



# Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Monday 4 July 2022 at 6.00 pm

## 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>Minutes</b> (Pages 5 - 8) To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 May 2022.
4.	<b>Chair's Announcements</b> To receive communications from the Chair.
5.	<b>Urgent Business</b> The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.
6.	<b>People Strategy</b> The Committee to provide scrutiny input into key actions contained within the West Northamptonshire People Strategy
7.	<b>Annual Report 2021/2022 - Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b> (Pages 9 - 16) The Committee to consider and approve the Draft Annual Report on activity by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2021/2022 to be presented to Full Council.

8.	<p><b>Treasury Management Task and Finish Group</b> (Pages 17 - 24)</p> <p>The Committee to consider for approval the draft scope (terms of reference) of the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group.</p>
9.	<p><b>Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group</b> (Pages 25 - 32)</p> <p>The Committee to consider for approval the draft scope (terms of reference) of the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group.</p>
10.	<p><b>Veolia Waste Contract</b></p> <p>The Committee to consider a request from a Committee Member to include the Veolia Waste Contract on its Work Programme.</p>
11.	<p><b>Review of Committee Work Plan</b> (Pages 33 - 40)</p> <p>To review and note the Committee Work Plan.</p>

Catherine Whitehead  
Proper Officer  
24 June 2022

**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members:**

Councillor Ian McCord (Chair)	Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Jamal Alwahabi	Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Councillor Paul Clark	Councillor Maggie Clubley
Councillor Rupert Frost	Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
Councillor Mark Hughes	Councillor David James
Councillor Koulla Jolley	Councillor Colin Morgan
Councillor Ken Pritchard	Councillor Azizur Rahman
Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms	Councillor Danielle Stone

## **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 Tracy Tiff, Democratic Services via the following:

Tel: 01604 837408

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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## Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Tuesday 10 May 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present      Councillor Danielle Stone (Chair)  
                   Councillor Maggie Clubley  
                   Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere  
                   Councillor Mark Hughes  
                   Councillor Ian McCord  
                   Councillor Colin Morgan  
                   Councillor Ken Pritchard  
                   Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms

Substitute    Councillor Jonathan Harris (For Councillor Sally Beardsworth)  
 Members:

Also            Councillor Mike Hallam (Portfolio Holder for HR and Corporate Services)  
 Present:

Apologies    Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice-Chair)  
 for             Councillor Sally Beardsworth  
 Absence:      Councillor Rupert Frost  
                   Councillor Koulla Jolley  
                   Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz

Officers        Martin Henry, Executive Director - Finance (Section 151 Officer)  
                   Sarah Reed, Executive Director - Corporate Services  
                   Alison Golding, Assistant Director - Human Resources  
                   Mitchell Thomason, Transformation Project Manager  
                   James Aldridge, Group Asset Manager  
                   Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager  
                   Richard Woods, Democratic Services Officer

### 56.      **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 57.      **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 58.      **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair reminded Members that a training session, run by Dr Stephanie Snape, would be taking place remotely via Zoom on Wednesday 15 June at 5:30pm and would focus on the key elements of shaping a successful Overview and Scrutiny Function.

59. **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

60. **People Strategy**

The Committee considered a report and presentation from the Executive Director – Corporate Services and the Assistant Director – Human Resources which sought to provide a comprehensive overview of the new People Strategy, the underlying project activity and progress on the delivery of its key commitments. Councillor Mike Hallam, the Portfolio Holder for HR and Corporate Services, was also in attendance to deliver the presentation and answer questions from the Committee.

In introducing the presentation, the Portfolio Holder for HR and Corporate Services explained that fundamental to the People Strategy was the recruitment and retention of quality staff, which underpinned the Council's commitment to the £10 per hour minimum wage uplift and recognition of the post-pandemic cultural shift towards flexible working and the benefits this could bring towards employee satisfaction and productivity.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the early results that these commitments had yielded, the Portfolio Holder for HR and Corporate Services advised that the results obtained from staff surveys, alongside reviews from the employer review website Glassdoor, suggested that investing in the £10 minimum wage commitment and embracing flexible working had begun to have a positive impact upon how the Council was viewed as an employer.

The Assistant Director – Human Resources explained that a further key priority in the People Strategy was to create high performing teams to drive and reward high performance, and an example of this was the recent implementation of the new Valuing Individual Performance (VIP) conversations to replace conventional methods of annual appraisals between managers and their direct reports, which would ensure that performance would become a continuous, year-round focus in order to foster wellbeing and personal development benefits and provide clarity on goals, objectives and learning and development needs. The Assistant Director – Human Resources also advised that this was a necessary step in order to replace the differing appraisal mechanisms inherited from the previous sovereign Councils.

The Committee received the presentation up to part 2.2 and agreed to hear the remainder of the presentation at the next meeting of the Committee, where six key areas of the People Strategy would be identified for further scrutiny activity.

