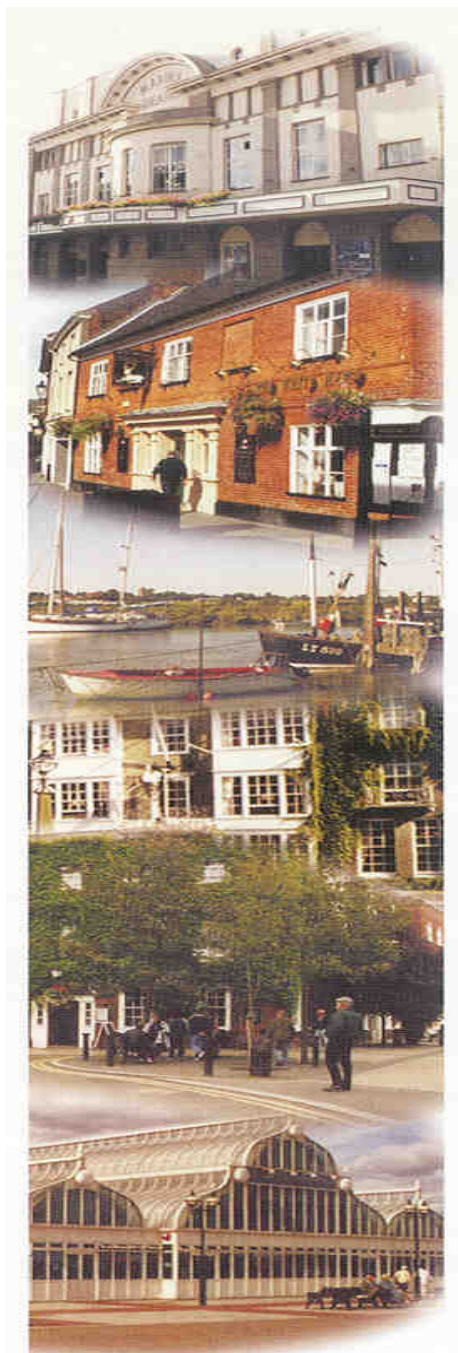




Waveney District Council  
Serving the Community



# **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

## **Annual Report 2014/15**



If you require this document in large print, audio or braille or in a different language, please contact a Democratic Services Officer on (01502) 523614 or email: [scrutiny@eastssuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@eastssuffolk.gov.uk)

### **Vision for Scrutiny Activity within Waveney**

Overview & Scrutiny at Waveney District Council aims to enhance the quality of life for all who live and work in the District by ensuring the provision of a safe, clean, attractive and prosperous environment for our communities.

Scrutiny aims to be objective, evidence-based, transparent and constructive, and to reflect the interests and concerns of local communities.

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page Nos</b>
Introduction by the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee	3
What do we mean by Overview & Scrutiny?	4
How does Overview & Scrutiny work at Waveney District Council?	4
Call-in	5
Councillor Call for Action	5
Meetings	5
Community & Partner Engagement	5 – 6
Committee Membership	7
Outcomes for 2014/15	8 - 15
Training and Development	16
The work programme of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee during 2014/15	17
Looking Ahead to 2015/16	18
Want to find out more about the Scrutiny function in Waveney?	19

## Introduction



**Councillor Sonia Barker**  
**Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2014/15**

Welcome to my Annual Report as Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for Waveney District Council for 2014/15.

Overview & Scrutiny is central to the Council's decision-making process and this report sets out the work of the Committee during the past year. The report presents some examples of where and how scrutiny has contributed to change, challenge and service improvements over the past year, and gives you a flavour of the work undertaken. The breadth of work covered over the past year has been remarkable, with the Committee covering issues from community safety (scrutinising Waveney's crime statistics and the work being carried out to reduce crime and disorder in our District) to environmental enforcement (where we commenced a review of how the Council can improve its enforcement of littering and dog fouling offences).

Scrutiny's main power is the power of influence, and when used well, in the spirit of collaboration rather than confrontation, scrutiny is able to positively impact on the services provided both by the Council and by its partners, in order to improve the quality of life for the communities we serve. Scrutiny really can make a difference.

