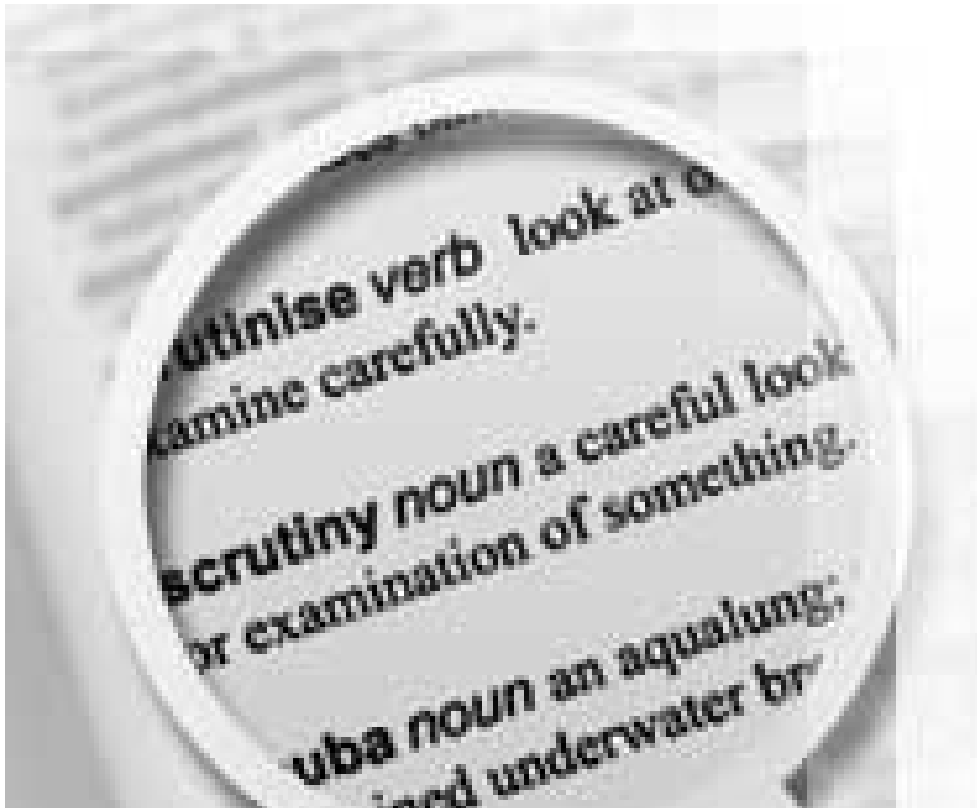


Scrutiny in North West Leicestershire



Annual Report

2008-09

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Background

1. Scrutiny's 2008/09 Annual Report provides a summary of work undertaken over the year, together with its key outcomes and achievements.
2. The Council has five Scrutiny Committees. Four of these Committees are aligned closely to the Cabinet portfolios on a theme basis and the fifth, the Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee, includes the Audit Committee function and the membership is drawn from the membership of the other Scrutiny Committees. The committees are as follows:-
 - 🔍 Environment Scrutiny Committee
 - 🔍 Communities Scrutiny Committee
 - 🔍 Health Scrutiny Committee
 - 🔍 Corporate Scrutiny Committee
 - 🔍 Corporate Governance Committee
3. The Scrutiny Committees meet six times a year with provision for extraordinary meetings from time to time and when appropriate.
4. In order to co-ordinate the work of the five Scrutiny Committees and ensure that they are operating effectively, the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the four "themed" Scrutiny Committees meet periodically as a Scrutiny Commission to secure the co-ordination of the work programmes of the Scrutiny Committees, to determine responsibility for any matters which fall within the terms of reference of more than one Scrutiny Committee, and to consider how to allocate any referrals from Community Forums. The Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee also attends the Commission.