**Resolved**

- (1) That Members of the Committee be requested to consider potential areas of scrutiny activity within the People Strategy ahead of receiving the remainder of the presentation at the next meeting of the Committee.

61. **Asset Management**

The Committee received a presentation from the Group Asset Manager which provided a summary of the Council's portfolio of assets, property strategy and estate structure, asset management plan and ongoing estates projects.

In introducing the presentation, the Group Asset Manager advised the Committee that the Council currently had circa 979 assets, 313 of which were investments and 666 of which were operational, with a total portfolio value in excess of £1.5bn.

The Group Asset Manager provided an overview of the current activities within the service area and advised that a root and branch review of the former Northampton Borough Council asset portfolio had been commenced, and that survey and CAD projects were also underway in order to build more accurate record data and assist the development of the new Asset Management Plan.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding the structure of the Property Strategy and Estates function, the Group Asset Manager advised that a recent restructure within the service area had created four new heads of service posts, with other key points being that the Operational and Investments Estates function had been centralised and a single Asset Records Team had been set up to serve the West.

Regarding how the development of the Council's new Asset Management Plan would be supported, the Group Asset Manager explained that the four legacy processes for estate management from the previous sovereign councils would be replaced by a single asset recording system with a target implementation date of April 2024, which would bring about consistency of data reporting and business intelligence, links to the ERP Gold system, and a single set of asset data to support transformation activities.

In considering future areas of scrutiny activity regarding the Asset Management Plan, Members of the Committee requested further information regarding how the various workstreams around Asset Management aligned to the Corporate Plan and the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030. In response to this request, the Group Asset Manager explained that this was a matter under investigation by the Sustainability Working Group, and that Members could request that the Sustainability Working Group report back to the Committee at a future meeting to determine in greater detail how the work aligned with the Corporate Plan and carbon neutrality commitments.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Sustainability Working Group be requested to report back to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting regarding the alignment of workstreams around the development of the new Asset Management Plan to the Corporate Plan and the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality.
- (2) That the Assets and Environment Service be requested to maximise opportunities for consultation with Parish and Town Councils regarding the disposal of local assets, with particular consideration to be given towards supporting the development of Community Hubs.

62. **Review of Committee Work Plan**

The Chair advised that, owing to the Expenses Policy having now been drafted, scrutiny activity could now begin and as a result, the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group would be convened later in the summer to begin this work.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Committee Work Plan be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.07 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## **West Northamptonshire Council**

### **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

## **Annual Report 2021/2022**

**Draft version 1**

### **A Message from Councillor Danielle Stone, Chair, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2021-2022**

This Annual Report highlights some of the work that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken during its first year and what issues the Committee will concentrate on next year.

Overview and Scrutiny is a vital part of local democracy and good governance. It is really important that the work of scrutiny adds value and improvement and I feel that the budget scrutiny work undertaken by the Committee really demonstrated that. I was pleased to attend the February 2022 meeting of Cabinet and highlight the recommendations of the Budget Scrutiny report.

Before the Committee held its first meeting in June 2022, as part of the Council's comprehensive Councillor induction programme, specific training for Overview and Scrutiny was held. This key training delivered by the Deputy Chief Executive of the Centre for Public Scrutiny and Governance to make sure that all Scrutiny Councillors were furnished with the knowledge prior to the inaugural meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Committee developed an interim short-term work programme ahead of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees agreeing the Work Programming process for 2021-2022. We asked the citizens of West Northamptonshire to suggest topics for future Scrutiny reviews. There were in excess of fifty suggestions from the public and the Committee values and encourages the input from the public into its work programming process. Similarly, to Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee and People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, this Committee held a workshop in the winter 2021 and carefully considered the suggestions. These suggestions, Cabinet's priorities for the year and ideas put forward by the Committee formed the basis of the Committee's work programme 2021-2022. There has been public interest in the work of the Committee, with some members of the public addressing a meeting, or observing the proceedings of the meetings. I hope that this increased in 2022-2023.

The work of the Committee has been varied and in particular, I would like to thank my colleagues who sat with me on Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2021/2022.

This report is not a complete commentary of everything the Committee has achieved but is a summary of some key highlights of the work undertaken in 2021-2022. I do hope that you enjoy reading it.



**Councillor Danielle Stone**  
**Chair, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### **Purpose of Overview and Scrutiny**

The Overview and Scrutiny function at West Northamptonshire Council helps to improve the quality of services provided to local residents and supports and challenges the work of the Council's Cabinet.

Overview and Scrutiny carries out a number of roles, including:

- (a) monitoring the decisions of the Cabinet
- (b) advising the Council on forthcoming decisions
- (c) contributing to the development and review of Council policy
- (d) reviewing decisions that have been taken by the Cabinet but not yet implemented that are 'called in' for further consideration

At West Northamptonshire Council these roles are carried out by three Overview and Scrutiny committees: Place, People and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committees. These Committees are made up of Councillors from different political groups, known as non-Executives, and who are not part of the Cabinet.

