

Public Document Pack



**Nottingham
City Council**

Nottingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Wednesday, 9 June 2021

Time: 2.00 pm

Place: The Ballroom - The Council House, Old Market Square, Nottingham, NG1 2DT

Please see information at the bottom of this agenda front sheet about requirements for ensuring Covid-safety.

Councillors are requested to attend the above meeting to transact the following business

Director for Legal and Governance

Governance Officer: Kim Pocock **Direct Dial:** 0115 876 64321

1	Apologies for absence	
2	Declarations of interests	
3	Minutes	3 - 4
	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2021	
4	Streetscene	5 - 6
5	Scrutiny of the Council's Improvement and Recovery	7 - 14
6	Work Programme	15 - 20

If you need any advice on declaring an interest in any item on the agenda, please contact the Governance Officer shown above, if possible before the day of the meeting

In order to hold this meeting in as Covid-safe a way as possible, all attendees are asked to follow current Government guidance and:

- remain seated and maintain distancing between seats through the meeting; please also remember to maintain distancing while entering and leaving the room;
- wear face coverings throughout the meeting;

- make use of the hand sanitiser available and, when moving about the building follow signs about traffic flows, lift capacities etc; and
- comply with Test and Trace requirements by scanning the QR code at the entrance to the building and/or giving name and contact details to the Governance Officer at the meeting.

Citizens are advised that this meeting may be recorded by members of the public. Any recording or reporting on this meeting should take place in accordance with the Council's policy on recording and reporting on public meetings, which is available at www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk. Individuals intending to record the meeting are asked to notify the Governance Officer shown above in advance.

Nottingham City Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held remotely via Zoom on 5 May 2021 from 3.00 pm - 3.21 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Anne Peach (Chair)
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis
Councillor Jane Lakey
Councillor Toby Neal
Councillor Ethan Radford
Councillor Angharad Roberts
Councillor Andrew Rule
Councillor Audra Wynter

Absent

Councillor Carole McCulloch
Councillor Georgia Power

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Kim Pocock - Scrutiny Officer

1 Apologies for absence

None.

2 Declarations of interests

None.

3 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2021 as an accurate record and they were signed by the Chair.

4 Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were noted.

5 Establishment of the Overview and Scrutiny Call-in Panel

The Call-in Panel was established with the following membership:

Councillor Anne Peach (Chair)
Councillor Carole McCulloch (Vice Chair)
Councillor Georgia Power (Vice Chair)
Councillor Jane Lakey
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis

Councillor Ethan Radford
Councillor Roger Steel
Councillor Cate Woodward

6 Work Programme 2021/22

- a) The Committee agreed that much of its scrutiny in 2021/22 will be informed by the progress of the Council's improvement programme and recovery. The Committee would like to develop its role as a critical friend, with the ability to give proper consideration to, and potentially influence, essential plans and decisions being made in a timely way.
- b) The Committee agreed that it would be helpful for the Chair of the Committee and the Scrutiny Officer to meet with the Leader of the Council to discuss the best way to take this forward.
- c) In addition, the Committee agreed to schedule the items it has already identified as priorities.
- d) The Committee agreed to schedule the following items for the meeting to be held on 9 June 2021:
 - Streetscene - to explore the split of responsibilities between residents and the Council; to examine the appropriate deployment of Council resources, as well as the impact of current financial constraints; to review how Street Scene fits into the Public Realm Transformation Programme and its contribution towards delivery of the Council's Improvement Programme.
 - Improvement Programme – to formally establish the Committee's role in scrutinising the Council's Improvement and Recovery Programme and to agree the items to be discussed at future meetings.
- e) The work programme schedule for 2021/22 will be presented to the next meeting of the Committee following further informal discussion with Committee members and in the light of the outcomes of the meeting with the Leader.

7 Dates of Future Meetings

The Committee agreed to meet on the following Wednesdays at 2pm (with a pre-meeting to be attended by all members at 1.30pm):

2021 – 9 June, 7 July, 8 September, 6 October, 3 November, 8 December
2022 – 5 January, 9 February, 9 March, 6 April

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 JUNE 2021
STREETSCENE
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To explore the various aspects of Streetscene and the Council's approach to transformation of services.

