

Annual Report

Introduction

Welcome to the annual scrutiny report, which highlights the key scrutiny activities and developments in North East Lincolnshire Council during the 2017/18 Municipal Year. The report provides a summary of the work undertaken by the five scrutiny panels in 2017-18 and outlines future work programmes.

In addition to our scheduled scrutiny meetings a number of themed meetings, working groups and workshops have been held. Residents, partners and stakeholders have been involved in topics such as autism diagnosis, domestic abuse, mental health, school exclusions, housing and beach safety. The Autism Spectrum Conditions Working Group was a notable example of best practice in scrutiny; taking a matter brought to the Council's attention via a petition and its investigations leading to the development of a single access pathway aimed at improving support available for children and young people in North East Lincolnshire. Scrutiny will continue to play a valuable role in monitoring its success.

The scrutiny panels have continued to monitor implementation of the Council's budget, both prior to budget setting and through quarterly resource monitoring reports. All Elected Members were invited to take part in a budget consultation workshop prior to the formal consultation on the Council's budget and priorities, which this year was done via two all Member scrutiny budget sessions. Members have again been keen to 'see things for themselves' and have undertaken a number of site visits and information gathering visits to partners and community groups to inform their debates. The panels have continued to inform Cabinet decision-making, through both pre-decision scrutiny and the call in mechanism; further details of which can be found within this report.

There has been a continued focus on scrutiny of the Council's outcomes framework and the associated commissioning programmes such as the Smarter Neighbourhoods project. Scrutiny has a key role within the Council's governance arrangements to support effective delivery of the outcome framework and provide challenge, as appropriate, to make sure that the basis for decisions being taken by the Council are robust and this work will continue during the next Municipal Year.

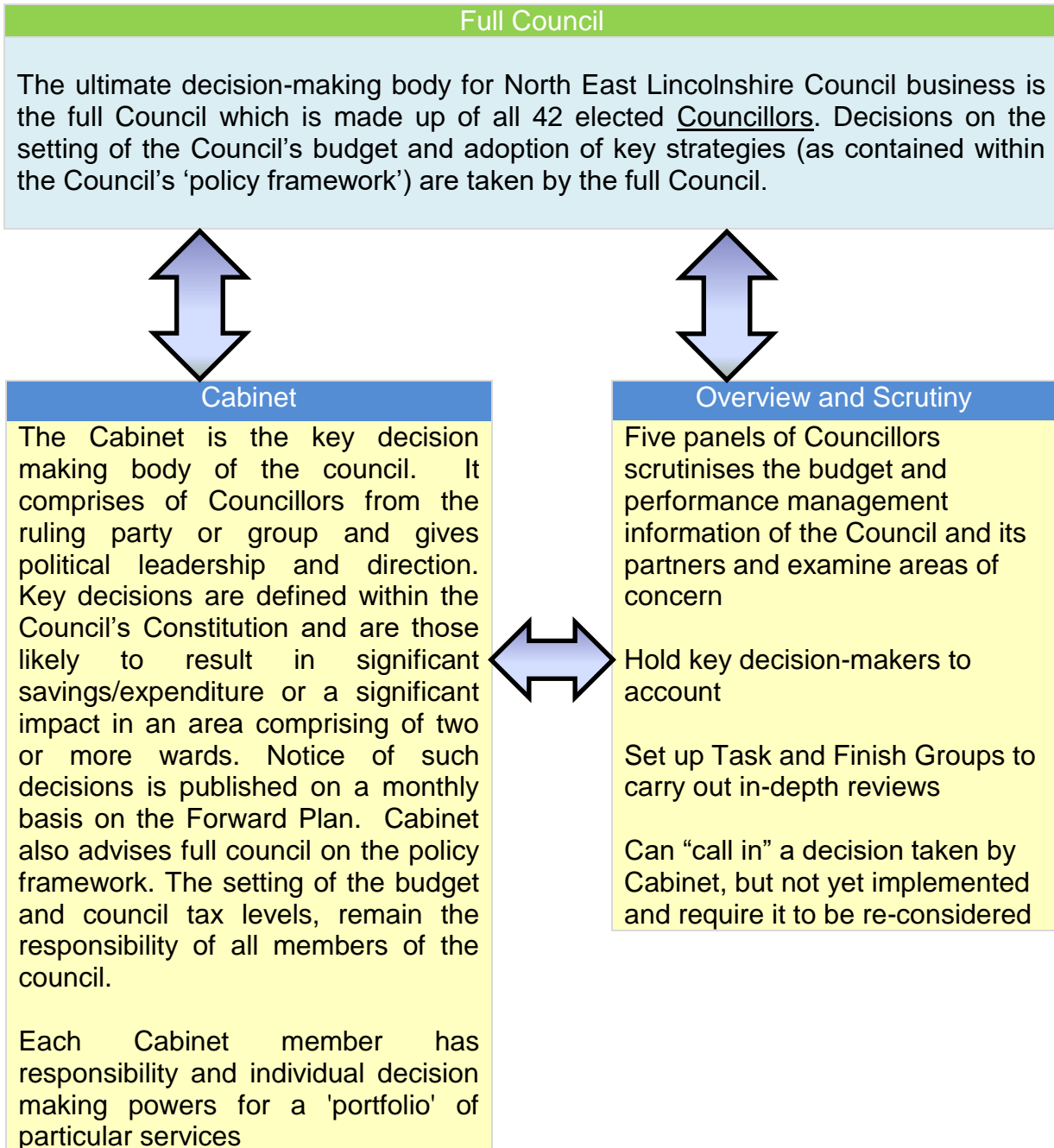
*Helen Isaacs, Statutory Scrutiny Officer
Director of Governance, Democracy and Community Engagement*

