
- Acknowledged the phased strategy to reopen the line as appropriate at the moment
- Noted that a further report on the issue would be brought to the committee in due course
- Requested that the portfolio holder keep the committee updated on the progress on regular basis.

Kegworth Project

The committee were asked to review the progress of the Kegworth Project which involved the culmination of a number of funding streams to provide several improvements in Kegworth. NWLDC has been working alongside the Kegworth Parish Council to deliver the project.

The committee:

- Acknowledged the history of the project and welcomed comments from the ward members
- Submitted its views for consideration by Cabinet
- Recommended that NWLDC ask Leicestershire County Council to review parking enforcement in the area once the project is completed to ensure maximum benefit from the parking scheme is attained. This was taken on board and will be implemented.

Planning enforcement

Following concerns from the committee on the effectiveness of planning enforcement due to outstanding unresolved historic enforcement cases, a report was initially received in September 2022 and a further update on the latest position was provided in 2023/24. The committee were keen to ensure that NWLDC has a Planning Enforcement Team that was fit for purpose.

The committee:

- Welcomed and provided comments on the progress made to date
- Acknowledged the proposed process to report on planning enforcement to the Planning Committee bi-annually
- Requested an improved line of communication between officers and the public on the nature of the planning process and available enforcement mechanisms.

Health and wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of the community is an important matter for the Committee and several reports have been received in 2023/24 for consideration. The committee:

- Reviewed the proposals for the creation of the Hermitage Recreation Ground Ecopark, comments were fed back to Cabinet
- Received an update on the effectiveness of our leisure centres which was welcomed. The committee requested that future reports include more data profiles to demonstrate the effectiveness of the schemes
- Provided comments on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Strategy.

Task and finish groups

The committee did not establish any task and finish groups this year.

Committee meetings held	5
Reports considered	15
Recommendations submitted to Cabinet	2
Recommendations accepted by Cabinet	1
Comments submitted to Cabinet	5
Hours of public debate	8 hrs 17 mins
Questions submitted by public	0

Membership	Attendance					
	13 Jul 23	28 Sep 23	7 Dec 23	8 Feb 24	4 Apr 24	%
Dr Terri Eynon (Chair)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Murrae Blair-Park (Deputy Chair)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Mike Ball	N	Y	N	Y	Y	60%
Marie French	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	80%
Kenny Horn	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Simon Lambeth	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Paul Lees	N	Y	N	Y	Y	60%
Alison Morley	Y	N	N	Y	Y	60%
Elizabeth Parle	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
Lee Windram	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%

Where to get more information

If you would like more information about how to get involved or suggest a topic for scrutiny review, you can contact the Democratic Services Team on 01530 454512 or memberservices@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
You can also contact the Scrutiny Committee Chairs directly:

Councillor Simon Lambeth
Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee
simon.lambeth@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

Councillor Terri Eynon
Chair of Community Scrutiny Committee
terri.eynon@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2024



Title of Report	APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES	
Presented by	Councillor Tony Gillard	
Background Papers	The Council's Constitution The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (legislation.gov.uk)	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	None have been identified.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	In determining the membership of committees, account has been taken of the requirements of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and 1991 made under sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. These Regulations require that seats on committees and sub-committees are allocated to the political groups in a way which reflects the overall balance on the Council.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	None have been identified.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To appoint to the vacant seat on the Council's Audit and Governance Committee.	
Recommendations	THAT AN APPOINTMENT BE MADE TO FILL THE VACANT SEAT ON THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2024/25 CIVIC YEAR, OR IF NO NOMINATIONS ARE RECEIVED, IT WILL BE AGREED THAT THE SEAT WILL REMAIN VACANT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2024/25 CIVIC YEAR	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution Members must, at the Annual Meeting, endorse committee Terms of Reference, receive nominations of Councillors to serve on each board or committee and appoint to those boards or committees.
- 1.2 The appointments to the committees and groups for the 2024/25 civic year, taking into account the political balance requirement, were agreed at the Annual Council meeting held on 7 May 2024.

1.3 Ahead of the meeting on 7 May 2024, the report titled ‘Appointments to Committees and Groups, Election of Chairs and Deputy Chairs’ was also circulated, within which Appendix B to the report provides guidance on determining proportionality for political balance.

2.0 VACANT SEAT ON AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

2.1 At Annual Council in May 2024, the Alliance chose not to appoint to one of its allocated seats on the Audit and Governance Committee.

2.2 The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 states that where a political group has failed to express its wishes in relation to the appointment to such a seat as is mentioned in regulation 14 within the period of three weeks beginning with the date on which notice was given under that regulation, the authority or committee may make such appointment to that seat as they think fit. This is also reflected in the guidance in Appendix B referred to above.

2.3 During a busy period for the Council, the vacancy was unintentionally overlooked at the Full Council meeting in June, but is now being addressed at the next available opportunity.

2.4 Following discussions the Alliance has confirmed that it does not wish to fill the vacant seat, and that Council is to appoint a member to that seat.

2.5 Nominations have been sought from both the Labour Group and the Independent Members of the Council to fill the vacancy.

2.6 Nominations will be circulated at the meeting. If more than one nomination is received, a vote will be taken by Council and the member with the most votes will be appointed to the seat. If no nominations are received, the seat will remain vacant for the remainder of the 2024/25 civic year.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and 1991 made under sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
Safeguarding:	Not applicable
Equalities/Diversity:	The process ensures that all committees have a politically balanced make-up.
Customer Impact:	Not applicable
Economic and Social Impact:	Not applicable.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	Not applicable

Consultation/Community Engagement:	All Political Groups and Independent Members
Risks:	Failure to address the vacancy in the relevant Committee would put the Council in breach of its duties and compromise the legality and integrity of any future decisions.
Officer Contact	Elizabeth Warhurst Head of Legal and Commercial Services elizabeth.warhurst@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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