2 Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (a) use the information received at the meeting to inform questioning and discussion to establish whether the service is moving in the right direction, both in terms of its use of resources and the services provided to citizens; and
- (b) make recommendations for improvements if required.

3 Background information

- 3.1 Streetscene forms part of the public realm operating model, aiming to provide a service which reflects community priorities whilst, at the same time, meeting statutory obligations.
- 3.2 The Council's public realm services are undergoing transformation to increase integration of service, refocus income generation functions, create a responsive, one stop shop public realm service and improve the responsiveness of reactive teams.
- 3.3 The Streetscene service is responsible for keeping neighbourhoods and the city centre clean.
- 3.4 In previous meetings, members of the Committee have expressed particular interest in the following in relation to Streetscene:
 - the split of responsibilities between residents and the Council;
 - the appropriate deployment of Council resources;
 - the impact of current financial constraints;
 - the public realm transformation programme; and
 - how services are contributing towards delivery of the Council's improvement and recovery agenda.
- 3.5 Colleagues responsible for the Streetscene services will attend the meeting to provide a presentation to the Committee to cover the issues identified in paragraph 3.4, followed by questioning and discussion.

4 List of attached information

4.1 None.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

5.1 None.

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

6.1 None

7 Wards affected

7.1 All.

8 Contact information

8.1 Kim Pocock
Scrutiny Officer
0115 8764321
kim.pocock@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 JUNE 2021
SCRUTINY OF THE COUNCIL'S IMPROVEMENT AND RECOVERY
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To establish the role of the Committee in scrutinising the Council's progress towards improvement and recovery.

2 Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the proposals for timely and appropriate scrutiny of the Council's improvement and recovery work throughout 2021/22.

3 Background information

- 3.1 The Committee has received a number of updates at previous meetings on progress to implement the recommendations of both the Report in the Public Interest concerning the Council's governance arrangements for Robin Hood Energy Ltd (PIR) and the Non-Statutory Review of Nottingham City Council(NSR), both of which took place in 2020.
- 3.2 In 2021/22, the Committee has agreed to focus its scrutiny in a more direct and focused way on elements of the improvement and recovery journey and the impact on policy and services, for example in the areas of strategic direction, financial stability and service changes.
- 3.3 The Committee would like to develop its role as a critical friend, with the ability to give proper consideration to, and potentially influence, essential plans and decisions being made in a timely way.
- 3.4 Since the Committee's last meeting on 5 May 2021, the Chair has met with the Leader (Councillor David Mellen) and the Deputy Leader (Councillor Sally Longford) to discuss the most effective way of working together to ensure that its scrutiny adds value to the improvement and recovery process.
- 3.5 The outcomes of the meeting can be summarised as follows:

- The Leader and/ or the Deputy Leader will attend the Committee's 7 July meeting to present a report on each of the improvement and recovery themes and to present progress on the refresh of the Corporate Plan.
- Using the information presented in July, the Improvement and Assurance Board quarterly reports to Robert Jenrick (and his responses) and any other relevant sources of information, the Committee will decide on its focus for scrutiny of improvement and recovery, eg a particular theme, strategy or services.
- The Leader would be willing to attend each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting for approximately 15 minutes to provide a very brief update on key issues

in relation to improvement and recovery, to aid work programme planning, if this is wanted by the Committee and if his diary allows.

- 3.6 Nottingham City Council Improvement and Assurance Board's first report (17 March 2021) is publicly available on GOV.UK - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/non-statutory-review-of-nottingham-city-council#history> and attached at Appendix 1. The second report is due to be published shortly.

4 List of attached information

- 4.1 None.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None.

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting, 5 May 2021.
- 6.2 Nottingham City Council Improvement and Assurance Board: first report, 17 March 2021.

7 Wards affected

- 7.1 All.

