



# Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held in the Jeffrey Room, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Monday 19 June 2023 at 6.00pm

## Agenda

1.	<b>Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members</b>
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
3.	<b>Notification of requests from Members of the Public to address the Meeting</b> To receive notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting on an item on the public part of the agenda.
4.	<b>Chair's Announcements</b> To receive any communications from the Chair.
5.	<b>West Northamptonshire Council Housing Allocation Scheme (Pages 5 - 26)</b> To consider and provide input in the development of the new Housing Allocation Scheme for West Northamptonshire.
6.	<b>Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24 (Pages 27 - 44)</b> To consider and agree the matters to be included in the Committee work programme for 2023/24.

7.	<p><b>Urgent Business</b></p> <p>The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.</p>
8.	<p><b>Exclusion of Press and Public</b></p> <p>In respect of the following items the Chair may move the resolution set out below, on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information (information regarded as private for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972) would be disclosed to them: The Committee is requested to resolve: “That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act of the descriptions against each item would be disclosed to them.”</p>

Catherine Whitehead  
Proper Officer  
9 June 2023

**Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members:**

Councillor Andrew Grant (Chair)	Councillor Stephen Hibbert (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Harry Barrett	Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Councillor Imran Ahmed Chowdhury BEM	Councillor Louisa Fowler
Councillor Cheryl Hawes	Councillor Azizur Rahman
Councillor Zoe Smith	Councillor Nick Sturges-Alex
Councillor Mike Warren	

## **Information about this Agenda**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk) prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

### **Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates**

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

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### **Queries Regarding this Agenda**

If you have any queries about this agenda please contact James Edmunds / Kathryn Holton, Democratic Services, via the following:

Email: [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk)

Or by writing to:

West Northamptonshire Council  
One Angel Square  
Angel Street  
Northampton  
NN1 1ED

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# West Northamptonshire Council Draft Housing Allocation Scheme (Detail)

**19 June 2023 – Children, Education and Housing Overview  
and Scrutiny**



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

# Legal context

- Social rented housing are homes for social rent and affordable for people whose needs cannot be met by the commercial housing market.
- All local authorities are obliged to operate a scheme for the allocation of social rented housing in its area, regardless whether or not a local authority continues to own and manage housing accommodation.
- Social rented housing can only be allocated to people that have a permanent right to reside in the UK.

# Legal context

- Local authorities are free to fix their own non-discriminatory qualification criteria.
- Local authorities are required to provide information to anyone interested in being allocated social rented housing and provide help to anyone who might need assistance to make an application.
- Local authorities are free to determine how much choice applicants might have in the home they are allocated.

# Legal context

- The law requires some people, due to specified circumstances or characteristics, are given a priority for allocation of social rented housing, this being people who are:
  - Homeless
  - Owed a homelessness duty
  - Occupying insanitary housing, overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
  - Needing to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability)
  - Needing to move with failure to meet this need would cause hardship



# Legal context

- Local authorities can determine how applicants are prioritised for an allocation of social rented housing.
- Local authorities and social landlords (i.e. housing associations) are required to cooperate with housing allocations, this can involve:
  - A nomination agreement
  - A common housing register
  - Common housing allocation policy
- The way social rented housing is allocated must reflect the priorities of a local homelessness strategy and tenancy policy.

# Legal context

- The Regulator of Social Housing regulates all social landlords, including housing associations and local authorities that retain ownership of housing accommodation, either directly or via arm's-length management organisations.
- The Regulator of Social Housing expects social housing to be let in a fair, transparent and efficient way.
- The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman, both provide a free and independent service to help resolve complaints, including those relating to the allocation of social rented housing.

# Local context

- West Northamptonshire Council is responsible for administering a range of public law housing functions, for the benefit of the whole community,
- Public housing law requires West Northamptonshire Council to have a housing allocation scheme.
- West Northamptonshire Council continues to own social rented, housing management of the circa 11,500 properties is carried out by Northamptonshire Partnership Homes.