Terms of reference

Environment - Prosperity and sustainable environment

(8 members)

Terms of Reference:

- 🔍 Planning policy
- 🔍 Development control
- 🔍 Employment/economy/regeneration/enterprise (LAA)
- 🔍 Environment
- 🔍 Street management
- 🔍 Environmental health
- 🔍 Rural agenda

Communities - Strong and safer communities

(8 members)

Terms of Reference:

- 🔍 Neighbourhoods and communities
- 🔍 Community safety (LAA)
- 🔍 Children and young people (LAA)
- 🔍 LSP
- 🔍 Voluntary sector
- 🔍 Community cohesion (social inclusion, diversity and equalities)
- 🔍 Housing

Health - Healthy fulfilled population

(8 members)

Terms of Reference:

- 🔍 Health (LAA)
- 🔍 Arts and cultural services
- 🔍 Tourism
- 🔍 Sport and leisure
- 🔍 Adults/older/vulnerable people (LAA)

Corporate - Quality, good value accessible services

(8 members)

Terms of Reference:

- 🔍 Budget and Policy Framework
- 🔍 Finance
- 🔍 People management
- 🔍 Asset management
- 🔍 Customer services
- 🔍 Policy and performance
- 🔍 ICT
- 🔍 Revenues and benefits
- 🔍 Transforming services
- 🔍 Procurement

Two of the above four Overview and Scrutiny Committees shall be chaired by a member of the largest Opposition Group. The remaining two Chairmen and the Deputy Chairmen shall be members of the Majority Group.

Corporate Governance

(8 members comprising 2 members from each of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees)

Terms of Reference:

To act as the Authority's Audit Committee, to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process. In particular:

- 🔍 Consider the effectiveness of the Authority's risk management arrangements, the control environment, and anti fraud and corruption arrangements
- 🔍 Seek assurances that action is being taken on risk-related issues identified by auditors and inspectors
- 🔍 Be satisfied that the Authority's assurance statements properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it
- 🔍 Approve (but not direct) Internal Audit's strategy and plans and monitor performance
- 🔍 Review summary Internal Audit reports and the main issues arising, and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary
- 🔍 Receive the annual report of Internal Audit
- 🔍 Consider plans of External Audit and inspection agencies
- 🔍 Monitoring of relevant reports and action plans
- 🔍 Ensure there are effective relationships between Internal and External Audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted
- 🔍 Review the financial statements, External Auditor's opinion and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by External Audit
- 🔍 Audit - internal and external, and
- 🔍 Related matters in relation to Legal and Democratic Services

Scrutiny Commission

5. The Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees meet periodically, on an informal basis, to secure the co-ordination of the work programmes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, to determine responsibility for any matters

that fall within the terms of reference of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to consider how to allocate any referrals from Community Forums.

6. These meetings of the Chairmen are known as the “Scrutiny Commission” and operate as a Working Group.

Membership

	Communities Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Scrutiny Committee	Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee	Environment Scrutiny Committee	Health Scrutiny Committee	Scrutiny Commission
Councillor	Bowley	Allman *	Bowley	Bowley	Brigden **	Allman
Councillor	A Bridges	Dalby	Brigden	Dalby	A Bridges	Brigden
Councillor	Gillard	P Holland	Gillard *	Everitt	Fenning *	Fenning *
Councillor	Hoult	Partner	P Holland	Meynell **	Jones	Gillard
Councillor	Howe *	P Purver **	Meller	Safell *	Meller	Howe
Councillor	E Purver	N Smith	N Smith	A Smith	E Purver	Meynell
Councillor	Timmis **	Stevenson	Timmis	Webster	Safell	P Purver
Councillor	Wyatt	Timmis	Webster **	Wyatt	Stevenson	Safell **
						Timmis
						Webster

* Chairman

** Deputy Chairman

Scrutiny Support

7. A new post of Senior Scrutiny Officer was appointment during July 2008.

Task and Finish Groups

8. The Committees can set up special Working Parties called Task and Finish Groups when they need to undertake a detailed, in depth investigation into a particular issue. The work is undertaken by a small group of councillors appointed by the membership of the respective Scrutiny Committee.
9. A Task and Finish Group is given a specific remit and timescale within which to undertake its research, gather evidence and produce recommendations, which it then brings back to the Committee for consideration.