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny is a national organisation that promotes effective governance in the public, private and voluntary sectors. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny states that good scrutiny involves four fundamental principles:

- (a) it provides constructive 'critical friend' challenge
- (b) it amplifies the voice and concerns of the public
- (c) it is led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- (d) it drives improvement in public services

### **Remit of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising issues and services in the following areas:

### **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee membership**

The membership of the Corporate O&S Committee was made up of 17 non-Executives during 2021/2022:

Councillor Danielle Stone (Chair)	
Councillor Sam Rumens (Vice Chair)	May 2021 – November 2021
Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice Chair)	from November 2021
Councillors:	

Aziz Rahman (Aziz)	
Sally Beardsworth	from November 2021

Councillor Michael Brown

Paul Clarke

Maggie Clubley

Terrie Eales

May 2021 - November 2021

Rupert Frost

Keith Holland Delamere

from November 2021

Mark Hughes

David James

Koulla Jolley

Ian McCord

from November 2021

Dennis Meredith

May 2021 - November 2021

Colin Morgan

Ken Pritchard

Brian Sargeant

Walter Tarasiewicz

### **How does Overview and Scrutiny make a difference?**

Overview and Scrutiny ensures that decision-making processes are clear and accessible to the public and that the people taking decisions are held accountable for those decisions.

### **Effective Scrutiny**

As stated by the Centre of Governance and Scrutiny, effective scrutiny:

- provides “critical friend” challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers
- enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
- is carried out by “independent minded governors” who lead and own the scrutiny process
- drives improvement in public services.

### **Terms of Reference for Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The terms of reference of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- Finance and resources
- Corporate services
- Shared services under the WNC and NNC Shared Services Joint Committee (the WNC Constitution assigns this focus area to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee or equivalent at each authority).
- Corporate Strategy and priorities

## **What has Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee achieved during 2021-2022 and how was this impact made during 2021-2022?**

The Committee held seven formal meetings during 2021/22 as well as one informal workshop style meeting in respect of the draft budget for the Council 2022-2023. The Committee set up three Task and Finish Groups during 2021-2022 and these are scheduled to commence their work in the Municipal year 2022-2023. Some key areas of work by the Committee and the outcomes resulting from this work are detailed below. The Committee's work programme, meeting details and papers can be located on West Northamptonshire Council's [website](#)

### **Training**

As stated on page 1, early in the municipal year 2021/2022, the Committee received comprehensive training delivered by an expert of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The training was particularly valued as it focussed on work programming and the role of Overview and Scrutiny. Overview and Scrutiny Chairs and Officers supporting the Scrutiny function have continued to ensure the knowledge base is development and examples of best practice built during the year, examples being attendance at the Centre for Scrutiny and Governance annual Conference and attendance at the East Midlands Scrutiny network meetings and various webinars offered by the Centre for Scrutiny and Governance. I am pleased to report that Councillor Stone, Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2021-2022 will be attending the East Midlands Scrutiny network in the spring to talk about the budget scrutiny process that the Committee adopted for 2021-2022.

## **What has Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee achieved during 2021 - 2022**

The following are examples of the scrutiny work which has been undertaken by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2021/2022:

Contract Management and Procurement

Social Values Act 2013

Budget monitoring - Revenue Monitoring Report

School Budgets

The Council's Draft Budget 2022-2023

Transformation Projects

The work of the Association for Public Excellence (APSE)

Convening three Task and Finish Groups - Treasury Management, Modernising Systems and Expenses Policy

### **Contract Management and Procurement**

The Committee scrutinised contract management and procurement and the links to social value. The Committee was provided with key information from the Head of Procurement and constructive

challenge was provided on the role of procurement. This information formed background evidence gathering for the Committee's work on Social Value.

## **Social Value**

The Committee considered and provided Scrutiny input into the development of social value and how the Council could positively affect communities by considering socio-economic and environmental factors when planning and implementing decisions and processes. The Committee also heard from a representative of the University of Northampton regarding the Social Value Framework that had been designed to support and fund the voluntary, charity and social enterprise sectors and extract social impact research; which was a collaborative exercise including various key partners such as the NHS, Police and other organisations. The County Framework is designed to: Define, Sustain and Measure Socioeconomic Development within Northamptonshire. The Committee scrutinised the Social Value Framework and the positives of the social value approach was emphasised but concern was highlighted regarding businesses allocating a percentage of profits to the social sector and whether this may raise prices to customers, meaning that residents would be paying more to cover costs.

## **Association for Public Services (APSE)**

The Committee received a presentation from a representative of APSE on how APSE can help Scrutiny Committees to review contracts, including social value. The presentation included details of the role of local Councils in delivering social value and community level economic outcomes, social value in outsourced contracts and reviewing the performance of contracts and the performance of services. The Committee welcomed that West Northamptonshire Council had set up a Social Value Task and Finish Group made up of Officers of the Council in order that a greater understanding of how Social Value links into contract reviews and reviews of service. The Committee recommended that this Task and Finish Group should receive similar input on Social Value from APSE to maximise Social Value across all of the Council's activities.