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2 Scrutiny in North East Lincolnshire



Please note that decisions regarding certain functions are determined by ‘regulatory’ committees of the council such as the Planning Committee and the Licensing and Community Protection Committee. Such decisions do not fall under the remit of Scrutiny. There is co-ordination between Scrutiny and the Audit and Governance Committee on matters of mutual concern.

Overview

Scrutiny is a process that enables Councillors who are not Members of the Council's decision-making process to review and scrutinise matters affecting local people.

The role of Elected Members performing the overview and scrutiny function is to:

- Review and report on issues that affect the economic, environmental and social well-being of local people;
- Act as a check and balance to the Council's decision makers, examining and reviewing decisions;
- Consider the work of public bodies operating outside the Council but which affect local residents, for example, local health services;
- Contribute to the development of future policies and strategies that will help improve services for local people;
- Involve local people in council decision making.
- Scrutiny is carried out using a number of methods, including panel meetings, working groups and select committees, but in all cases the process is non-political and Members from all groups participate.

Our Panels

Our panels and chairs this year were:

Children and Lifelong Learning – Councillor Ian Lindley

Health and Adult Social Care – Councillor Melanie Dickerson

Economy – Councillor Phillip Jackson

Communities – Councillor Stan Shreeve

Tourism and the Visitor Economy – Councillor Keith Brookes

Quarterly meetings were held with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Chairs of the panels to review progress, address in year issues and agree the allocation of emerging issues. Annual discussions also take place with the Independent Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee to ensure complementary and co-ordinated activity.

3 Scrutiny panels

Children and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Panel

An Ofsted Single Inspection Framework took place during July and August 2017. The panel were pleased that good progress had been made and that there was evidence of good partnership work but most of all that children in North East Lincolnshire were kept safe. Ofsted noted that, in their opinion, the voice of the child did not come across in the minutes of meetings of this panel. Officers held a development day and looked at information that the scrutiny panel and boards may find useful to see in the next municipal year. The panel will also continue to monitor the Ofsted action plan.



The panel were concerned about special educational need provision within the area and as a result received a report which provided an overview of the local authority's implementation of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) reforms. The panel were reassured that any potential issues in relation to access, inclusion, exclusions, SEND, safeguarding and

attainment were discussed regularly with both the schools/academies/academy trusts directly and the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Department for Education.