# Local context

- Prior to the creation of West Northamptonshire Council, three former local authorities operated separate housing allocation schemes.
- The schemes operated by Northampton Borough Council and Daventry District Council, used a choice based lettings approach to allocating social housing. South Northamptonshire District Council used a direct matching model. Each of the scheme varied in other aspects, including IT systems.
- Northampton Partnership homes administered housing allocation functions on behalf of Northampton Borough Council. Daventry District Council and South Northamptonshire District Council administered housing allocation functions in-house.

# Local drivers

- A new West Northants Housing Allocation Scheme needs to be in place by first April 2024.
- The Local Government (structural changes) Regulation 2020, made provision that certain schemes and strategies which are inherited from predecessor councils, can be revised and harmonised across the unitary authority, within 36 months of a new unitary authority being established.
- Regulation includes the allocation scheme under section 1668a of the Housing Act 1996

# Choice

## Choice-based lettings (CBL)

- The scheme draft is proposing CBL , but with an option to allow direct allocation / nomination, in particular circumstances.

## Why CBL

- CBL is recommended best practice
- CBL provides an element of choice to an applicant
- Should reduce the number of refusals, as applicant has expressed a preference for a property
- Can minimize re-let times
- Can highlight undesirable areas by low number of bids / hard-to-let properties

# Proposed qualification criteria

The following are the proposed non-qualifying criteria:

Persons under 16 years of age

Persons incapable of holding a tenancy

Persons that do not meet the West Northants local connection criteria

Persons founds guilty of unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour

Persons who have housing related debt

Persons who have breached tenancy conditions

# Proposed qualification criteria

Persons who are homeowners in the UK or abroad

Persons who have an income and / or savings above the financial resource limit

Persons who have no assessed housing needs



# Proposed assessment of housing need

- It is proposed that the Scheme will have 4 bands (A-D)

In determining which Band to place Applicants, the following priorities will apply:

- Applicants whom the Local Authority have chosen to award an additional preference, in addition to the requirement to be afforded a reasonable preference for an allocation, will be placed in Bands A or B.
- Applicants whom statute stipulates must be afforded a reasonable preference, will be placed in B with others in C&D

# Band A:

Under-occupying social rented housing by one or more bedrooms

Sudden loss of existing home as a result of a disaster

Need to move as homes is subject to a compulsory purchase order or requires major works

Releasing an adapted WNC home or Registered Provider property within the West Northants area

An applicant assessed as an urgent medical need whose condition is life threatening and / or terminal and their accommodation is a major contributory factor

Planned discharge from hospital is imminent and there is no accommodation available which is reasonable to occupy

# Band A:

Victims of domestic abuse who are homeless or owed a homelessness duty and/or have been identified as high-risk victims of domestic abuse at Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Victims of racial harassment amounting to violence or threat of violence

Victims of hate crime amounting to violence or threats of violence

Witnesses of crime, or victims of crime, who would be at high risk of intimidation amounting to violence or threats of violence

# Band B:

Homeless applicants owed a S189B initial duty, who are homeless and owed the S188 interim duty to accommodate having a priority need

Homeless applicants owed a S193 duty

Homeless applicants owed a S189B relief duty, but are not owed the S188 interim accommodation duty

Homeless applicants threatened with homelessness and owed the S195 duty

An applicant who is overcrowded and requires two or more additional bedrooms

An applicant occupying insanitary housing or living in unsatisfactory housing conditions

# Band B:

A Care leaver who has had a duty of care accepted under the Children's Act by the Local Authority and is ready for independent living

An applicant approved by the Local Authority as a foster carer or to adopt, who needs to move to a larger home in order to look after a child under the care of the Local Authority's children services

Applicants who are members of the Armed and Reserve forces

An applicant who are bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed forces leaving Service Family Accommodation

An applicant assessed as a High medical need or High welfare need due to detrimental effects caused by the present accommodation.