## **School Budgets**

The Committee provide scrutiny input into school budgets around the four-block funding model for the Dedicated Schools Grant: Schools Block, High Needs Block, Early years Block and the Central Schools Services Block. The Committee welcomed this funding model, providing constructive challenge on the progress made on the budget, welcoming the fact that an overall deficit was not predicted. The Committee requested that two Members attend all meetings of the schools Forum as observers on behalf of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **Revenue Monitoring Report**

Prior to Cabinet receiving the report Q1 – Revenue Monitoring Report 2021 – 2022 the Committee considered and provided Scrutiny input into it. This was the Council's first public finance document

since West Northamptonshire Council was formed. The Committee considered the new build programme as part of the Housing Revenue Account, the financial status of the predecessor Councils that detailed the carried forward balances and the actual expenditure and income for 2020-21 prior to being audited. The level of reserves for the Authority was considered along with the financial pressures associated with delivering services during the Covid19 pandemic.

## **Budget Scrutiny**

The Committee scrutinised the Council's draft 2022/23 budget in detail and provided scrutiny input. Budget Scrutiny was undertaken by the whole Committee in the form of a "Spotlight" Scrutiny Review. The Committee focussed its budget Scrutiny on three key areas:

- Carbon neutrality and Highways
- Children's Trust
- Strength Based Working model and financial savings associated with it

The Committee broke into three Groups, each one providing critical challenge to one of the above key areas.

The Committee's recommendations included that there was a need for a costed plan which clearly sets out how the Council can be Carbon neutral by 2030. The Committee welcomed the investment in highways services and the increase of 19 new FTEs. After robust challenge to the Children's Trust budget, the Committee supports the long-term view of aiming for zero based budgeting in future years. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the Strength Based working model and commends the savings detailed in the draft Budget 2022/2023. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee proposed a move to the Living Wage Foundation's living wage of £9.90 for all staff employed by the Council from 1 April 2022 and that care staff should be similarly remunerated.

As part of its budget scrutiny process, the Committee asked for and received information about how the budget aligns to the corporate plan. The Committee further asked for this to become the practice for budget setting and for Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be involved at an earlier stage. The Committee agreed that the budget Scrutiny process would start in October 2022.

The Committee's [report](#) was appended to the report on the budget that was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 15 February 2022. Comprehensive responses were received by the Committee to further queries that were raised at the meeting.

## **Task and Finish Groups**

During 2021-2022 the Committee set up three Task and Finish Groups that, due to timing reasons, will commence their review work in the Municipal year 2022-2023:

- Expenses Policy
- Treasury Management
- Modernising Systems

### **Critical Friend to Cabinet**

Cabinet Members and Senior Officers attended various meetings of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and provided the detailed reasoning behind the various key issues. These are summarised at pages 6 and 7 of this Annual Report. By doing this, it provided comprehension and clarity for the Committee on the issues detailed in its work programme.

### **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme 2021/2022**

The Committee has addressed key issues as detailed at pages 6- 7, and other subjects that were considered during 2021/22. The Committee's work programme was put together by the Committee which was then approved by the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group, that comprises the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the three Overview and Scrutiny committees. As previously stated, the development of the Committee's work programme was informed by a public consultation exercise carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny function in autumn 2021. This enabled members of the public and representatives from community groups to suggest issues for scrutiny review. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered all suggestions within its remit alongside other potential priorities to produce its final work programme.

### **Looking ahead**

The work of the three Task and Finish Groups (Expenses Policy, Treasury Management, Modernising Systems) will commence in the Municipal year 2022-2023. There are a number of key issues contained within the work programme for example, budget monitoring and budget scrutiny and these will continue to be key focus areas for Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.





**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**4 July 2022**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Treasury Management Task and Finish Group – Scope of the Review</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager, <a href="mailto:tracy.tiff@westnorthants.gov.uk">tracy.tiff@westnorthants.gov.uk</a> 01604 837408</b>

<b>Contributors/Checkers/Approvers</b>		
<b>MO Deputy MO</b>	Paul Hanson on behalf of Catherine Whitehead	<b>23 June 2022</b>
<b>S151</b>	Martin Henry	<b>23 June 2022</b>

**List of Appendices**

**Appendix A – Draft Scope of Review – Treasury Management Task and Finish Group**

**1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group to undertake comprehensive scrutiny activity regarding the Treasury Management Policy.
- 1.2 This report therefore sets out the draft scope (terms of reference) for this Scrutiny Review as agreed by the Task and Finish Group for the consideration and approval of this Committee as set out at Appendix A.

**2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group confirmed Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme that includes Treasury Management and the setting up of a Task and Finish Group.

