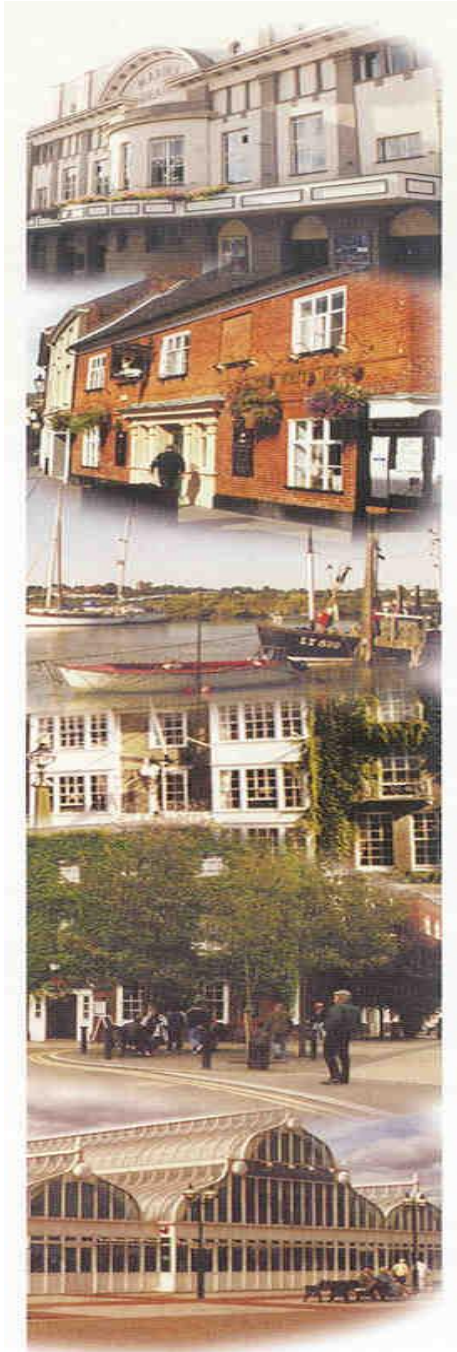




Waveney District Council  
Serving the Community



# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

## Annual Report 2015/16



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## **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
Review of the Past Year	
Committee Membership	7
Outcomes for 2015/16	8 - 15
Training and Development	15
The work programme of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee during 2015/16	16
Looking Ahead to 2016/17	17
Scrutiny Budget	18
How to find out more about the Scrutiny function in Waveney	18



## Introduction

### **Councillor Sonia Barker Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2015/16**

Welcome to my Annual Report as Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for Waveney District Council (WDC) for 2015/16.

It is a great privilege to have served as Chairman of the Committee from 2014 – 2016 by virtue of being the Leader of the Opposition on WDC. However, since the change in the Constitution voted on by Full Council in March 2016 and the subsequent change in the election of the Chairman at the Annual Meeting in May 2016, this is my final Annual Report.

Overview & Scrutiny is central to the Council's decision-making process, and this 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.

2015/16 was a busy year for the Committee, being the first year we have had monthly scheduled meetings. This has made the Committee more responsive to changing requirements, and has meant that it has not been necessary to call Extraordinary meetings.

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, and all Members are aware of the good practice aim of scrutiny being politically neutral.

Looking ahead, the Committee has adopted a new method of setting its Work Programme, with scoping forms being completed for each piece of scrutiny setting out exactly what the Committee can hope to achieve from any use of its time. This new way of working was kicked off at a work programme setting workshop, and it is hoped that the introduction of this scoping stage will lead to more value-added and focused reviews in the years ahead, and a rolling work programme with reviews added throughout the year. It will be interesting to see which items are prioritised by Members of the Committee for the year 2016/17 as a result of the workshop.

It is often said that the work of an effective Chairman is like the view of an iceberg in that the work viewed is a third of the industry actually undertaken to achieve an effective outcome. In that vein, I would like to thank WDC for the excellent training I have received on numerous courses in the last two years from the LGA Leadership Academy Course (I graduated from the Course at Warwick University in 2014) to the two excellent scrutiny training sessions offered by the LGA at the Centre for Public Scrutiny, one in London and one in Suffolk. In addition there have been two WDC/Suffolk Coastal District Council scrutiny training sessions for Chairmen and Vice Chairmen during 2015/16.

I would also like to place on record my thanks to all the Committee Members whom I have served alongside. Lastly, but by no means least, I would like to thank on behalf of the entire Committee, the ever diligent and good humoured Overview & Scrutiny Committee WDC Democratic Services Officer, Adriana Stapleton, whose efficiency and work ethic is second to none.

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.

## 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. 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
- Scrutiny reviews
- Pre-decision scrutiny
- Post implementation reviews
- Policy development and review
- External and joint scrutiny
- Call-ins
- Councillor Calls for Action
- Holding the Cabinet to account
- 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 2015/16, 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 2015/16.