Over the last couple of years there had been an increase in the number of pupils who were being electively home schooled. The panel were keen to understand more about why there had been an increase and what could be done to encourage parents and children to stay within mainstream education. Members of the panel attended a workshop where they were able to explore the issue in greater detail, ask questions and understand the potential issues faced with elective home education and the complex work that officers undertake to ensure that children who were home schooled were accessing some form of educational learning.

After a period of high number of referrals into the Behaviour and Attendance Collaborative (BACs) there had been an increase in managed moves across schools/academies which members felt was positive. The panel also noted work by officers to align the work on exclusions to early intervention and prevention. To build on this work, and in addition to its termly reports, panel members have visited the secondary Behaviour and Attendance Collaborative. Although numbers of permanent exclusions have decreased

recently, the panel continues to keep its options open regarding an in-depth review should numbers begin to rise.



School engagement remains high on the panel's priorities. Members visited Cambridge Park and Humberston Park Academy in March. Members of the panel would like to thank all staff and pupils at the schools they visited during 2017/18 for extending a warm welcome and sharing their hopes and aspirations with them.

Other areas that have been scrutinised this year include:

- Children's social care statutory complaints
- Local Safeguarding Children Board – outcome scorecards.
- 0-19 Phase 2
- Virtual Heads Annual Report
- Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report.
- Delivery of the Together for Childhood Programme.

The panel welcomed three new co-opted Members on to the panel this year from Youth Action, the Roman Catholic Diocese and the Church of England Diocese. The panel is still seeking parent governor representatives and is keen to fill these positions.

"I am delighted with the commitment that this panel has shown over the past year in scrutinising key areas of children and young people's services, particularly the work of the Autism Spectrum Conditions Diagnosis Pathway Working Group. This level of Scrutiny is vital if we are to continue to deliver improved outcomes for all of our children and young people in NEL"



Councillor Ian Lindley

The panel requested that the following work be carried forward into next year's scrutiny work programme:

- Voice of the Child reports
- Standards in schools
- Delivery of the Together for Childhood programme - focusing on multiple adversity prevention
- Development of the apprenticeship programme
- Review of education and SEND as part of phase 2 of the 0-19 programme.

Health and Adult Social Care

The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel noted that mental health was a growing health concern, both locally and nationally, which affected all age groups. The panel wanted to understand where the issues laid within the borough so that they could focus on areas where they could make a difference. The panel attended a workshop led by officers where they discussed the main things that impacted on mental health at different stages of the life course, from young people to older adults, and the sort of things that could be put in place to mitigate some of these impacts. Following on from the workshop the panel felt that the suicide rates were a concern. A further workshop was held which looked at the local suicide prevention audit and compared it with the national picture. Officers shared the approach to suicide prevention and the Prevention Concordat. Members were reassured by the local health and wellbeing approach to mental health and that post intervention / after care was in place and effective.



The Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust (NLAG) announced service changes to ENT and Urology which would affect not only residents in North East Lincolnshire but also East Riding and North Lincolnshire. A joint scrutiny panel approach with neighbouring authorities was taken and a joint meeting held in North East Lincolnshire. Whilst the panel appreciated the decision was taken on grounds of safety, they were keen to ensure the temporary service changes would work and not impact on patients and their relatives/carers. Following recommendations made by the panel, NLAG produced a written briefing paper that was circulated to the panel after three months of the change. NLAG representatives attended the meeting in March 2018 and reassured the panel that the service changes had been successful at this stage and the panel would be involved in future consultation and engagement.

With the service changes taking place within NLAG, the panel became increasingly concerned about patient transport, in particular with the potential transfer of services to Scunthorpe and Hull hospitals. As a result there would be an increasing demand on transport. The panel wanted to look at the current service provision, whether it was operating effectively, and if there was sufficient future service provision that took into account the increasing demand. A select committee will be established to make recommendations to help with designing future transport service provision. This will be a focus for the panel in 2018/19.

The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel monitored the actions from the NLAG Care Quality Commission inspection throughout the year to track the progress of the actions from the inspection.