2014/15 was a busy year for the Committee, with 6 scheduled and 3 Extraordinary meetings considering issues of importance to the Waveney community. It was also another strong year for external involvement in our scrutiny reviews, with a number of partner and community representatives being involved in reviews, and we look forward to working ever more closely with our communities and our partners in conducting future scrutiny reviews, welcoming the enthusiasm, experience and knowledge which can be accessed in this way.

The Committee has also continued to emphasise external scrutiny and working with partner organisations to achieve service improvements for the people of Waveney, and examples of external scrutiny can be found within this report. We look forward to building on these achievements and positive relationships in the future.

I hope you find this Annual Report both informative and interesting, and that you will continue to follow the progress of the Overview & Scrutiny function at Waveney District Council.

Councillor Sonia Barker  
Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

## What do we mean by Overview & Scrutiny?

The concept of Overview & Scrutiny was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 as part of an overall agenda to reform and modernise the way in which local authorities operate. The objective was to ensure that services are delivered and policies are developed in ways that provide quality and best value for the public and that these are relevant to their needs. As part of this, councils were required to establish at least one “overview and scrutiny committee” to monitor decisions made and, where appropriate, to advise the Council on matters of policy or service delivery.

The functions and responsibilities for scrutiny are set out in detail in the Council’s Constitution but they can be summarised as:-

- Developing new policies and reviewing the effectiveness of existing policies
- Holding the Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members, Joint Committees exercising executive powers and officers to account for the decisions they make
- Ensuring best value in the provision of services
- Monitoring and challenging the performance of services
- Considering any matter affecting the District Council or its inhabitants
- Review and scrutiny of other public sector bodies in the area and inviting reports from them regarding their activities and performance
- Encouraging public participation in policy development and review.

## How does Overview & Scrutiny Work at Waveney District Council?

The Council has an Overview & Scrutiny Committee of thirteen members and the convention has been for the Committee to be chaired by a member of an opposition group where possible. The Committee also has the ability to set up time-limited “task and finish groups” to look into an issue in more depth, and to give it more time than the full Committee would be able to spare.

### Responsibilities

- |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Community leadership          | • External and joint scrutiny    |
| • Scrutiny reviews              | • Call-ins                       |
| • Pre-decision scrutiny         | • Councillor Calls for Action    |
| • Post implementation reviews   | • Holding the Cabinet to account |
| • Policy development and review | • Scrutiny improvement           |

### Holding decision-makers to account

As the Council’s “critical friend”, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee holds the Cabinet, Full Council and officers to account by monitoring the decision making process and testing existing practices to check they are working properly. It can also “call in” Cabinet decisions to check them before they are put into practice. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is able to stand back from the decision making process, look at the outcomes for the people of Waveney and contribute to ensuring improved performance.

### Policy development and review

The Committee looks at the impact on the community of key plans and strategies within the Council’s policy framework, investigating why things are as they are, researching options, challenging assumptions and suggesting improvements. When looking at a new policy, the Committee ensures it will contribute to the Council’s priorities, and that any links to other Council policies demonstrate continuity. When reviewing existing policies, the Committee investigates how successful it has been, whether it achieved its objectives within budget and to timescale, and what needs to change. In all its policy development the Committee aims to enhance services and make life better for people living and working in Waveney, as well as those visiting us.

## **Call-in**

Councillors have the ability to “call in” to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee decisions of the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member, a Joint Committee exercising executive powers or a key decision made by an officer for review before they are actioned.

The grounds for activating a call in are:

- The decision may be contrary to the Council’s agreed policy framework
- The decision may be contrary to the Council’s agreed budgetary framework
- The decision was not taken in accordance with the principles of good decision-making.

The call-in process should only be used in exceptional circumstances and is very much seen as a tool of last resort.

Any five Councillors are able to call an item in. The Council is keen to increase the level of public engagement with the scrutiny process and so has extended this facility to enable any five members of the public to call an item in. Additionally, joint call-ins of a mixture of at least seven Councillors and members of the public are able to call in a decision. Call-in forms are available to download from the Council’s website, or a form can be provided on request.

No call-ins were considered during 2014/15, which could be seen as a sign that the decision making process is working as it should.

## **Councillor Call for Action**

Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) is a scrutiny power which came into force on 1 April 2009, and which enables any Member of the Council to refer to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee any local government matter or any crime and disorder matter which affects their ward/division, within certain limitations. These limitations are set out in the Councillor Call for Action Protocol which is available on the Council’s website, or by emailing [scrutiny@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@eastsoffolk.gov.uk).