Work Programmes

10. The Committees decide in advance the issues they wish to look at and it compiles a work programme. This enables the Committees to plan their workloads for the year.
11. The criteria that need to be considered for an item to be placed on the work programme are as follows:-
 - 🔍 An area of Corporate priority
 - 🔍 An issue of importance to the public
 - 🔍 An issue of importance to councillors
 - 🔍 A service that has been identified as having unsatisfactory performance
 - 🔍 A service that has recorded high levels of dissatisfaction from customers
 - 🔍 An issue that the Council has spent a significant proportion of its budget on.
 - 🔍 There was a consistent pattern of not reaching budget targets with regard to a service
 - 🔍 New Government guidance or legislation had been introduced which would affect delivery or policy in a service area.
 - 🔍 A major matter of local concern that may not be the responsibility or sole responsibility of the Council.
12. A review would not be set up if any of the following factors applied to the topic being suggested:
 - 🔍 It is already being addressed in the Council
 - 🔍 It could be dealt with more effectively in another way
 - 🔍 The matter is considered to be sub-judice or prejudicial to Council's interests

- 🔍 The case fell within the complaints procedure and processes
- 🔍 It is an individual disciplinary or grievance matter
- 🔍 It is unlikely to result in improvements for local people.

13. Suggestions for future (2009/10) topics of examinations have not represented a full reflection of the scrutiny committees' remits. Other than 'standard' monitoring reports, non-executive elected members have made the suggestions. Additional efforts are being made to involve the public in the scrutiny process, including suggesting topics for examination.

14. Topics to be examined during 2009/10 include:

- 🔍 Hood Park Open-Air Pool
- 🔍 Members' Refreshments
- 🔍 Planning Fundamental Improvement Plan
- 🔍 Members' ICT provision
- 🔍 Free Initial Parking Period
- 🔍 Use of Contractors

15. In May 2009, Council amended the Terms of Reference of the Corporate Governance Scrutiny Committee and in future, the committee will undertake more work in its audit role.

Call-in

16. Members use the Call-in facility sparingly in North West Leicestershire. As the council's constitution notes, 'Call-in should only be used in exceptional circumstances'.

17. No requests for call-in were received during 2008-09

Examinations during 2008-09

18. The Scrutiny Committees carried out a number of examinations during 2008-09. Details of the progress of current examinations are available on the Council's Website¹ or on request.

Waste Recycling

19. The Recycling Task and Finish Group completed its examination and presented its final report. Cabinet welcomed and endorsed the report. We published the

¹ Details at <http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/scrutiny/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=9248> 'What is Scrutiny Doing?' or on request.

report on the Centre for Public Scrutiny library website.² The Report is available on the Council's website³ or on request.

Polyclinics - Impact on Towns and Rural Communities in NW Leics

20. The Health Scrutiny Committee examined 'Polyclinics - Impact on Towns and Rural Communities in North West Leicestershire'. We published the report on the Centre for Public Scrutiny library website.⁴ The Report is available on the Council's website⁵ or on request.

Parking on Footways - Implications for Safety and Accessibility

21. The Communities Scrutiny Committee examined issues surrounding Parking on Footways – Implications for Safety and Accessibility.
22. This examination arose from discussions in the Council's Opportunities for People with Disabilities Group and involved co-operation between the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Committees.
23. The Communities Scrutiny Committee will forward the final report including recommendations, including closer partnership working, to the Cabinet.
24. We shall publish the report on the Council's website and the Centre for Public Scrutiny library website.

Recommendations

25. In addition to the formal examinations, a number of recommendations have arisen from one-off reports or monitoring reports.

Active Together Project

26. The Health Scrutiny Committee was impressed at the success of the project and recommended that officers sought to identify alternative sources of funding to enable the project to continue upon the end of original funding.

Budget Process

27. Representatives of the Youth Council, with the Council's Youth Champion, attended the Joint Scrutiny Committee considering the draft Budget proposals in connection, in particular, with the future of 'Picnic in the Park'.
28. The Joint Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet that it retain 'Picnic in the Park'.

² At <http://www.cfps.org.uk/scrutiny-exchange/library/>.

³ Details at <http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/scrutiny/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=9035> 'Scrutiny Reports' or on request.

⁴ At <http://www.cfps.org.uk/scrutiny-exchange/library/>.

⁵ Details at <http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/scrutiny/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=9035> 'Scrutiny Reports' or on request.