The Sustainability and Transformation Plan for the Humber Coast and Vale was published and the panel had been updated on the plan and the work to date. This will form part of the work programme next year.

The panel continued to work closely with Healthwatch, identifying areas where their work overlaps as well as the potential for joint working.

The panel received briefings on oral health services provision; Virgin Health Care service provision of sexual health; the Union with the Clinical Commissioning Group; and the Accountable Care Partnership.

In addition, the panel considered the East Midlands Ambulance Service change programme; the public health annual report; and the review of the disabled facilities grant review.

The following work will be carried forward into next year's scrutiny work programme:

- Sustainable Transformation Plan (Humber Acute Services Review)
- Clinical Commissioning Group quarterly reports

"The Panel has robustly challenged many Health Care providers regarding the quality of provision for residents of North East Lincolnshire, giving plaudits when appropriate and expressing concerns over inadequate performance"



*Councillor Melanie Dickerson
Chair*

- Transport and accessibility of health
- Mental Health – Self Harm
- Adult Services Select Committee
- Delivery of the Resilience and Relationship Programme
- Integration of young and adult carers.
- Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Recommissioning of NHS Health Check

Economy Scrutiny Panel

The panel enabled influence, scrutiny and involvement of the public in highways and transport major projects by way of recommendations to the portfolio holder to bring about a major project consultation and engagement process. This has been adopted and is published on the council's website.



Challenge continued on transport and highways matters. The panel responded to a petition for debate at full council considering options for the review of existing traffic signal junction in NEL. Its recommendations have been implemented on a scheme to reduce the number of speed limit changes to a stretch of the B1203. Major highways schemes have been examined via routine monitoring reports with continuing scrutiny of

- Toll Bar junction
- Littlefield Lane, Grimsby
- 20 mph speed limits.

The panel contributed to the development of the car parking strategy and made recommendations to influence the strategy. The panel will continue its scrutiny of the delivery of emerging work streams (residents' parking, town centre car parks, disabled parking and blue badge schemes)

and in any case will receive a review in December 2018 following 12 months implementation of the strategy.

The panel turned its attention to strategic housing matters. It called a special meeting to focus on delivery of the council's housing strategy action plan. Recommendations to cabinet were made to improve the numbers of empty homes brought back into use via the use of new homes bonus and to urge consideration of NELC becoming a future provider of social housing. The panel were consulted by Shoreline Housing

"The Economy Scrutiny Panel was very active during 2017/18 with meetings held most months. Following robust examination and debate around key issues, many recommendations were made to Cabinet which significantly influenced the direction and implementation of policy."



*Councillor Philip Jackson
Chair*

Partnership, a major social housing provider in NEL, prior to its merger with Boston Mayflower Housing Partnership. Following a special scrutiny panel meeting, resolutions were made ensuring councillor awareness of content of the outline business case and continuing engagement and consultation with scrutiny, council and especially ward councillors in wards with high numbers of social housing.

Further resolutions were made to lobby central Government via local MPs to enhance legislation and improve LA enforcement powers to tackle empty homes.



The panel monitored the performance of the Regeneration Partnership and approved new measures for monitoring outcomes relating to strategic housing.

Members also received briefings and / or challenged on the following issues

- Gypsy and traveller sites
- Business units
- Protocol to ensure efficient reinstatement to decorative paving in the town centre
- Additions to the specification for tender for provision of some public toilets in NELC
- Amendments to charges for House in Multiple Occupation
- Adoption of the housing assistance policy
- Disposal of Welholme Galleries

Members of the panel have continued to contribute to the Smarter Neighbourhoods Programme (see page xxx refers) as members of a working group looking at options around community safety, waste and recycling.

The following work will be carried forward into next year's scrutiny work programme:

- South Humber Inward Investment Programme, updates on progress to include sites, enquiry numbers, business types and take-up.
- Car Parking Strategy
- Energy Services Company
- Economy Strategy (refresh 2019)
- Highways Schemes
- Housing Strategy

Communities Scrutiny Panel

This year saw the terms of reference for the Panel change slightly, gaining the responsibility for Bereavement Services; Homelessness; Neighbourhood Operations; Public Protection; and Digital, just to name a few.