There were no CCfAs submitted during 2014/15.

## **Meetings**

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has eight scheduled meetings per year (to be increased to 10 in 2015/16), but is very responsive to changing needs and local priorities, and is able to call Extraordinary Meetings to consider particular issues. Meetings of the Committee are held in public (except where exempt or confidential material is being discussed).

## **Community & Partner Engagement**

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee works hard to develop and improve the scrutiny process at Waveney, and continually aims to increase the involvement of stakeholders and public engagement. To this end the Committee often gathers evidence with the involvement of external witnesses, and over the past year, in addition to any targeted consultations carried out as part of reviews, the Committee has formally invited and warmly received community and partner input into the scrutiny process from the following individuals and organisations:

- Chairman of the Waveney Youth Council
- Managing Director, Sentinel Leisure Trust
- Business Development Manager, Sentinel Leisure Trust
- Leader of Suffolk County Council

- Suffolk County Council Director for Children and Young People's Services
- Suffolk County Council Assistant Director Education and Learning
- Suffolk County Council Deputy Assistant Director Education and Learning
- Lead Officer for Lowestoft Rising
- Managing Director, General Manager, Project Manager and Car Park Manager, Waveney Norse
- Trustee of Living Wage Norwich
- Chief Executive, Marina Theatre Trust

Opportunities for increased public/community involvement in scrutiny activities are explored as an integral part of the planning for future scrutiny reviews and public involvement in scrutiny reviews is welcomed. If you would like to assist the Committee in any future work or reviews, you should obtain a copy of the Council's Scrutiny Guide from the Council's website, or by emailing [scrutiny@eastssuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@eastssuffolk.gov.uk).

## Review of the past year

### Committee Membership

The Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee during 2014/15 were:-



Councillor Sonia Barker (Chairman)



Councillor  
Alison Cackett  
(Vice Chairman)



Councillor  
Graham Catchpole



Councillor  
Peter Coghill



Councillor  
Gareth Douce



Councillor  
Graham Elliott



Councillor  
Tony Goldson



Councillor  
Ian Graham



Councillor  
Kathleen Grant



Councillor  
Len Jacklin



Councillor  
Paul Light



Councillor  
Martin Parsons



Councillor  
Letitia Smith



## Outcomes for 2014/15

During the last municipal year, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee met 9 times, including three Extraordinary Meetings. This section describes some of the key scrutiny topics covered during the year (May 2014 to March 2015 – no meetings were held during April 2015 due to forthcoming elections), and their associated outcomes. A list of all the scrutiny topics covered during the past year is provided on page 17.

### ***Scrutiny Reviews commenced or completed during 2014/15***

#### **1. Environmental Enforcement**

At its meeting on 4 December 2014 the Committee considered a baseline report setting out the current position and arrangements for environmental enforcement in Waveney. The Council's current enforcement focussed on the "incident ticketing scheme", which used many employees in diverse roles working for the Council, partners and outside agencies to generate the evidence required for enforcement action. Over the past 5 years the number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued had consistently exceeded that of the combined efforts of the rest of the local authorities in Suffolk.

There had been a decline in the number of dog fouling complaints over the past few years, with the Council issuing very few FPNs for dog fouling due to the difficulty in catching somebody not doing something they should be doing, compared with littering, where the crime was committed when somebody actually did something.



The Committee considered the current arrangements and discussed what could be achieved in terms of future improvements to the service, and requested that a full report be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee setting out relevant performance data and an improvement plan which could be used to make recommendations to improve the service.

#### **2. East Coast Tidal Surge**

The Committee examined the Council's role in the multi-agency response to the tidal surge which had occurred during the night of 5 December 2013, which had resulted in the flooding of 70 residential and 97 commercial premises within the District, covering the lessons learnt, and action being taken to review and improve the Council's response to any future flooding incidents.

The actions which had been taken prior to the incident, when the flood risk for Suffolk had been increased to medium and then severe, were considered, as well as discussion of the actions taken



during the emergency response phase, led by a Strategic Co-ordinating Group based at Martlesham Police HQ in Ipswich. Actions taken included advising occupiers of premises at risk of flooding to evacuate, the setting up of an Emergency Control Centre at Suffolk Coastal District Council's offices in Woodbridge, deployment of staff to Rest Centres, the issuing of regular statements and provision of information, involvement of voluntary organisations and deployment of water rescue teams to assist with the emergency response.