Summary of the Work of the Scrutiny Commission

29. The Scrutiny Commission meets every two months to discuss scrutiny related issues and matters arising from the scrutiny committees.
30. Issues discussed include;
- 🔍 Work plans
 - 🔍 Greater involvement in scrutiny

Conclusion

31. The scrutiny function has further developed during the year, laying foundations for further steps forward during the forthcoming year.
32. Scrutiny will need to create a specific identity to ensure that both elected members and the public are clear as to its role and its contribution.
33. We now publish the progress⁶ and final reports⁷ of Scrutiny Examinations on the Council's website and on the Centre for Public Scrutiny library website⁸.
34. We shall give greater publicity to forthcoming examinations as well as reports and outcomes so that elected members and members of the public are aware that they can suggest topics for examination, contribute to examinations and of the impact that their contribution has within the Council's work.

⁶ At <http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/scrutiny/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=9248> 'What is Scrutiny Doing?' or on request

⁷ At <http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/scrutiny/DisplayArticle.asp?ID=9035> 'Scrutiny Reports' or on request

⁸ At <http://www.cfps.org.uk/scrutiny-exchange/library/>

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:							
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11 Nov 09	Q2 Performance Management Report	Director of Environment	Written report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓				
11 Feb 10	Q3 Environment Performance Report	Director of Environment	Written report	20 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓				
18 May 10	Car Parking Charges – A Free Half Hour! Working Party report	Chairman and Members of the Working Party	Written report	15 mins	Recs. To Cabinet			✓		✓			✓
18 May 10	End of Year Performance Management Report	Director of Environment	Written report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓				

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME 2008/2009 (as at 11/06/09)

- 1. Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- 2. Local Area Agreement (LAA)
- 3. Council Improvement Priorities

- 4. Inspection / Audit Requirement
- 5. Policy / Strategy Development
- 6. Legislation / Statutory

- 7. Regional / National Issue
- 8. Councillor / Member of Public Suggestion

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
18 Aug 09	Older Persons' Service Review	Director of Community Head of Housing	Written Report	15 mins	For comment			✓		✓				
18 Aug 09	Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2010 to 2015	Head of Housing	Written Report	15 mins	For comment			✓		✓				
18 Aug 09	Choice Based Lettings	Director of Community Service Manager Housing Futures	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet			✓		✓		✓		
18 Aug 09	Housing Repairs Working Group – Performance of contractors, repairs and inspections	Housing Maintenance Manager	Written Report	15 mins	For comment			✓						✓
18 Aug 09	Leisure Centres Carbon Trust Progress Report	Head of Leisure and Culture	Written Report	15 mins	For comment			✓						✓
18 Aug 09	Q1 Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written report	15 mins	For comment		✓	✓	✓					

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:							
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
24 Nov 09	Housing Strategy Action Plan	Director of Community Service Manager-Housing Futures	Written report	20 mins	For comment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
24 Nov 09	Q2 Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓				
9 Feb 10	Parking on Footways Update	Senior Scrutiny Officer Director of Environment	Written report	15 mins	For comment			✓		✓			✓
9 Feb 10	Review of Neighbourhood Management Arrangements	Director of Community	Written report	15 mins	For comment			✓		✓			
9 Feb 10	Q3 Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓				
25 May 10	End of Year Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓				

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME *(as at 11/06/09)*

1. Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
2. Local Area Agreement (LAA)
3. Council Improvement Priorities

4. Inspection / Audit Requirement
5. Policy / Strategy Development
6. Legislation / Statutory

7. Regional / National Issue
8. Councillor / Member of Public Suggestion

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
19 Aug 09	Implementation of an Health Improvement Plan – Progress Report	Head of Environmental Health	Written Report	15 mins	Comments from Committee		✓	✓		✓				✓
19 Aug 09	Healthier Communities Partnership Action Plan	Head of Leisure and Culture	Written Report	15 mins	Comments from Committee	✓	✓	✓		✓				
19 Aug 09	Q1 Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓		✓					
19 Nov 09	Hood Park Outdoor Pool WP Report	Chairman and Members of the WP	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. To Cabinet					✓				✓
19 Nov 09	Q2 Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓		✓					
18 Feb 10	Q3 Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓		✓					