A key piece of the panel's work this year was taking over responsibility for the Smarter Neighbourhoods Working Group. This has included consideration of the change from weekly waste collections to alternate fortnightly waste and dry recycling collections. The newly created Community Compliance team have also provided the panel with regular data on the compliance with the new recycling scheme and the number of fines issued. A more detailed breakdown of this working group's deliberations can be found on page 16 of this report.

The panel have also been focused on the criminal justice system and the prevention of anti-social behaviour. An update was received on the progress made since the use of Community Protection Notices (CPNs) was approved by Cabinet in February 2017. The panel noted the positive impact of parents being issued with fixed penalty fines and threatened with parenting orders if the behaviour of young people who were subject to Acceptable Behaviour Contracts did not improve. CPNs had remained in place and the unruly behaviour had generally ceased. The young individuals had since dropped off the radar; showing that the use of CPNs was effective.

In preparation for consideration of the

Together for Childhood Programme report, the panel were invited to visit the Youth Offending Service and the new East Marsh Hub to see the new ways of collaborative working with agencies, such as Humberside Police and the NSPCC to help tackle causes of child neglect and abuse.

The panel was also asked by the Portfolio Holder to look into a petition regarding anti-social behaviour of young drivers along the Central and North Promenade in Cleethorpes. As a result the Panel worked with Humberside Police to tackle the issue.

"The panel has continued to focus on those issues which affect both the most vulnerable and our whole community. Our two year continuity has enabled panel members to explore issues in great detail, and the quality of our recommendations reflects this."



Councillor Stanley Shreeve

Increased traffic patrols had been implemented and the use of hand held speedometers were used for enforcement.

As a result, uninsured drivers and drivers not wearing seat belts had been caught and dealt with under Section 59 of the Traffic Act. Warnings had also been issued that continued anti-social behaviour in their cars would result in the vehicles being seized.



Homelessness and begging has been considered by the panel and recommendations have been made to the portfolio holder for additional night time provision to be provided. While this is ongoing, the panel have agreed to hold a Select Committee next year to review homelessness and begging in finer detail to ensure the council, with its partners and local agencies, is doing all it can to ensure everyone has a safe place to sleep.

The panel have also considered and debated the following:

- Community Safety Partnership performance reports
- Killed and seriously injured statistics, including data comparison with benchmarking neighbours and reviewing breakdowns by ward
- Safety in the Night Time Economy
- PREVENT
- Financial Inclusion, including Universal Credit
- The approach to tackle dog fouling and littering within North East Lincolnshire
- The Needs Assessment for

Substance and Alcohol misuse.

Crime and Disorder Committee

This panel is the council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee and has used this platform to continue its challenge on domestic abuse. The committee met on 15th March 2018 and heard about the 'one system' approach that was being taken, with partners, to tackle domestic abuse. The Committee welcomed the shift in focus towards perpetrators and agreed that the long term approach was to change social attitudes by spending time talking to young people, either in schools or individually. In terms of a more immediate approach, the Committee felt that partners such as Blue Door and Women's Aid deserved as much support as possible.

The following work will be carried forward into next year's scrutiny work programme:

- Smarter neighbourhoods programme (to include the Priority Work Programme, the development of an integrated waste management strategy, a review of litter bin services and updates from the Compliance Team)
- Smarter Neighbourhoods: Street Cleansing Select Committee
- Anti-social behaviour
- Voluntary community and social enterprise sector
- Domestic Abuse
- Violent crime
- Homelessness Select Committee
- Visit to Humberside Police call handling centre
- MARRAC meeting invite to panel members
- Road Traffic Incidents: Cyclist Safety review; to include a review of junction buffer zones

Tourism and the Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel

Involving local people and other bodies in the work of the panel has been uppermost this year.