The recovery phase of the incident involved visits to all businesses and residential properties which had been flooded, including temporarily re-homing people where necessary, and a clean-up operation co-ordinated by Waveney Norse. This included the purchase of a significant number of dehumidifiers and the establishment of a drop-in centre as a focal point for information and assistance. The sea defences were also assessed for damage and emergency repairs carried out where necessary. The Council also co-ordinated the administration of the various Government and local grant schemes to support businesses and home owners affected by the flooding.

It was concluded that overall the multi-agency response to the incident had worked well, however some key learning points had been identified, including issues around information sharing, response co-ordination, communications and recovery co-ordination.

### ***Scrutiny of partner organisations***

#### **3. Waveney Youth Council Annual Update**

The Committee was pleased to welcome the Chairman of the Waveney Youth Council, Nathan Bowkett, to a meeting, who made reference to the growing membership of the Youth Council, and initiatives undertaken to highlight the importance of young people actively contributing to society. The Youth Council had been involved in a number of high profile and exciting events and projects during the past year, and additionally the Waveney Youth Council had been asked by Suffolk Coastal District Council to assist with the setting up of its own Youth Council.



Councillors found this session useful as it kept them in touch with the projects which were important to young people in the District. Councillors were reminded that they could refer any youth related or relevant issues from their ward to the Waveney Youth Council using a referral form which had been produced for this purpose.

Nathan concluded his presentation by saying how he looked forward to continuing to work with the Council and other organisations to give the young people of Waveney the opportunity to make a difference and to have their say on the delivery of local services.

#### **4. Annual Partnership Report on Sentinel Leisure Trust**

The Managing Director and Business Development Manager from Sentinel Leisure Trust attended a meeting of the Committee to present the annual report on the performance of the Trust, which had operated leisure services on behalf of the Council since 1 April 2011, and was now trading in its fourth financial period.

The Trust had just recorded its first operating surplus of £120,000. Key highlights in financial performance for 2013/14 related to outdoor services, health and fitness, and the partnership development of beauty therapy and food and beverage services. Other key achievements included receipt of a £41,000 grant from Badminton England to undertake a refurbishment of the Water Lane Sports Hall, establishment of a strategic partnership with East Coast Community Health to deliver health improvement initiatives across all sites, and investment in new pool hoists to improve access to swimming for people with disabilities. Improvements were also planned at Bungay Pool and Gym.



## 5. NPS Property Consultants Ltd Partnership



Since August 2009 NPS has been responsible for the day-to-day management of the Council's assets, as well as other areas including condition surveys and special projects. The Committee has the opportunity to look at the performance of NPS on an annual basis, where it scrutinises not only service performance, but also finance and governance issues, projects related to the management of assets and achievements during the previous year.

During 2013/14 capital from asset disposals had generated in excess of £285k. In addition, a range of savings and efficiencies were achieved through the reduction of business rates and by reduced operational costs from asset disposals. Annual rents received had also increased by over £449k pa during 2013/14, and the year to date receipts from disposals were £659k, with other transactions yet to be completed.

Working alongside NPS, the Council had achieved the original partnership objectives and the future of the service was now under review, with opportunities being explored to enhance and broaden the service provided, and the Committee made relevant recommendations to Cabinet regarding the future of the asset management service.

## 6. Marina Theatre

The Marina Theatre Trust is a charitable not-for-profit organisation which operates the Marina Theatre, Lowestoft on behalf of the Council and which commenced operation of the Theatre on 1 December 2011. The Committee considered an overview of the performance since that date, and scrutinised key achievements.

The 2013/14 accounts had been filed, and the current financial performance of the Trust was on course to achieve budget. However, Councillors were advised of an ever increasing challenge within the industry to attract a high quality product.

Partnership performance is monitored via a three year programme policy which ensures that the Theatre delivers a wide range of product to the venue; to date the Trust had exceeded expectations. New products and projects developed and delivered by the Trust were outlined to the Committee, and the Chief Executive of the Trust circulated a report which set out in detail the programming service level outputs of the Theatre. The report showed that, in its fourth year of trading, the Theatre Trust had substantially exceeded the agreement requirements in all genres of entertainment..