An Applicant that is subject to Multi-agency Public Protection arrangement (MAPPA)

An Applicant that needs to move on hardship grounds

## Band C:

An applicant who is intentionally homeless and have a priority need for accommodation owed the S190 duty

An applicant in overcrowding due to lacking one bedroom

An applicant is separated family due to no suitable accommodation

An applicant has at least one dependant child and is living in accommodation where the facilities are shared with others

An applicant assessed as a medium welfare need due to detrimental effects caused by the present accommodation

An applicant who has been assessed for 'Right to Move' to take up a particular employment, education or training opportunity and in respect of transfer Applicants, to be closer to work

## Band D:

An applicant has refused the maximum number of suitable offers and will receive reduced priority/preference for 12 months

An applicant with no housing need but establishes a local connection to a S106 or village exception site, whether the connection is to the specific village where the development is located, or within the cascading villages (as set out in relevant legal agreements)

An applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances to gain more priority through this scheme

Any other applicant who is eligible and qualifies and not covered by any of the above priority categories

# Bidding / offers and refusals

- It is proposed that properties will be advertised on a weekly cycle
- Adverts will include a description of the property, tenure, rental charge size and any adaptations, plus any specific criteria or restriction on who may bid for the property
- Applicants who do not meet the criteria for a property will not be able to bid for the vacancy
- Applicants will be required to bid for a property to be considered for a nomination and may bid for a maximum of 3 properties per week
- All Applicants regardless of band will be entitled to two refusals of a reasonable offer of accommodation; except for the following exemptions who will only receive one refusal of a reasonable offer of accommodation, after the first refusals, the 2<sup>nd</sup> offer will be through a direct match
  - i. Homeless applicants to whom the authority has accepted a S193 main duty to accommodate
  - ii. Homeless applicants to whom the authority has accepted a S188 duty to accommodate
  - iii. Applicants who are subject to MAPPAs are entitled to one reasonable offer to accommodation, this will be through a direct match



# Reviews

- Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 applicants for housing have the right to request a review of any decision made about their application (below)
- Applicants have 21 calendar days of receiving a decision to submit a review
- The LA must complete the review with 56 days
  - A decision that an applicant is not eligible to register on the Scheme due to immigration status
  - A decision that an applicant belongs to a non-qualifying group
  - A decision on an applicant's priority status, including any changes to applicant priority status
  - A decision on the type of housing an applicant can bid
  - A decision regarding the extent of an applicant's household
  - A decision on whether an allocation / nomination constitutes a final offer within the terms of the scheme

# Timetable

- June 2023 – finalise draft of new housing allocation scheme
- Workshops with staff
- Meetings / workshops with Registered Providers
- Prepare for consultation
- 19 June - Children, Education and Housing O & S
- 26 June - Executive Programme Board
- 11 July 2023 – Cabinet - approval sought to start formal public consultation
- 17 July – 24 September - formal public consultation
- 14 November 2023 – Cabinet approval sought to adopt housing allocation scheme
- November onwards – work on the implementation of the new scheme in April 2024



# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND HOUSING

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### 19 JUNE 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24</b>
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<b>Contributors/Checkers/Approvers</b>		
<b>West MO</b> (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	05/06/2023
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#### List of Appendices

**Appendix A – Scrutiny topics identified by the former People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Appendix B – Draft Committee Work Programme 2023/24**

**Appendix C – Updated draft plan for a scrutiny review of support for children with SEND**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The report is intended to enable the Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider and agree its work programme for 2023/24.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. The report invites the Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny to consider and agree its work programme for 2023/24. The report presents a draft work programme resulting from discussion at the Committee pre-meeting on 25 May 2023, together with information relating to prospective scrutiny reviews. The Committee in formal session should confirm the items of business to be included in its work programme.