Following public representations about the salt marsh and beach quality, the panel invited Associated British Ports (ABP) and a representative of local fishermen to a presentation about dredging operations in the River Humber. As a result, interested parties; the council's Ecology Officer, ABP and local fisherman met to discuss matters of mutual interest. The council and ABP met to further explore issues including sediment sampling of 'affected' areas. There was no evidence to suggest that muddy areas of the beach were a result of dredging from sandbanks in the Humber.

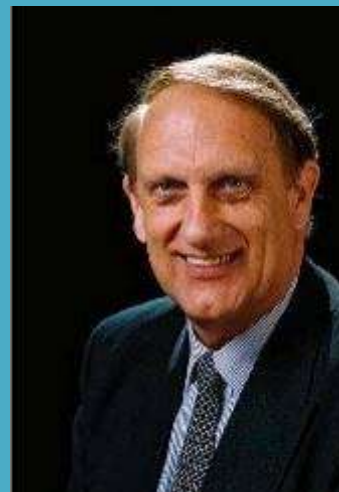
Beach safety landed on the agenda following concerns around changes to procedures. Officers were able to reassure the panel and public that no lives were put at risk and relationships with employees and partners alike were improved. The service works closely with other agencies such as RNLI and the Coastguard ensuring beach and water safety all year round. The panel will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the new procedures next

year.

The playing pitch strategy and sport facilities strategy have both received the panel's attention. Members' comments were noted and taken into account when the strategies were formally adopted by Cabinet.

The sporting theme continued when the panel considered a call-in regarding Bradley Football Development Centre. The Cabinet decision was upheld with the panel acknowledging that the project to secure over £1m funding for expansion of facilities could only add to the already excellent facilities available at Bradley for all residents and visitors to North East Lincolnshire.

"The panel has applied greater challenge to its work programme this year and believes its recommendations will make real improvements for the residents and visitors of North East Lincolnshire "



An in depth report on the condition and conservation of Grimsby's historical vessels was presented to the panel in November 2017. Members were passionate about securing future funding to support the long-term conservation of the vessels. The panel will persist with this work in June 2018 when activities to secure funding and detailed costings will be presented.

The panel has kept up to date with an on-going review of library services. Members have requested that before Cabinet consideration, an options appraisal and consultation outcomes come back to the panel to allow proper scrutiny contribution and influence on proposals. This is scheduled to happen in the Summer of 2018.



In March, panel members visited various locations to view archives, historical archives and museum collections. This will inform their future work relating to future care of and accessibility to this material. The authority will soon be in a position to consider options to review the Grimsby Town Centre cultural assets/facilities

(including Grimsby Town Hall, the Archives Office, Central Library, the Fishing Heritage Centre and the museum collection) and provide fully costed options in respect of rationalisation and development of the assets. Scrutiny will be involved in this work.

In addition the following were also considered:

- Tourism Information Centres (TIC)
- Cleethorpes Seafront Townscape Heritage Programme and Cleethorpes Regeneration Programme

The panel is keen to fulfil its terms of reference around financial and performance monitoring including improved outcomes for citizens and visitors to NEL. To this end members continue to work with officers to identify budgets, create a scorecard and performance measures that indicate (quantify / measure) the success of tourism and the visitor economy in NEL.

In addition to priority outcomes within the panel's terms of reference, the following work will be considered for next year's scrutiny work programme:

- Culture, Heritage, Leisure, Sport and Tourism commissioning programme including:
 - Libraries Consultation (expected Summer 2018)
 - Strategic approach to tourism (via a working group)
 - Archives
 - Culture Strategy

4 Scrutiny working groups

Working groups are appointed to investigate issues in more detail and report their findings and recommendations back to the panel. Working groups are still required to scope the piece of work and identify clear objectives and benefits of the review, but there is no requirement to hold formal, public meetings. The investigation may be on a 'task and finish' basis where the review is time-limited, or carried out over a longer period.

Over the last twelve months, the following issues have been reviewed via working groups:

- Smarter neighbourhoods
- Autistic spectrum conditions diagnosis pathway
- Cleethorpes market

Further information about each review can be found below.