## 7. Waveney Norse Annual Progress Report



Waveney Norse was formed as a Joint Venture Company between Waveney District Council and Norse Commercial Services in 2008. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships and Lowestoft Rising attends the Committee annually to present an annual update report for Waveney Norse.

During the update given on 4 December 2014 the Deputy Leader advised that the final accounts summary for the 2013/14 financial year showed a profit of nearly £603,000, some 151% above original budget. This had been another exceptional year for WN

and the Partnership, with further savings and efficiencies being achieved, together with additional procurement savings and productivity economies, and a further £531k of savings and efficiencies being passed back to the Council in the 2014/15 Medium Term Financial Plan.

A question and answer session followed presentation of the report, during which Councillors received further information on issues including grounds maintenance, green bin collections, disposal of food waste and the work undertaken by WN following the December 2013 tidal surge and flooding. The Committee finds this annual update useful, as it is important to have the opportunity to scrutinise the work of this organisation which carries out a significant amount of work on the Council's behalf.

## **8. Suffolk County Council – “Raising the Bar”**

In October 2013 the Committee held an Extraordinary Meeting to consider a report from Suffolk County Council on “Raising the Bar”, an initiative which aimed to raise standards of education across the County, as well as details of the Inquiry Report produced by the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA): “No School an Island”. The County Council was invited to attend a further meeting in one year's time to review progress, and this took place in October 2014.

# **Raising the Bar**

---

## **Supporting Successful Futures Together**

At this meeting the aims and priorities for Raising the Bar were revisited, and an update provided on activity which had taken place over the previous 12 months, taking forward several of the recommendations of the RSA report. Key areas of progress

were outlined, including changes to the way schools were supported and challenged, with a single point of contact for every school in the county, and a sharp focus on leadership and management, as well as an increased focus on the role of governors.

Included in the report was an update from Lowestoft Rising on a local approach to Raising the Bar and an overview of local issues around educational attainment. Much work had taken place with primary and high school head teachers, school governors and key partners to identify the gaps and issues which were affecting academic performance in Lowestoft. To address these issues, Lowestoft Rising had worked with the schools and partners to design a new way of working and a process that pulled together best practice from other districts and ensured that all key partners and stakeholders were working together.

At the end of this meeting the County Council was again invited to re-visit Waveney, both for a further progress report on “Raising the Bar”, and in order to discuss the specific issue of the GCSE results to be published in January 2015, to enable comparison between the national, Suffolk, Waveney and Lowestoft specific results. This meeting took place on 18 March 2015, where a detailed discussion took place both on “Raising the Bar”, and on headline results in Waveney and Lowestoft by National Curriculum Key Stage, comparing performance with national results.

Full details of the debate and question sessions at all three of these meetings can be found in the Committee's Minutes. The Committee is grateful for the attendance of Suffolk County Council Members and officers at meetings of the Committee, and for their taking on board the Committee's comments and ideas. The Leader of Suffolk County Council concluded the March 2015 meeting by noting that it would take changes in only a small number of schools to see dramatic movement up the league tables, and the Committee looks forward to seeing these improvements in the future.



## ***Budget Scrutiny***

### **9. Council Tax and Budget Setting**

The Committee played a lead role, alongside the Audit & Governance Committee, in reviewing the Council's budget for future years, including recommending a level of Council Tax, alongside proposals for budget reductions and opportunities for increased income.

This process commenced at the Committee's 9 September 2014 meeting with the consideration of the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2015/16 – 2018/19, which is a baseline forecast of income and expenditure which provides a framework within which the Council's overall spending plans may be developed.

Budget scrutiny is particularly important given the continued challenge to councils due to the significant uncertainties surrounding some of the key aspects relating to their services and funding streams and the continuing Government reform programme.



At a joint meeting with the Audit & Governance Committee on 12 February 2015 the Committee considered the Draft General Fund Budget for 2015/16, which gave an early opportunity for the two Committees to submit any comments to the Cabinet on the proposed 2015/16 budget prior to its referral to Full Council on 25 February 2015. A detailed debate was held, with Councillors discussing a number of areas of the proposed budget including the effect on the Council of changes in interest rates, reductions in Government funding, the structure of the Council's Finance Team and Council Tax discounts. Full details of these discussions can be found in the Committee's Minutes.