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- a) Agrees the topics to be included in its work programme for 2023/24 and the timing and working methods to be used for addressing them; and
  - b) Agrees the updated plan for the scrutiny review of support for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

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- 4.1 The recommendations are intended to support the effective operation of the Committee and assist it in carrying out productive scrutiny work during 2023/24.

### **5. Report Background**

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- 5.1 West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has established the Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023/24 with a remit consisting of the following areas:
- Children’s social care
  - Early Years and Family Support
  - Education
  - Child Mental Health
  - Housing

- 5.2 The work of the Committee should reflect and support the mission statement set out in the WNC Overview and Scrutiny Framework: *“Effective scrutiny supports the work of the Council in achieving its objectives and priorities through constructive challenge and the promotion of best practice. It makes a positive contribution to the lives of citizens in West Northamptonshire.”*

- 5.3 The WNC Constitution specifies that Overview and Scrutiny committees will draw up a work programme, which should be informed by consultation with other parts of the Council, including the Cabinet, as appropriate and should also take account of the resources, both officer and financial, available to support it. The WNC Overview and Scrutiny Framework sets out the following requirements relating to the development of work programmes:

*“It is vital that each committee sets a work programme in order that it can prioritise its work and ensure there is a clear emphasis on key issues. Work programmes must be focussed as there is strong evidence that when scrutiny focuses on fewer things of greater importance, more is achieved.*

*“Work planning ensures scrutiny stays focussed on strategic issues where it can make an impact, whilst making the best use of time and resources. Work planning is not a one-off activity. Although a workshop at the beginning of the year may be helpful in identifying priorities and providing structure, each work programme will need to retain flexibility, which means each committee should set aside time to review its work programme to ensure it remains relevant.*

*“In agreeing items for their work programmes, Overview and Scrutiny Committees should take account of suggestions from members, as well as partners and the public but must also be directed by the Council’s corporate plan, plans for policy development and risks and challenges identified through corporate performance reporting. Work planning should be a committee-based activity but must also be forward-looking and strategic in nature.”*

## **6. Issues and Choices**

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### Draft work programme

- 6.1 Committee members were able to give initial consideration to possible topics for scrutiny in 2023/24 at the Committee pre-meeting on 25 May 2023. Discussion took account of relevant topics in the work programme of the former People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which is included with this report (at Appendix A); topics suggested by Committee members; and topics suggested at the Triangulation meeting on 22 May 2023 involving Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs, Cabinet Members and the Executive Leadership Team. A draft work programme intended to reflect the outcomes of the Committee pre-meeting is included with this report (at Appendix B). This is presented to the current meeting for the Committee to consider and discuss, in order to agree its work programme. It is intended that the resulting work programme will then be reported to each regular Committee meeting so that it can be monitored and updated as necessary.

### Scrutiny review of support for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

- 6.2 The former People Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a task and finish panel during 2022/23 to carry out a scrutiny review of support for children with SEND, which had just started its work by the end of the municipal year. This area is now part of the remit of the Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, meaning that the Committee must decide whether it wants the scrutiny review to continue. This was supported at the Committee pre-meeting on 25 May 2023 but needs to be confirmed formally by the Committee. An updated version of the scope for the scrutiny review, incorporating some necessary changes to the membership of the task and finish panel and to the timescale, is included with this report (at Appendix C).

### Scrutiny review of fostering services

- 6.3 The Committee pre-meeting on 25 May 2023 identified fostering services as a potential topic for a scrutiny review in 2023/24. In accordance with the process set out in the WNC Overview and Scrutiny Framework, a Scrutiny Review Proposal form for this work will be completed and presented to the Committee for consideration. If the Committee approves the topic for provisional inclusion in its work programme a further planning exercise will then be undertaken to produce the final plan for the scrutiny review.

## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **7.1 Resources and Financial**

7.1.1 There are no specific resources or financial implications associated with this report. The Committee should set a work programme that is realistically deliverable within the resources available to support it.