8 Contact information

- 8.1 Kim Pocock
Scrutiny Officer
0115 8764321
kim.pocock@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

REPORT OF THE IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD

Nottingham City Council's Improvement and Recovery Plan 2021 -24

Introduction

The Improvement and Assurance Board has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local government to fulfil the following roles:

To provide external advice, challenge and expertise to Nottingham City Council in driving forward the development and delivery of their three-year Recovery Plan.

To provide assurance to the Secretary of State on Nottingham City Council's progress in delivering this Plan.

This will involve:

Providing regular advice, challenge and support to the council on the full range of their improvement activities, and in particular on delivery of the recommendations in Max Caller's non-statutory review, and of the three year recovery plan to restore the financial viability of the council's capital programme and revenue budget.

Providing written commentaries on the Council's progress to the Secretary of State each quarter, including recommending the use of Best Value powers (such as the appointment of Commissioners) if the Council fails to demonstrate progress. These commentaries will be published.

The Improvement and Recovery Plan 2021 – 2024

The Authority's Recovery and Improvement Plan for 2021 -24 has been approved by the City Council and the Improvement and Assurance Board has considered its purpose, direction and contents in seeking to address the previously identified significant failings in governance, finance and commercial operations.

The Strategic Council Plan has taken account, in large part, the findings identified by Max Caller's team and the approach to recovery advocates a series of fundamental changes to the council's strategic planning, its constitution, financial resilience and the culture of the organisation.

The Plan provides a detailed exposition of how the local authority is developing and implementing its recovery:

A new Strategic Plan

A revised Constitution and a new governance framework

A balanced budget approach over a three year period (MTFS)

Review of commercialisation and scrutiny of all company interests

Consideration of Council debt levels and reserves

Undertaking an asset disposal exercise as appropriate

Skills training for members and officers

Continuing to create a new culture for the organisation

Emphasis on service delivery and the prioritisation of key services

The Council's commitment to fundamental change is illustrated, in part, in the tone and content of the plan. There is an acknowledgement of the significant shortcomings and failures by the council identified in the Caller report and a desire to rectify these very serious weaknesses in structure, finance and in some parts of service delivery. The scale of the challenge must be addressed including, in particular, the delivery of the Plan.

Implementation of the Plan

Whilst the Board sees this Plan as a positive step forward in effecting the Authority's recovery over the next three years it wishes to draw attention to the following as key to the successful implementation of the Plan.

1. The Strategic Plan, itself, should be clearly stated as one of the deliverables as the highest priority.
2. "Transformation" is key to the success of the plan and this must be given specific emphasis in the delivery of the Improvement Plan.
3. Arrangements should be put in place to accommodate the management of the transition from current ways of working to the new approach bearing in mind the City Council will continue to operate in a difficult environment whilst delivering essential services to its residents. Capacity to achieve this outcome represents a major challenge across the whole organisation.
4. The improvement Plan acknowledges the need for a culture change programme but to effect such a fundamental shift in approach will require a strengthened corporate capacity in order to dissect the delivery of an organisational development strategy, management of behaviours alongside visible leadership at officer and member level.

5. The training and development of the workforce, incorporating cultural change, is an urgent requirement if the council is to embrace new ways of working.
6. The review of governance to include the delineation of the respective roles and responsibilities of the officer and member teams, and clarity of decision making and accountability must be in place at the outset including a programme of coaching to support practical implementation of change.
7. Prudent and consistent financial administration and control is critical to the success of the Plan including prudent policies relating to reserves and debt ratios with a strong budget discipline in terms of both capital and revenue. The evaluation and management of financial risk is a critical consideration in examining the realism of each financial proposal.
8. There is a need to align the MTFS with the Strategic Plan production process.
9. The savings exercises, yet to be evaluated, implicit in the balanced budget approach over a three year period must be practicable, deliverable and achievable in the set time scales. The savings plan should also incorporate the review of the organisational structure, given the proportion of the budget relating to staff, and training may be required in the achievement of planned savings.
10. Whilst asset disposals are to assist in the funding of the capital programme, market considerations should be taken in account regarding the timing of such sales.
11. The plan for reconfiguring the mixed economy in the provision of services should be further developed as soon as is possible including a review of the commissioning strategy and the arrangements for outsourcing.