2.2 At its meeting on 15 November 2021, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group and it was intended that the Group would commence its work in the spring 2022. All Members of the Task and Finish Group attended a briefing session on Treasury Management prior to the Task and Finish Group starting its work. The inaugural scoping meeting was held on 6 June 2022 and the draft scope is appended to this report for the Committee's consideration and approval.

### **3. Recommendations**

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3.1 It is recommended that:

3.1.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers for approval the draft scope of the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group as attached at Appendix A.

#### **3.2 Reason for Recommendations**

3.2.1 One of Overview and Scrutiny's key roles is to undertake focussed work programming in order that it is ensured that Scrutiny contributes actively to the Council's objectives.

3.2.2 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the parent Committee of the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group and has the responsibility for approving the scope (terms of reference) for all Scrutiny reviews that it sets up.

### **4. Report Background**

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4.1 At its inaugural meeting on 6 June 2022, the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group scoped its Review for consideration by this Committee.

4.2 The draft scope is attached at Appendix A for the Committee's consideration for approval. Once approved, the Task and Finish Group can embark upon its evidence gathering process, with production of its final report scheduled for April 2022. The Chair of the Task and Finish Group will present the report to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its approval. The report will then be presented to Cabinet for its consideration.

### **5. Issues and Choices**

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5.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider approving the draft scope (terms of reference) for the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group as set out at Appendix A.

5.2 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee can adopt an alternative scope (terms of reference) or decide not to proceed with this Scrutiny review.

## **5.2 Resources and Financial**

5.2.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

## **5.3 Legal**

5.3.1 Overview and Scrutiny operates within the provisions as set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. It has specific powers relating to health services since 2001 and the crime and disorder since 2006.

5.3.2 Paragraph 7.1.3 of the constitution “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.”

## **5.4 Risk**

5.4.1 Scrutiny is essential to good governance and enables the voice and concerns of residents and communities to be heard and provides challenge and accountability.

## **5.5 Consultation**

5.5.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed its work programme, that includes a review of Treasury Management.

5.5.2 The Work Programme 2021/2022 was then approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group.

## **5.6 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

5.6.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 4 July 2022 will consider the draft scope of the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group.

## **5.7 Climate Impact**

5.7.1 There are no immediate climate impact implications arising from the proposals.

## **5.8 Community Impact**

**5.8.1** Scrutiny work will need to assess the implications of any recommendations made, including equalities and community cohesion implications.

## **6 Background Papers**

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Agenda and Minutes of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15 November 2021

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group - 6 June 2022



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

### **CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

#### **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH SCRUTINY REVIEW – SCOPE**

##### **1. Topic – Treasury Management Strategy**

##### **2. Responsible Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)

##### **3. Purpose of the scrutiny review**

The purpose of this Scrutiny review is to:

To scrutinise the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and monitor progress on treasury management in accordance with CIPFA codes of practice and the Council's corporate priorities, in particular Robust Resource Management.

##### **Key lines of enquiry**

- To be appraised on the delivery of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and review how the Council has complied with all elements of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement.
- To examine the policies, objectives and approach to risk management in accordance with the treasury management activities.
- To examine the treasury management practices that set out how the Council seeks to achieve the policies and objectives in the Treasury Management Policy statement.

##### **4. Outcomes**

To make evidenced based recommendations to inform the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

## 5. Approach

The scrutiny review will be carried out by a Task and Finish Group made up of the following councillors:

1. Councillor Ian McCord
2. Councillor Sally Beardsworth
3. Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
4. Councillor Danielle Stone (Chair)
5. Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms

Co-optees: None.

The Task and Finish Group will make use of the standard working methods applicable to scrutiny reviews, including evidence-gathering meetings (either in-person or virtual); desktop research; targeted evidence-gathering by individual members; and site visits, as appropriate.

## 6. Information required

### Background data

- Scene-setting presentation – To apprise the Task and Finish Group of the elements of the Treasury Management Strategy
- Council's Treasury Management Strategy
- Council's Treasury Management Policy Statement
  - Minimum Revenue Provision Policy
  - Treasury indicators
  - Risk management
- CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (Treasury Management Code) (2021)
- Slides from the Treasury Management Training Session (May 2022)

### Views from internal expert advisors

- Cabinet Member for Finance
- Audra Statham – Assistant Director - Accountancy
- Richard Hughes – Strategic Finance Business Partner
- Biyi Adegbola – Senior Finance business Partner

- Chair of the Audit Committee
- Finance Spokesperson for Liberal Democrat Group

### Views from external expert advisors

- Link Asset Management Services

### 7. Resources and support

- Audra Statham, Assistant Director - Finance
- Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager for evidence-gathering and for production of the scrutiny review report

### 8. Timetable and key dates

	<b>Date</b>
Inaugural Task and Finish Group meeting	6 June 2022 (remote over Zoom)
Confirmation of the scope of the review by the Corporate OSC	4 July 2022
Evidence-gathering (specific dates for meetings and other activity to be set by the Task and Finish Group)	July to October 2022
Approval of draft report by the Task and Finish Group Agreement of draft report by the Corporate OSC	7 November/16 January 2023
Chair of the Corporate OSC to present the final report to WNC Cabinet	January 2023

### 9. Follow-up/Monitoring

Corporate OSC will review the impact of the scrutiny review 6 months after the presentation of the final report to decision-makers.