At the end of the debate the Committees jointly made recommendations to Cabinet and Full Council regarding approval of the General Fund revenue budget and movements in reserves, and the setting of the Council Tax for the District for 2015/16 reflecting no increase over the amount set since 2010.

### ***Crime and Disorder Committee Responsibilities***

#### **10. Waveney Community Safety Partnership**

As the Council's nominated Crime and Disorder Committee, the Committee keeps a watching brief on levels of crime and disorder in the District through monitoring the activities of the Community Safety Partnership twice yearly.

At its meeting on 12 June 2014 the Committee considered the end of year report for 2013/14 from the Community Safety Partnership. The Cabinet Member for Community Health & Safety was pleased to report that the total recorded crime for the Waveney District to 31 March 2014 was down 8.1% on the same figures for the previous year. Figures broken down into each Local Policing Command and Safer Neighbourhood Team also showed a downward trend.



The report also provided updates on a number of projects and work supported by the Partnership during 2013/14, including support of the Lowestoft Town Pastors and the local Domestic Violence & Abuse Forum, and projects aimed at supporting young people such as Crucial Crew. For 2013/14 the Police and Crime Commissioner had allocated nearly £32,000 to the Partnership to commission projects and pieces of work which directly and indirectly addressed the priorities identified within the county-wide Annual Strategic Assessment for Community Safety Partnerships and the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. However, funding for 2014/15 was being

applied for by the Partnership, and had not yet been agreed, which meant the Partnership was restricted in what it could achieve until funding had been confirmed for the coming year.

A further report presented by the Cabinet Member for Community Health & Safety on 6 November 2014 provided a six month progress report on funding and achievements to date for 2014/15, showing that total recorded crime reduced over the six month average of the preceding three years. Issues discussed included the style of distribution and lack of funding, and domestic violence and the lack of funding to support the Domestic Violence Forum.

## ***Policy Development and Review***

### **11. Review of Car Parking**

This review had been prompted by the decrease in car park income which had been seen due to a number of factors, and a Joint Working Group had been set up during 2013 to carry out a strategic car park review across the Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Districts. The Committee's involvement in the review had begun in January 2014, and a dedicated meeting had also been held in March 2014 where the Committee discussed the progress made to date by the Working Group.



On 4 December 2014 the Committee considered a further update report on the recommendations arising from the March 2014 meeting of the Committee, and was pleased to note that significant progress had been made on most of the recommendations. The Committee requested further work on a number of areas, including a report back in June 2015 on options for uncharged car parks and for the Battery Green site, and on the Bungay, Halesworth and Kirkley concessionary parking trials. At this meeting the Committee will also consider options for fees and charges. In September 2015 a report will be brought on the

Automated Number Plate Recognition trial at Clapham Road Car Park. The Committee also asked that work continue on improvements to signage and the evaluation of Civil Parking Enforcement.

### **12. Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan 2014/15**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Framework Agreement and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) National Local Authority Enforcement Code requires the Council to review the performance against the Food and Health and Safety Service Plan, to identify any variance from the plan and to set out areas for service improvement.

The Committee scrutinised the Council's performance in meeting targets identified within the 2013/14 Service Plan, concentrating on key achievements delivered as well as areas for service improvement. Councillors were particularly pleased to hear that the Team continued to create income for the Council through its food hygiene training courses, and that a contract had recently been agreed to provide bespoke food hygiene training to a major local food manufacturer.



## ***Requests from Cabinet and Full Council***

### **13. Apprenticeships**



Arising from a request from Full Council, a report was considered which provided information on the impact and effectiveness of the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme, and on ways in which the scheme could be improved, including details of the Apprenticeship Brokerage Scheme in operation at Ipswich Borough Council.

The Apprenticeship Scheme was well established, with 18 apprentices joining teams across the Council over the last two years. Of the 13 apprentices who had completed the

initial year's training contract, nine had gained suitable skills to be offered future employment within the Council, and six of those were still working within the Council.

With the scheme now in its third year of operation, it would be appropriate to share the Council's skills around recruiting and managing apprentices, perhaps with small and medium sized businesses. The Apprenticeship Brokerage Scheme run by Ipswich Borough Council was discussed, and the Economic Services Team at Waveney was in the process of reviewing apprenticeship provision in the District, following which recommendations could be made on gaps in provision and potential apprenticeship projects which could be considered such as the Ipswich model.