### **7.2 Legal**

7.2.1 Overview and Scrutiny operates within the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the National Health Service Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. It has had specific powers relating to health services since 2001 and crime and disorder since 2006.

7.2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements in Part 7.1 of the WNC Constitution state: *“The Overview and Scrutiny function will develop a work plan as well as supporting policy development, providing pre-decision scrutiny where appropriate, holding decision-makers to account and exercising the formal call-in of executive decisions to review any concerns about the making of the decision.”*

7.2.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 7.2 of the WNC Constitution state:

*1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny committees will consult with other parts of the Council as appropriate, including the Cabinet, on the preparation of any work programme.*

*1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny committees will take into account any views expressed following consultation under Rule 1.2 above in drawing-up any work programme. They should also take into account the resources, both officer and financial, available to support its proposals.*

*1.4 An Overview and Scrutiny Triangulation Group, composed of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny committees, members of the Cabinet and Directors, shall be responsible for supporting the work of the scrutiny function and ensuring scrutiny has the opportunity to input into matters of strategic importance.*

### **7.3 Risk**

7.3.1 The Committee should ensure that its work programme enables it to carry out effective scrutiny work that produces worthwhile outcomes. Risks that could affect this could include setting a work programme that included too much work to be realistically deliverable or that focussed on topics that were not sufficiently strategic. These risks should be mitigated by the Committee giving appropriate regard to the priorities and requirements set out in the WNC Overview and Scrutiny Framework when developing its work programme and using the tools that the Framework provides for planning scrutiny reviews.

## **8. Background Papers**

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West Northamptonshire Council

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme – Potential disaggregation between Overview and Scrutiny committees for 2023/24

West Northamptonshire Council will operate Overview and Scrutiny committees with the following remits in 2023/24:

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Finance and resources	Adult care, public health and wellbeing	Children Social Care	Built and natural environment
Corporate services	Mental Health	Early Years and Family Support	Transport and highways
Shared services under the WNC and NNC Shared Services Joint Committee	Statutory health scrutiny	Education	Community safety and regulatory services (including statutory crime and disorder scrutiny)
Corporate strategy and priorities		Child Mental Health	Economic development, regeneration and growth
		Housing	Statutory scrutiny of flood risk management
			Culture, Leisure and Communities

The new Overview and Scrutiny committees will need to consider their work programmes at the start of 2023/24. This could include considering whether they will take on any topics from the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s previous work programme. Topics listed in the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s work programme could be divided between the new committees as follows:

## Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Proposed purpose	Task and Finish Panel	Comments
Integrated Care across Northamptonshire (iCAN)	The Committee to scrutinise progress made with the development of iCAN and the position on key risk factors.	Yes	The task and finish panel will meet 6 times from January 2022 to April 2023, aligned to iCAN contract gateway review points, to scrutinise delivery of iCAN programme outcomes.
Debt and Money Advice Transformation Project <i>[NOTE – It is open to discussion whether debt represents a ‘wellbeing’ topic that should be dealt with by the Adult Care and Health OSC, or a ‘communities’ topic that should be dealt with by the Place OSC].</i>	The Committee to provide scrutiny input into the development and delivery of the transformation project.	No	The Committee agreed at its meeting on 21 February 2023 to request that more detailed plans for the future Debt and Money Advice service to be developed be presented to the Committee at an appropriate future meeting.
Individual debt and West Northamptonshire Council’s approach to debt recovery <i>[NOTE – It is open to discussion whether debt represents a ‘wellbeing’ topic that should be dealt with by the Adult Care and Health OSC, or a ‘communities’ topic that should be dealt with by the Place OSC].</i>	The Committee to consider an overview of issues relating to individual debt in West Northamptonshire and the Council’s approach to debt recovery.	No	The Committee agreed at its meeting on 21 February 2023 to add this topic to its work programme.
West Northamptonshire Council homecare framework	The Committee to consider an update on progress with the proposed new framework.	No	The Committee agreed at its meeting on 8 December 2022 to request that a progress update be brought to an appropriate future meeting.
Integrated Care Northamptonshire Strategy 2022-32 outcomes framework	The Committee to consider the outcomes framework intended to measure progress with the delivery of key outcomes in the ICN Strategy.	No	The Committee agreed at its meeting on 8 December 2022 to scrutinise the developing outcomes framework for the ICN Strategy.