**NB:** Each OSC will have a monitoring Work Programme to monitor the impact of the accepted recommendations

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**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**4 July 2022**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group – Scope of the Review</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager, <a href="mailto:tracy.tiff@westnorthants.gov.uk">tracy.tiff@westnorthants.gov.uk</a> 01604 837408</b>

<b>Contributors/Checkers/Approvers</b>		
<b>MO</b>	Paul Hanson on behalf of Catherine Whitehead	<b>23 June 2022</b>
<b>S151</b>	Martin Henry	<b>23 June 2022</b>

**List of Appendices**

**Appendix A – Draft Scope of Review – Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group**

**1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group to undertake comprehensive scrutiny activity regarding the Council’s Expenses Policy.
- 1.2 This report therefore sets out the draft scope (terms of reference) for this Scrutiny Review as agreed by the Task and Finish Group for the consideration and approval of this Committee as set out at Appendix A.

**2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group confirmed Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s work programme that includes Expenses Policy and the setting up of a Task and Finish Group.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 15 November 2021, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group and it was intended that the Group would commence its work in the spring 2022, when the Council’s new Expenses Policy had been approved.

inaugural scoping meeting was held on 20 June 2022 and the draft scope is appended to this report for the Committee's consideration and approval.

### **3. Recommendations**

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3.1 It is recommended that:

3.1.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers for approval the draft scope of the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group as attached at Appendix A.

#### **3.2 *Reason for Recommendations***

3.2.1 One of Overview and Scrutiny's key roles is to undertake focussed work programming in order that it is ensured that Scrutiny contributes actively to the Council's objectives.

3.2.2 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the parent Committee of the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group and has the responsibility for approving the scope (terms of reference) for all Scrutiny reviews that it sets up.

### **4. Report Background**

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4.1 At its inaugural meeting on 20 June 2022, the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group scoped its Review for consideration by this Committee.

4.2 The draft scope is attached at Appendix A for the Committee's consideration for approval. Once approved, the Task and Finish Group can embark upon its evidence gathering process, with production of its final report scheduled for September 2022. The Chair of the Task and Finish Group will present the report to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its approval. The report will then be presented to Cabinet for its consideration.

### **5. Issues and Choices**

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5.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider approving the draft scope (terms of reference) for the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group as set out at Appendix A.

5.2 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee can adopt an alternative scope (terms of reference) or decide not to proceed with this Scrutiny review.

### **5 Implications (including financial implications)**

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#### **5.2 Resources and Financial**

5.2.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

### **5.3 Legal**

- 5.3.1 Overview and Scrutiny operates within the provisions as set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. It has specific powers relating to health services since 2001 and the crime and disorder since 2006.
- 5.3.2 Paragraph 7.1.3 of the constitution “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.”

### **5.4 Risk**

- 5.4.1 Scrutiny is essential to good governance and enables the voice and concerns of residents and communities to be heard and provides challenge and accountability.

### **5.5 Consultation**

- 5.5.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed its work programme, that includes a review of the Council’s Expenses Policy.
- 5.5.2 The Work Programme 2021/2022 was then approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group.

### **5.6 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

- 5.6.1 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 4 July 2022 will consider the draft scope of the Treasury Management Task and Finish Group.

### **5.7 Climate Impact**

- 5.7.1 There are no immediate climate impact implications arising from the proposals.

### **5.8 Community Impact**

- 5.8.1 Scrutiny work will need to assess the implications of any recommendations made, including equalities and community cohesion implications.

## **6 Background Papers**

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Agenda and Minutes of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15 November 2021  
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/2022  
Minutes of the meeting of the Expenses Policy Task and Finish Group - 20 June 2022

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

### **EXPENSES POLICY TASK AND FINISH SCRUTINY REVIEW – SCOPE**

#### **1. Topic – Expenses Policy**

#### **2. Responsible Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)

#### **3. Purpose of the scrutiny review**

The purpose of this Scrutiny review is to understand how West Northamptonshire Council's Expenses Policy for employees is structured. The review may also look at the procedures in place for councillors claiming expenses, while acknowledging the policy matters fall under the responsibilities of the full Council.

#### **Key lines of enquiry**

This Review seeks to:

- Understand how West Northamptonshire Council's Expenses Policy for employees and Councillors is structured
- How the Policy for employees and Councillors is currently operating
- How claims for both employees and Councillors are submitted and the audit mechanism in place
- To understand how often the Expenses Policy is reviewed

#### **4. Outcomes**

To make evidenced based recommendations to inform the Council's Expenses Policy for both employees and to make evidenced based recommendation to inform the procedure for the Expenses Policy for Councillors.