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
12 May 10	End of year Performance Management Report	Director of Community	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓		✓					

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME (as at 11/06/09)

- 1. Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- 2. Local Area Agreement (LAA)
- 3. Council Improvement Priorities

- 4. Inspection / Audit Requirement
- 5. Policy / Strategy Development
- 6. Legislation / Statutory

- 7. Regional / National Issue
- 8. Councillor / Member of Public Suggestion

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
13 Aug 09	Refreshments for Members Working Party report	Chairman and Members of the Working Party	Written report	20 mins	Recs. to Cabinet			✓						✓
13 Aug 09	Treasury Report	Corporate Director	Written report	20 mins	Comments from Committee				✓	✓	✓			
13 Aug 09	North West Leicestershire Comprehensive Equality and Diversity Policy 2008 – 2011: Annual Report	Corporate Director	Written Report	20 mins	Recs. To Cabinet			✓	✓	✓	✓			
13 Aug 09	Health & Safety Annual Report	Corporate Director	Written Report	20 mins	Comments from Committee					✓	✓			
13 Aug 09	Q1 Performance Management Report	Corporate Director	Written Report	20 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓					

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
17 Nov 09	ICT Working Party Report	Chairman and Members of the working party	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. To Cabinet			✓		✓				✓
17 Nov 09	Use of Contractors in North West Leicestershire	Senior Scrutiny Officer	Scoping Report	10 mins	Establish WP			✓		✓				✓
17 Nov 09	Q2 Performance Management Report	Corporate Director	Written Report	20 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓					
16 Feb 10	Q3 Performance Management Report	Corporate Director	Written Report	20 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓					
19 May 09	Member Development strategy	Senior Democratic Services Officer	Written report	20 mins	Recs. to Cabinet			✓		✓			✓	
19 May 10	Use of Contractors in North West Leicestershire WP Report	Chairman and Members of the WP	Written Report	15 mins	Recs. To Cabinet			✓		✓				✓
19 May 10	Health & Safety Annual Report	Corporate Director	Written Report	20 mins	Comments from Committee					✓	✓			

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:							
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
19 May 10	End of Year Performance Management Report	Corporate Director	Written Report	20 mins	Recs. to Cabinet		✓	✓	✓				

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME (as at 11/06/09)

- 1. Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
- 2. Local Area Agreement (LAA)
- 3. Council Improvement Priorities

- 4. Inspection / Audit Requirement
- 5. Policy / Strategy Development
- 6. Legislation / Statutory

- 7. Regional / National Issue
- 8. Councillor / Member of Public Suggestion

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:									
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
25 Jun 09	Accounts Training Session	Corporate Director	Short report / presentation	30 mins	Training										✓
25 Jun 09	Audit Services Manager – Annual Report 2008/09	Corporate Director	Written Report	15 mins	Comments from Committee			✓	✓	✓					
25 Jun 09	Corporate Policies - Annual Review	Corporate Director	Written Report	15 mins	Comments from Committee			✓	✓	✓					
25 Jun 09	Internal Audit Strategy/Terms of Reference	Corporate Director	Written Report	15 mins	Comments from Committee			✓	✓	✓					
25 Jun 09	Final Accounts	Corporate Director	Short report	30 mins	Comments from Committee				✓	✓	✓				
29 Sep 09															

Date of meeting	Item	Witnesses	Method of review	Time allowed	Outcomes	Links to the following:								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
28 Oct 09														
Late Nov – Early Dec 09	Comprehensive Area Assessment	District Auditor	Short report	30 mins	Comments from Committee				✓	✓	✓			
20 Jan 10	Use of Resources Assessment	District Auditor	Short report / presentation	45 mins	Comments from Committee				✓	✓	✓			
28 Apr 10	Annual Governance Statement	District Auditor	Written report	30 mins	Comments from Committee									
28 Apr 10	Annual Audit and Inspection Letter and Plan	District Auditor	Short report / presentation	30 mins	Comments from Committee				✓	✓	✓			
28 Apr 10	Annual Internal Audit Report	Corporate Director Audit Services Manager	Short report	30 mins	Comments from Committee				✓	✓	✓			