Topic	Proposed purpose	Task and Finish Panel	Comments
Healthwatch West Northamptonshire work	The Committee to invite Healthwatch West Northamptonshire to give an overview of issues identified through its work.	No	Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN) has previously suggested that an item on this topic could be best scheduled following publication of HWN's Annual Report in the summer. The Committee may wish to schedule an item early in 2023/24 on HWN's Annual Report for 2022/23.
Support for people living with dementia	The Committee to scrutinise how well people living with dementia are supported in West Northamptonshire.	To be confirmed	The Committee has identified that work on this topic might take as a starting point the response to the Northampton Borough Council scrutiny review on dementia-friendly communities.

## Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Proposed purpose	Task and Finish Panel	Comments
Task and finish scrutiny review: Special educational needs and disability (SEND) support	To approve the scope for a scrutiny review on this topic, as agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 21 November 2022.	Yes	
Housing Allocations Policy	The Committee to consider the development of a Housing Allocation policy for West Northamptonshire.	No	The Committee agreed at its meeting on 3 May 2023 to recommend that its successor should carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Housing Allocations Policy. At this meeting the Committee also recommended that work to develop the new Policy should explore the potential for West Northamptonshire Council to apply a broader definition of overcrowding than the statutory definition.
School performance	The Committee to invite the Regional Director to discuss school performance in relation to academy schools in West Northamptonshire.	No	The Committee sought to schedule this topic in the first half of 2022 but the-then Regional Director was not able to attend on scheduled meeting dates. This matter was pursued again in September 2022. It initially appeared that the Regional Director would be able to attend the meeting on 21 February 2023 but their attendance ultimately could not be secured. The Committee resolved to write to the Department for Education concerning engagement with the Regional Director.
Provision of free broadband to young people leaving local authority care.	The Committee to provide scrutiny input into the potential development of proposals by West Northamptonshire Council.	To be confirmed	The Full Council meeting on 23 September 2021 referred a motion on this topic to the Committee, to consider the issues involved.
Rough sleeping	The Committee to provide scrutiny input on responses to rough sleeping in West Northamptonshire.	To be confirmed	The Committee has identified the following potential focus areas for scrutiny: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the potential to continue to apply the principles of the 'everyone in' approach used during the COVID-19 pandemic</li> <li>severe weather shelter provision.</li> </ul>

Topic	Proposed purpose	Task and Finish Panel	Comments
Provision of housing support for refugees	The Committee to consider an update on the provision of housing support for people coming into West Northamptonshire as refugees.	No	The Committee agreed at its meeting on 25 October 2022 that it should seek to maintain oversight of this issue.
Fostering services	The Committee to scrutinise actions to support the improvement of services provided by the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust Independent Fostering Agency following the Ofsted inspection reported in March 2023.	No	<p>The Committee agreed at its meeting on 3 May 2023 to recommend that its successor should seek to consider various areas relevant to the programme of improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality assurance framework and processes put in place to support effective operation of fostering services in future</li> <li>• The outcomes delivered by the Valuing Care project on opportunities to step down care placements</li> <li>• An overview of the operation of the multi-agency referral panel and of the decision-making panel for children entering local authority care, to include data on caseloads, decisions and the outcomes for young people</li> <li>• Data on the number of children in care from West Northamptonshire, broken down by relevant factors</li> <li>• An outline of any discussions between the Northamptonshire local authorities and the Department for Education about the long term future direction for the Northamptonshire Children’s Trust organisational model.</li> </ul>

## Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Proposed purpose	Task and Finish Panel	Comments
Sports and Leisure needs assessment	The Committee to consider the needs assessment for sports and leisure provision in West Northamptonshire.	To be confirmed.	This item was originally scheduled for late-2022 but the time required for the corporate work has since changed and late-2023 is now more likely.
Sports and leisure provision	Scrutiny of how West Northamptonshire Council works together with other service providers and community groups to provide the best overall offer to residents from all parts of the community.	To be confirmed.	The Committee considers that this work could be an example of scrutiny on the wider theme of the community impact of Council services: looking at how the Council identifies needs, other support available in the community that helps to meet those needs, and therefore how the Council can focus resources to have the most impact.

## West Northamptonshire Council

## Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Draft Work Programme 2023/24

Topic	Proposed purpose	Date	Approach	Cabinet Member / Executive Director / other senior leader	Comments
Housing Allocation Scheme	The Committee to provide scrutiny input into the development of the new Housing Allocation Scheme.	19 June 2023	Committee meeting item	Assistant Director Housing and Communities	
Task and finish scrutiny review: special educational needs and disability (SEND) support	The Committee to agree the updated plan for a scrutiny review of support for children with SEND in West Northamptonshire.	19 June 2023	Task and Finish Panel	NA	The scrutiny review was begun in 2022/23 under the former People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Task and finish scrutiny review: fostering services	The Committee to consider a proposal form for a scrutiny review of opportunities to improve the effectiveness of fostering services in West Northamptonshire.	19 June 2023	Task and Finish Panel	NA	
Provision of free broadband to young people leaving local authority care.	The Committee to receive information about support provided to care leavers.	To be confirmed	Briefing paper ahead of a pre-meeting	Executive Director People Services	The Committee can consider the need for further scrutiny of this topic after receiving the briefing paper.
Severe Weather Emergency Protocol	The Committee to scrutinise the aims and use of the SWEP in West Northamptonshire.	25 September 2023	Committee meeting item	Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Leisure Assistant Director Housing and Communities	

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Proposed purpose</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approach</b>	<b>Cabinet Member / Executive Director / other senior leader</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Child and adolescent mental health and the risk of self-harm	The Committee to review actions taken in response to the recommendations of the 2022/23 scrutiny review of Child and Adolescent Mental Health and the Risk of Self Harm	25 September 2023	Committee meeting item	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Wellbeing and Health Integration Executive Director People Services	The scrutiny review was done by the former People Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report was presented to the Cabinet on 7 March 2023.
Early help offer	The Committee to scrutinise the early help offer for children and families and opportunities to improve provision in order to prevent needs from escalating.	To be confirmed	Committee meeting item	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education Executive Director People Services	
0-19 services	The Committee to provide scrutiny input in developing future service requirements ahead of the Council going out to contract.	To be confirmed	Committee meeting item	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education Executive Director People Services	
School exclusions	The Committee to scrutinise issues connected to an increasing trend in school exclusions in West Northamptonshire.	To be confirmed	Committee meeting item	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education Executive Director People Services Assistant Director Education	
Forthcoming service contracts	The Committee to be advised of any opportunities to provide scrutiny input in developing the requirements for significant service contracts relating to its remit.	10 July 2023 4 January 2024 29 February 2024	Standing item at pre-meetings	Executive Director People Services	

**Children, Education and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting dates in 2023/24**

<b>Pre-meeting</b>	<b>Committee meeting</b>
25 May 2023	19 June 2023
10 July 2023	25 September 2023
4 January 2024	5 February 2024
29 February 2024	3 April 2024

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## Scrutiny Review Plan – Form B