#### **5. Approach**

The scrutiny review will be carried out by a Task and Finish Group made up of the following councillors:

1. Councillor Sally Beardsworth (Chair)
2. Councillor Azizur Rahman

### 3. Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere

Co-optee None suggested for this Task and Finish Group

The Task and Finish Group will make use of the standard working methods applicable to scrutiny reviews, including evidence-gathering meetings (either in-person or virtual); desktop research; and targeted evidence-gathering, as appropriate.

## 6. Information required

### Background data

- Scene-setting presentation – To provide details of the Council’s Expenses Policy to the Task and Finish Group, how it is structured and operating; how claims are submitted and the audit mechanisms in place and the procedures in place for Councillors to claim expenses
- Relevant Expenses policy and strategies and

### Views from internal expert advisors

- Head of Payroll
- Head of Enterprise Applications Digital, Technology & Innovation
- Assistant Director Human Resources
- Head of Organisational Development, Design and Change
- Democratic Services Manager

## 7. Resources and support

- David Hannah, Head of Payroll
- Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager for evidence-gathering and for production of the scrutiny review report and the

## 8. Timetable and key dates

	<b>Date</b>
Inaugural Task and Finish Group meeting	20 June 2022 (remote over Zoom)
Confirmation of the scope of the review by the Corporate OSC	4 July 2022
Evidence-gathering	13 July 2022

Approval of draft report by the Task and Finish Group

19 September 2022

Agreement of draft report by the Corporate OSC

7 November 2022

Chair of the Corporate OSC to present the final report  
'23  
to WNC Cabinet

December/January

## **9. Follow-up/Monitoring**

The Corporate OSC will review the impact of the scrutiny review 6 months after the presentation of the final report to decision-makers.

**NB:** Each OSC will have a monitoring Work Programme to monitor the impact of the accepted recommendations

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	Topic identified and scheduled
	Topic identified but not yet scheduled
	Topic completed

Title	Proposed purpose	Date of Committee meeting	Cabinet Member and Executive Director	Proposed Task and Finish Group	Comments
People Strategy	To provide scrutiny input to the 50 key actions contained within the People Strategy	10 May 2022 4 July 2022	Cabinet Member for HR & Corporate Services  Executive Director – Corporate Services and Assistant Director – Human Resources	No - Whole Committee	The Committee to provide scrutiny input into the People Strategy
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/2022	The Committee to consider its Annual Report 2021/2022 for submission to full Council for information	4 July 2022	The Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee	No	

Expenses Policy	To review the Council's expenses policy	4 July 2022 – The Task and Finish Group to present its scope (Terms of reference) for consideration by the Committee.	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	Yes	A Task and Finish Group will carry out a short sharp review. This Task and Finish Group held its inaugural meeting on 20 June 2022.
Treasury Management	To scrutinise treasury management focusing on efficiencies – forward looking	15 March 2022 – The Committee to set up a Task and Finish Group to undertake this scrutiny activity  Prior to the setting up of the Task and Finish Group a briefing will be scheduled on Treasury management that will provide important information to Councillors. <b>ACTIONED.</b>  The Task and Finish Group will commence in June 2022	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	Yes	A Task and Finish Group will carry out a review.  The Task and Finish Group will commence in June 2022 and present its scope to the meeting of the committee on 4 July 2022
Modernising Systems	The Committee to receive information regarding systems at the Council and to consider their value for money	15 March 2022 - A report to the Committee providing background information, to assist the committee in deciding how it will undertake scrutiny activity  Modernising Systems Inquiry day(s) have been programmed from September 2022 onwards  <b>Reports to Committee November 2022 onwards</b>	Cabinet Member for Finance  Executive Director for Finance	To be confirmed	The meeting on 15 March 2022 comprised a comprehensive question and answer session (Scrutiny Inquiry) to inform a potential scrutiny review.

Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports	The Committee to receive regular budget monitoring reports at its meetings	5 September 16 January 2023	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	No	To receive a quarterly budget monitoring report which will inform the budget scrutiny role of this Committee.
Quarterly reports on the MTFP	The Committee to receive regular MTFP monitoring reports at its meetings	5 September 2022 16 January 2023	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	No	To receive a quarterly budget MTFP report which will inform the budget scrutiny role of this Committee.
Performance Monitoring Report	The Committee to consider the Performance Monitoring Report to inform Performance Management Scrutiny	5 September 2022 16 January 2023	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	No	