#### **14. The Living Wage**

Again following a request from Full Council that the Committee look into this issue, a report was provided at the September 2014 meeting detailing the implications of the living wage being introduced by the Council. The report explained the differences between the living wage and the National Minimum Wage, and advised that, if adopted, the living wage would apply to all staff over the age of 18 that worked regularly on the Council's premises, including contracted and subcontracted staff, but not including apprentices.



The cost of becoming a living wage employer was discussed, along with numbers of staff who would be affected, and other indirect implications, including on the Council's partners.

In November 2014 a presentation was made to the Committee by a Trustee of Living Wage Norwich which outlined the implications of organisations implementing the living wage, and what support was available. The Committee resolved to revisit the issue again at its

September 2015 meeting, with the involvement of employers who have adopted the living wage, the views of unions, and national research. However, this was superseded by a resolution of Full Council on 25 February 2015 to pay all direct employees of Waveney District Council a Living Wage with effect from 1 April 2015.

#### **15. Parishing Lowestoft**

The issue of a review of the democratic position within Lowestoft had previously been the topic of reports in 2008, but had been superseded by a Local Government Review of Suffolk, which had itself then been abandoned in 2010. The features present in 2008 which had led to a recommendation for review were still present today, and the Cabinet had requested the Committee to consider the issues relevant in preparation for a CGR of the un-parished areas of Lowestoft.

The Committee established a Task and Finish Group which will consider the issues which will need to be addressed as part of any future Community Governance Review (CGR), and to devise terms of reference in preparation for such a review.



This piece of work will require the consideration of a large amount of information, hence the setting up of a Task and Finish Group which will report back to the Committee. The Group's work will take approximately 6 months, and a recommendation to Full Council as to whether a CGR should be initiated is expected by the end of 2015/early 2016.



## ***Other work***

### **16. Major Projects Programme Team – Current and Future Activities**



From time to time the Committee requests a presentation from a particular team of the Council, or on a specific area of the Council's responsibility, and the Committee had requested a session on Economic Development. This was carried out by way of a presentation from the Council's Major Projects Programme Team outlining the contribution of the team to the delivery of economic growth within the District and sub-region.

Councillors were pleased to hear of the major opportunities for growth in the Waveney area, particularly in the offshore

energy sector, and the major projects located within Waveney including the Lake Lothing and Outer Harbour Area Action Plan.

It was estimated that c. £50bn would be invested in the Southern North Sea within the next 5-10 years, and this investment was expected to attract up to 200 new businesses and create 9,000 direct jobs and 4,500 indirect jobs within the sub-region of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Significant onshore development would also be required to house businesses operating in the supply chain. There were, however, challenges to be overcome in order to deliver this development, including the road and rail network and the availability of a suitably skilled local workforce, but plans were in place to tackle these in partnership with other organisations and agencies.

## **Training and Development**

The Council recognises the importance of training and development for both Councillors and officers who support the scrutiny role at Waveney. Regular targeted training, both internally and externally, has facilitated the development of a successful scrutiny function. In 2014/15 both the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny's Parliamentary Seminar. The Vice Chairman and another Member of the Committee also attended a scrutiny workshop at Broadland Council.

Member Development opportunities on the scrutiny function have been included within the Joint Member Development Programme which will follow the May 2015 District Council Elections.

## The work programme of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2014/15

Meeting	Topics covered
12 June 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Safety Partnership Year End Report</li> <li>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Annual Report – 2013/14</li> <li>Scrutiny Arrangements and 2014/15 Scrutiny Work Programme</li> <li>Major Projects Programme Team – Current and Future Activities</li> </ul>
9 July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waveney Youth Council Annual Update</li> <li>Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan 2014/15</li> </ul>
9 September 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint Consideration with Audit &amp; Governance Committee of Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>East Coast Tidal Surge</li> <li>Apprenticeships</li> <li>Living Wage</li> </ul>
Extraordinary - 9 October 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suffolk County Council Update on RSA Report “No School an Island” and “Raising the Bar”</li> </ul>
6 November 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Safety 6-Monthly Update</li> <li>Annual Partnership Report on Sentinel Leisure Trust</li> </ul>
Extraordinary - 25 November 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Living Wage</li> </ul>
4 December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car Parks Update – Progress Report</li> <li>Environmental Enforcement</li> <li>Waveney Norse Annual Progress Report</li> </ul>
12 February 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft General Fund Budget 2015-16 (jointly with Audit &amp; Governance Committee)</li> <li>Annual Update Report: Waveney District Council and NPS Property Consultants Ltd Partnership</li> <li>Parishing Lowestoft</li> <li>Marina Theatre Annual Report</li> </ul>
Extraordinary - 18 March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suffolk County Council Update “Raising the Bar”</li> </ul>

No meetings were scheduled during April and May 2015 due to the District Council Election period.