<b>Topic title</b>	Support for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) in West Northamptonshire.
<b>Scope</b>	The scrutiny review is intended to scrutinise and inform the development of support for children with SEND in West Northamptonshire that will address previous areas for improvement regarding children and families' experience of services and that will be more able to deliver effective outcomes for service users.
<b>Link to the Council's Corporate Priorities (from Form A)</b>	The scrutiny review will contribute to the delivery of the Council's corporate priority to make West Northamptonshire a place where there is opportunity for all – where children are given the best start in life and vulnerable children are supported and protected. A place where all young people grow up qualified and inspired to succeed.
<b>Key objectives and measures of effectiveness (from Form A)</b>	<p>The scrutiny review will aim to provide ideas and constructive challenge intended to contribute to work on the development of effective support for children with SEND in West Northamptonshire underway during the period of the scrutiny review.</p> <p>The scrutiny review will make evidence-based recommendations to the West Northamptonshire Council Cabinet and/or other applicable decision-makers intended to contribute to the provision of effective support for children with SEND in the area.</p>
<b>Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND needs assessment: does the local area understand the needs of children with SEND and does it have coherent plans to meet this need?</li> <li>• How will the new SEND Accountability Board ensure effective oversight of the development and implementation of future provision? How will good engagement with parents of children with SEND be achieved?</li> <li>• Are plans to co-produce a new SEND strategy and delivery plan for West Northamptonshire appropriate? Will the new strategy and delivery plan meet identified needs? Are the new strategy and delivery plan realistic and achievable, giving specific consideration to the capacity in the Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan team? Does the new SEND strategy meet key legal requirements?</li> <li>• How does the local system embed a learning culture to support improving outcomes?</li> </ul>

<p><b>Outlining stakeholders</b></p>	<p>Internal information-providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education</li> <li>• Executive Director People Services</li> <li>• Assistant Director Education</li> <li>• Service officers involved in delivering SEND support</li> </ul> <p>Internal information-providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents of children with SEND</li> <li>• Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust</li> <li>• Schools / Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outlining evidence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on the level of demand for SEND support in West Northamptonshire, trends, service organisation and capacity, resources and pressures</li> <li>• Anonymised case studies of the operation of SEND support in West Northamptonshire, including examples of positive and negative experiences for service users</li> <li>• Local Government Association 2022 peer review of SEND provision in Northamptonshire</li> <li>• Outcomes from Department for Education-led improvement work in March 2023</li> <li>• Draft SEND Strategy and Delivery Plan for West Northamptonshire</li> <li>• Information on school attendance</li> <li>• Information on current staffing and analysis of future needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Risks</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of scrutiny work not adding value to, or conflicting with, corporate work relating to SEND.</li> <li>• Risk of scrutiny work adding to pressures on service officers providing support to children with SEND.</li> </ul> <p>These risks will be mitigated by the Assistant Director Education working closely with the task and finish panel to provide expert advice on corporate work underway and to act as a link to the relevant service areas.</p>
<p><b>Membership</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Councillor Harry Barrett (Chair)</li> <li>2. Councillor Sally Beardsworth</li> <li>3. Councillor Muna Cali</li> <li>4. Councillor Maggie Clubley</li> <li>5. Councillor Louisa Fowler</li> <li>6. Councillor Mark Hughes</li> <li>7. Councillor Emma Roberts</li> </ol> <p>8. Co-opted member: a representative of the Northamptonshire Parent Forum Group will be invited to</p>

	join the task and finish panel as a co-opted member for the part of its work focussed on SEND needs assessment.	
<b>Timeframe</b>	Original confirmation of scope by the former People OS Committee	21 February 2023
	Scene-setting task and finish panel meeting	11 May 2023
	Confirmation of updated scope by the Children, Education and Housing OS Committee	19 June 2023
	Evidence-gathering (specific dates for meetings and other activity to be set by the task and finish panel)	June – September 2023
	Approval of draft report by task and finish panel	October 2023
	Agreement of final report by the Children, Education and Housing OS Committee	5 February 2024
	Presentation of final report to the Cabinet	12 March 2024

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