Performance Management Scrutiny	The Committee to undertake Performance Management Scrutiny	5 September 7 November 16 January 2023 6 March	Executive Director Finance and relevant Cabinet Members dependent upon the key performance indicator to be reviewed	No	The Committee will consider the performance monitoring report and undertake performance management scrutiny of specific indicators at these meetings.
The Children's Trust Budget	The Committee to receive a briefing on the Children's Trust budget	15 September 2021  <b>Further meeting TBC</b> To consider the Business Plan for the Children's Trust	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	No but following the briefing the Committee may consider setting up a Task and Finish Group	The Committee received a briefing on the Children's Trust Budget at its September 2021 meeting and resolved to receive the business plan for scrutiny input at a future meeting
Budget Scrutiny	The Committee to confirm its budget scrutiny process and undertake budget scrutiny of the Council's budget 2023/24	Date to be confirmed	Executive Director for Finance	No	

Asset Management	To undertake scrutiny activity of asset management	<p>15 March 2022 - The Committee to set up a Task and Finish Group to undertake this scrutiny activity</p> <p>A presentation to be given to the Committee at its meeting 10 May 2022 and from there the Committee will consider Scrutiny work into this issue.</p> <p><b>Date to be confirmed:</b> The Sustainability Working Group is asked to report back to a future meeting regarding the alignment of workstreams around the development of the new Asset Management Plan to the Corporate Plan and the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality.</p>	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	To be confirmed	It was resolved that the Sustainability Working Group is asked to report back to a future meeting regarding the alignment of workstreams around the development of the new Asset Management Plan to the Corporate Plan and the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality.
Transformation Projects	The Committee to review transformation projects: Definition of the Transformation Projects Spend on transformation Savings	<b>Meeting dates in 2022 to be confirmed</b>	Director – Transformation Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	No	
Social Values Act 2013	The Committee to receive a briefing on the Social Values Act 2013	<p>15 September 2021</p> <p>15 March 2022 – Further information to be provided to the Committee, and the representative leading on social value to be invited to address the Committee</p>	To be determined	No but following the briefing the Committee may consider setting up a Task and Finish Group	The Committee to receive a briefing on the Social Values Act 2013 and the procurement of contracts, contract management and social value to enable Members to decide on how it will undertake further scrutiny activity on that topic.

Contract management and procurement	To receive a presentation on contract monitoring and procurement and the links into Social Value	15 September 2021	Executive Director Finance and Head of Procurement	No	Highlighted at the first meeting as an area of interest with particular reference to social value  The Committee noted the presentation with a view to it being background information in respect of any future work on Social
Work Programming Event	The Committee to confirm the date for its Work Programming event	15 September 2021	Executive Director for Finance  Cabinet Members to be invited to the work programme event	No	COMPLETED  Taken place
Schools Budgets	To receive a briefing on the way schools need funding and how this is calculated	15 November 2021	Cabinet Member for Finance  Executive Director for Finance	Not at the meeting on 15 November 2021, The Committee may consider setting up a Task and Finish Group to undertake a review of school's budgets	The meeting on 15 November 2021 will comprise a comprehensive question and answer session (Scrutiny Inquiry) to inform a potential scrutiny review. The Committee noted the presentation and agreed that Cllrs Aziz and Traasiewicz attend all

Draft West Northamptonshire Council budget 2022-2023	To provide scrutiny input into the draft budget	15 November 2021 – briefing on the budget process was provided  12 January 2022; and further additional meetings of the Committee to be scheduled as required.  COMPLETED	Cabinet Member for Finance Executive Director for Finance	To be confirmed	Budget scrutiny is a key role of this Committee. The Committee could decide on which budgets it would scrutinise in-depth at a later meeting (to be set)
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### Potential cross-cutting themes for the Scrutiny Committees

Topic	Proposed purpose	Committees to be involved in this review	Cabinet Member and Executive Director	Proposed Task and Finish Group	Comments
Highways Contract	The Committee, together with Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the highways contract	Corporate and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	Meeting of Place OSC on 28 June 2022, with Corporate OSC to undertake joint Scrutiny of this item
Major Contracts and Capital Contracts	The Committee together with Place and People Scrutiny Committees to undertake scrutiny of major contracts of the Council including the Children's Trust	Corporate, People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	
Housing	The Committee, together with Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake scrutiny activity of the housing costs and social value	Corporate and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	

### **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting dates in 2022/23**

- 4 July 2022
- 5 September
- 7 November
- 16 January 2023
- 6 March

### **Development of Overview and Scrutiny work programmes for 2022/23**

NB: The Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group considered the process to be used to develop Overview and Scrutiny work programmes at a meeting on 25 May 2022. The Group agreed that rather than go out to public consultation about suggestions for scrutiny topics as in 2021/22 it could be more useful to consider a survey of residents' views about Council services. This would enable areas to be identified where Overview and Scrutiny might help to alleviate issues. The Group also agreed that Cabinet Members should be asked to provide details of forthcoming issues within their portfolios that might be subject to pre-decision scrutiny. The chairs of the three Overview and Scrutiny committees have written to the Leader of the Council to progress these matters.

**NB: The Committee resolved at its meeting on 15 November 2021: Given due consideration to the carried motions relevant to the remit of Corporate OSC be noted.**