Smarter neighbourhoods working group

A working group was set up consisting of members of the Regeneration, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel to look in detail at options to contribute to around £4m of savings across neighbourhood services.

The working group felt the council's priorities should be to increase the recycling rates and reduce costs.

In July, the working group reported to the Communities Scrutiny Panel and it was recommended to Cabinet that the current vehicle fleet be reviewed, that the same size bins be retained and there be a move towards a fortnightly collection of residual

waste with adequate support provided to the community during implementation.

Following on from the Cabinet meeting on the 30th August 2017, the draft community enforcement policy and the stakeholder engagement plan were referred direct to the working group for further scrutiny and due diligence. The working group set out some principles for the council's approach to enforcement.

This work will continue into the 2018/19 municipal year with the development of an integrated waste management strategy and a review of the street cleansing and litter bin service changes to further optimise use of resources.

Autism spectrum conditions diagnosis pathway working group

Following a petition in September 2016 a working group set out to look at services to diagnose and support children and young people with autism spectrum conditions (ASC) in North East Lincolnshire. The Group found it difficult to scrutinise a provision, made up of a number of services within different agencies, which was under review. Within the agencies concerned (including the Council), service restructures, staff secondments and new appointments further complicated the process and hindered progress. Nevertheless, a new single access pathway for ASC has been developed and, in February 2018, the working group made a total of seven recommendations to ensure;

- children and young people in NEL receive a timely and accurate clinical diagnosis of neurodevelopmental conditions (if they want one).

- pathways to support for diagnosed ASC and other related conditions are accessible.
- roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear and defined.

The working group invited the lead petitioner to comment on its recommendations and these comments were included in the report to a special joint meeting of the Children and Lifelong Learning and Health and Adult Social Care scrutiny panels. The joint panels approved all seven recommendations from the working group and referred them to Cabinet.

The Children and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Panel will track progress on the recommendations.

Cleethorpes Market

In response to issues raised by the public, the Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel set up a working group to look at Cleethorpes Market. With the support of officers, the group looked at a number of options to reinvigorate the market.

A number of recommendations were made back to the scrutiny panel with the intention of the market being made more sustainable, of a quality comparable to the best of modern markets and providing value for money to meet the needs of residents and visitors to the resort.

The panel agreed that a market which is an event will attract greater numbers of visitors



to Cleethorpes and encourage them to remain in the resort longer and experience other attractions, shops, restaurants and cafes which will benefit the visitor economy of the resort.

5 Get involved in scrutiny

One of the key roles of scrutiny is to work on behalf of residents to address the issues that are causing concern to people who live and work in the borough. We are using this report to tell you what we have done and we want you to tell us what you think we should be doing next. Please use the contact details at the end of this report if you would like us to focus on a particular issue in future.

All agendas and minutes of scrutiny panels as well as reports from scrutiny working groups are available by following the links on our website – nelincs.gov.uk

This report is also an opportunity to say thank you to everyone who has contributed to the scrutiny process over the past twelve months. To be able to function effectively, scrutiny relies on the invaluable knowledge and expertise of witnesses. Last year a wide range of individuals and organisations assisted us in our work, including:

- Service users
- ENGIE
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- East Midland Ambulance Service
- NHS Foundation Trust

But we are not content to leave it there... Members of the public are:

- Welcome to attend scheduled scrutiny panel meetings to observe local scrutiny in action. To find out what is being discussed and what to expect please have a look at the website or contact the scrutiny team.
- Encouraged to make suggestions for future scrutiny reviews by contacting your local councillor or the scrutiny team. You can do this by email, post or telephone.
- Able to approach councillors with your views on specific issues so that these can be added into the debate on the scrutiny panels
- Able to speak on specific issues, with the prior permission of the panel chair.

Scrutiny cannot promise to form the same conclusions as you do but your comments will be acknowledged and considered.

Sometimes we receive correspondence that raise issues outside of scrutiny or the council's remit – should this happen we will forward your comments to the relevant service or partner organisation and ask them to provide you with a response.

If you would like further information about scrutiny, please use the contact details below:

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