12. A considerable amount of attention is devoted to tackling the current concern about the commercialisation programme of the Council but this should be underpinned by an extensive training familiarisation exercise for all key personnel if knowledge and expertise is not to be lacking as the council addresses the current portfolio of companies.

13. Reviewing and delivering change, in the Council's interests in the companies will be a substantial piece of work. Nottingham City Council needs to ensure adequate capacity, know-how and process is in place to make good strategic decisions. Stricter prioritisation of activities may be required, focusing on companies that represent a material financial or service delivery risk. This is in addition to taking steps to reducing duplication and increasing simplification.

14. There is evidence in the plan of a performance monitoring regime at both member and officer level but this must be supplemented by a clear articulation of how the council would address failure and underperformance to ensure the plan remains robust. Strong and effective political leadership is key. The respective responsibilities and accountability of members and officers must be prominent here.

15. The plan illustrates the virtue of citizen and community engagements in the progress towards a new configuration of service provision but more information on how this will be achieved would demonstrate the transparency and accountability of the Authority.

16. There must be much greater concentration on key essential services in planning and service delivery including Adult Care and Children's Services.

Conclusion

These observations are not presented in any way to undermine the progress that the council has made in seeking to produce a radical and fundamental reform in the structure, organisation, resourcing and delivery of change.

However, they point to the substantial challenges ahead if Nottingham City Council is to achieve success in fulfilling the plan's objectives over the next three years whilst securing and maintaining financial resilience throughout that period and beyond. The detailed specifics of plans and budgets have yet to be determined and these will be scrutinised by the Board to test whether they are achievable and meet the underlying requirements of the quality of service delivery consistent with managed risk and sound governance. Political and managerial strong leadership underpins the achievement of an effective and successful delivery of the plan.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 JUNE 2021
WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the Committee's work programme for 2021/22.

2. Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year and make any amendments as required.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The purpose of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to ensure all statutory and other roles and responsibilities are fulfilled to the required standard, covering review and development of key strategic issues, policies and strategies relevant to Nottingham and its residents, and adding value through the examination of issues of local importance and concern.
- 3.2 The Committee is responsible for setting and managing its own work programme to fulfil this role.
- 3.3 In setting a programme for scrutiny activity, the Committee should aim for an outcome-focused work programme that has clear priorities and a clear link to its roles and responsibilities. The work programme needs to be flexible so that issues which arise as the year progresses can be considered appropriately.
- 3.4 Where there are a number of potential items that could be scrutinised in a given year, consideration of what represents the highest priority or area of risk will assist with work programme planning. Changes and/or additions to the work programme will need to take account of the resources available to the Committee.
- 3.5 At this meeting, the Committee will have considered the most appropriate way to schedule its scrutiny of the Council's improvement and recovery, including implementation of the recommendations from the Report in the Public Interest concerning the Council's governance arrangements for Robin Hood Energy Ltd (PIR) and the Non-Statutory Review of Nottingham City Council(NSR), both of which took place in 2020. This discussion should inform scheduling of improvement and recovery items for scrutiny at future meetings.

- 3.6 The Committee's current work programme is included at Appendix 1.

4. List of attached information

- 4.1 Appendix 1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/22.

5. Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

5.1 None

6. Published documents referred to in compiling this report

6.1 None

7. Wards affected

7.1 All

8. Contact information

8.1 Kim Pocock, Scrutiny Officer

Tel: 0115 8764321

Email: kim.pocock@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021-22

Date	Items
5 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference To note the terms of reference for the Committee • Establishment of Call-in Panel • 2021-22 Work Programme
9 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • StreetScene To explore the split of responsibilities between residents and the Council and to examine the appropriate deployment of Council resources, as well as the impact of current financial constraints and how Street Scene fits into the Public Realm transformation programme. How are services contributing towards delivery of the Council's Improvement Programme? • Improvement and Recovery To establish the role of the Committee in scrutinising progress towards improvement and recovery following the meeting between the Chair, Leader and Deputy Leader • 2021-22 Work Programme
7 July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery To receive information from the Leader on progress in each of the themes for recovery to aid identification of items to scrutinise for the remainder of the municipal year. • Council Plan Refresh To consider and comment on the robustness of the refresh and how it will contribute to improvement and recovery • 2021-22 Work Programme
8 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery Pending agreement from the Committee on how it wants to proceed