## Looking Ahead to 2015 /16

### Future Focus for Scrutiny Activity

As we look forward to the 2015/16 municipal year, the focus for future scrutiny activity will continue to be strategic, and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will carry out reviews that provide critical challenge to both internal services and external organisations. For the first time, the Committee has chosen to schedule meetings every month, in order to enable it to be more responsive to changing requirements and to avoid the need to set Extraordinary Meetings to consider urgent issues.

Reviews programmed so far for the coming year include the following, but please note these allocations are subject to change so you are advised to keep an eye on the Council's website for more up to date information on when these reviews are timetabled.

Meeting	Topics to be covered (draft programme)
11 June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year End Community Safety Update</li> <li>• Overview &amp; Scrutiny Annual Report</li> <li>• Scrutiny Arrangements/Work Programme/Outside Scrutiny Bodies</li> </ul>
Audit & Governance Committee – 22 June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee will join the Audit &amp; Governance Committee to discuss the Draft Annual Governance Statement</li> </ul>
8 July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waveney Youth Council – Update</li> <li>• Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan</li> <li>• Car Parks Update – Progress Report (Exempt)</li> </ul>
6 August 2015	Additional meeting scheduled if required
10 September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>• Car Parks Update – Progress Report</li> <li>• Public Conveniences</li> <li>• Environmental Enforcement</li> <li>• Future of Asset Management Service (Exempt)</li> </ul>
8 October 2015	Additional meeting scheduled if required
3 November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentinel Leisure Trust Annual Report</li> <li>• Suffolk County Council – School Improvement in Suffolk</li> </ul>
3 December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waveney Norse Annual Progress Report</li> </ul>
7 January 2016	Additional meeting scheduled if required
Audit & Governance Committee – 14 January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee will join the Audit &amp; Governance Committee to discuss the Housing Revenue Account Budget and Capital Programme</li> </ul>
11 February 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Tax / Budget Setting</li> <li>• NPS Annual Report</li> <li>• Marina Theatre Annual Report</li> <li>• Further report on the implementation of the recommendations within the Flood Recovery Report</li> </ul>
10 March 2016	Additional meeting scheduled if required
13 April 2016	Additional meeting scheduled if required

A budget of £4,000 is available to the Committee to assist in its work, which can be used, for example, in engaging specialist assistance, obtaining evidence, carrying out site visits, paying for meeting accommodation, training and development. This budget provides an opportunity for the Committee to build upon its successes to date and to develop innovative approaches to scrutiny at Waveney, and constructive relationships with the Cabinet and the Council's partners.

Whilst there are certain responsibilities which the Committee has to undertake annually, such as monitoring Community Safety in the District as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee, and scrutinising the activities of partner organisations such as Waveney Norse, there is space in the work programme to enable the Committee to be reactive to changing priorities.

## **Want to find out more about the Scrutiny Function in Waveney?**

For further information regarding how the scrutiny function operates at Waveney, please contact a Democratic Services Officer on (01502) 523614 or email: [scrutiny@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

Alternatively, visit our website at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk), selecting 'Council and Democracy' from the 'Council Information on' menu and then clicking the link for Overview & Scrutiny.

In the main, Scrutiny meetings are open to the public to attend. The public may be excluded exceptionally when a particular item contains 'exempt' information (as defined by the Local Government Act 1972, as amended). However, the underlying principle will be for reports to be considered in the public section of meetings.

The Agendas, reports and Minutes for Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings are available to view on the Council's website. Alternatively, copies can be provided for inspection on request and a limited number of agendas are made available to the public at meetings free of charge.

### **Feedback**

If you have any comments regarding the information provided within this report, please contact a Democratic Services Officer on (01502) 523614 or email: [scrutiny@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@eastsuffolk.gov.uk).