Date	Items
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring of Council's Regulatory Services (Community Protection, Neighbourhood working, Environmental Services and Trading Standards, Public Safety Officers etc) To consider the Council's Regulatory Services in the context of Council service provision, restructuring and savings • 2021-22 Work Programme
6 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery As above • The Council's Commercial Ventures To consider the effectiveness of the Council's commercial ventures in the light of changes required by the PIR and their contribution towards the Council, especially in the context of its recovery • 2021-22 Work Programme
3 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery As above • Crime and Drugs Partnership To consider information on the current work of the Crime and Drugs Partnership (focus to be agreed; suggestion is ASB, including domestic violence and neighbourhood disputes and impact on community policing and protection) and performance against the Crime and Drugs Partnership Plan • 2021-22 Work Programme
8 December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery As above • Employment Services in the City To consider how the range of services to support employment work together, the resources available and their effectiveness, especially in the context of pandemic recovery and the Council's financial constraints • 2021-22 Work Programme

Date	Items
5 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery As above • Digital Access of Nottingham Households <u>Referral from CYSPC</u> To look at current digital access across the city; how this impacts on access to services particularly given the likelihood that there will be continued emphasis on virtual/ online provision for the foreseeable future; and what can be done to address these issues • 2021-22 Work Programme
9 February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery As above • Nottingham's Carbon Neutral Policy To explore the impact of the budget, delays because of COVID, schemes/ engagement with other bodies and partners on achievement of carbon neutral targets • 2021-22 Work Programme
9 March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery • 2021-22 Work Programme
6 April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement and Recovery • 2021-22 Work Programme

Space has been left in the work programme to retain flexibility in order to accommodate timely scrutiny of issues in relation to improvement and recovery, ie items scheduled may need to be moved to later meeting dates to facilitate this. The items below may be scheduled if there are gaps in the work programme or if they become priorities.

Reserve items/ Items still to be considered for work programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Workforce Reorganisation and Restructure To consider workforce reorganisation and restructure in the light of the need to achieve recovery and the impact on policy and essential services; and in the light of the impact of Covid and reinstatement of the workforce.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Governance To consider the impact of constitutional and other governance changes introduced in response to recommendations for improvement and recovery
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Planning Enforcement To consider the effectiveness of the Planning Enforcement process, including resourcing (finance and workforce arrangements), with particular reference to retrospective planning applications, especially in student areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Citizenship/ immigration service provision and support Focus to be determined
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Houses of Multiple Occupation and selective licensing Focus to be determined
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student Accommodation To consider whether the number of developments meet demand and free up family housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scooter Pilot To consider the success of the wind scooter trial (including measures of success, evaluation and plans for the future)

Improvement and Recovery Themes and Portfolio Holder Leads for reference:

<u>Theme 1: Medium Term Financial Strategy</u> Cllr Webster	<u>Theme 5: Constitution</u> Cllr Longford, supported by cross-party member working group
<u>Theme 2: Asset Management</u> Leader, advised by the Asset Rationalisation Board	<u>Theme 6: Organisation & Culture</u> Cllr Campbell-Clark and Cllr Barnard
<u>Theme 3: Companies</u> Cllr Khan and Cllr Woodings	<u>Theme 7: Delivery options</u> Cllr Langton and Cllr Williams
<u>Theme 4: Capital Programme</u> Leader, in conjunction with Cllr Webster, advised by Capital Board	<u>Theme 8: Council Plan</u> Cllr Longford, in partnership with whole Executive