## Meetings

For the first time, the Committee has chosen to schedule meetings every month, in order to enable it to be more responsive to changing needs and local priorities, and to avoid the need to arrange Extraordinary Meetings to consider urgent issues, although these may still be called if required. 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 and another Member of the Waveney Youth Council
- General Manager, Managing Director, Project Manager, Assistant Property Services Officer and Operations Manager from Waveney Norse/Suffolk Coastal Norse

- Suffolk County Council Assistant Director for Education & Learning
- Suffolk County Council Deputy Assistant Director for Education & Learning
- Managing Director, Sentinel Leisure Trust
- Head of Business Development, Sentinel Leisure Trust
- Director, Infinite Management Solutions
- Chief Executive and Trustee of 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 2015//16 were:-



Councillor Sonia Barker (Chairman)



Councillor  
Alison Cackett  
(Vice Chairman)



Councillor  
Norman Brooks



Councillor  
Graham Catchpole



Councillor  
Jenny Ceresa



Councillor  
Graham Elliott



Councillor  
Tess Gandy



Councillor  
Louise Gooch



Councillor  
Paul Light



Councillor  
Steve Logan



Councillor  
Martin Parsons



Councillor  
Tom Reynolds



Councillor  
Caroline Topping

## Outcomes for 2015/16

During the last municipal year, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee met 11 times. This was the first year that the Committee met monthly, a change which was made both to enable more business to be transacted, and to reduce the need to call Extraordinary Meetings. This section describes some of the key scrutiny topics covered during the year (May 2015 to April 2016), and their associated outcomes. A list of all the scrutiny topics covered during the past year is provided on page 16.

### ***Scrutiny Reviews commenced or completed during 2015/16***

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

At its meeting on 4 December 2014 the Committee had considered a baseline report setting out the current position and arrangements for environmental enforcement in Waveney, and requested a full report setting out relevant performance data and an improvement plan which could be used to make recommendations to improve the service.

This report was considered on 10 September 2015, and set out the statutory provisions and type of enforcement carried out, as well as performance data. An update was also given on two specific areas, the "incident ticketing scheme", which used many employees in diverse roles working for the Council, partners and outside agencies to generate the evidence requirement for enforcement action, and the "Green Print Forum" which encouraged communities to take action locally on green issues, for example via litter picks.



An improvement plan was also discussed, and the Committee was pleased to see the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued beginning to rise, following the filling of a previously vacant post, and also that the existing Dog Control Orders would be replaced by Public Space Protection Orders which could be more closely tailored to the needs of the areas covered.

#### **2. Flooding: Emergency Planning and Recovery Update**

On 9 September 2014 the Committee had 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.



Following that meeting, the Committee had requested that a further progress update be provided. An update on actions taken to address lessons learnt from the tidal surge was provided to the Committee on 13 April 2016, and included amendments to the Emergency Response and Recovery Plans, warning and information systems, training on emergency planning roles, emergency planning exercises and incidents, local evacuation plans, improved information sharing during recovery phase, business continuity, community emergency planning,

improvements to flood protection and Government policy with regard to flood risk management, developments in flood risk areas and emergency financial assistance for dealing with local flooding emergencies.



A detailed discussion and question session followed the presentation of the report, during which a number of issues were discussed, including town and parish emergency plans, insurance for property owners in high risk flood areas, past and future Councillor training, provision of rest centres, the County Council's new flood reporting tool and funding being made available to reduce future flooding risk.

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

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

The Committee was pleased to welcome the Chairman of the Waveney Youth Council (WYC), Nathan Bowkett, and another Youth Council Member, Ray Wang, to a meeting, to update the Committee on the work and progress of the WYC over the preceding year. Nathan was pleased to advise that the WYC had continued to work hard to deliver youth-led change in Waveney. This had been achieved through the WYC's ongoing work on the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) front, which had instigated two projects: a PSHE youth-led conference, and the Waveney Transition Ambassadors Project. Further to this the WYC had continued to develop partnerships with other groups and organisations, including having representation on the East Suffolk Partnership Board. Nathan and Ray also presented the updated findings from a survey asking young people to elect the three issues they felt as the most important to adult life from the PSHE Framework for Suffolk, and how well they felt schools had prepared them for these. The top three areas from the survey were managing money, living independently and finding work, and the WYC would continue to push for improvements, along with its partners, to PSHE in schools.



Councillors found this session useful as it kept them in touch with the projects which were important to young people in the District. 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, and invited the Chairman of the Committee to attend a meeting of the Youth Council, in order to have an ongoing dialogue and contact with the Committee over and above the annual report.

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

The Managing Director and Head of Business Development from Sentinel Leisure Trust, and the Director of Infinite Management Solutions (IMS), 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 fifth financial period.



The Trust's funding position had seen a significant change in 2014/15, moving from a £256k grant in 2013/14 to a £505k payment, resulting in the Trust recording a loss of £140k in 2014/15. However, a £63k profit was currently forecast for 2015/16. Recent successes of the Trust included a successful tender for Great Yarmouth Borough Council's leisure services, private acquisition of a health and fitness facility in Oulton Broad, and a successful tender to operate the new Halesworth Campus facility. Key achievements included the launch of a new Community College involving 75 young people in vocational and educational programmes; the support of many local events; securing of £322k of funding from Sport England to deliver a health improvement project over the next three years; and investment in 9 modern apprentices across the Trust's leisure sites. The Trust had also launched a consultancy company, IMS, in September 2015, which had already had a number of successes nationally, and which, whilst

keeping a local focus, would help other local authorities to set up their own charitable trusts on the Sentinel model.

## 5. Marina Theatre Annual Report

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. This annual report to the Committee provided an overview of the performance of the Trust to date, highlighted key achievements and detailed governance arrangements.



The report was not as detailed as in previous years, due to the present Chief Executive only having been in post for 7 weeks, and Members asked that an information bulletin be provided to the Committee in 6 months' time in order for them to be able to compare performance with the previous year.

The Trust's 2014/15 accounts had been audited, signed and filed with Companies House, and all account information was shared with the Council on a quarterly basis, which ensured the Partnership Board could review and scrutinise performance.

A 3-year programme policy ensured that the Theatre delivered a wide range of product to the venue to appeal to all sections of the community. The Trust continued to exceed expectations in the range, quality and diversity of its programme, with over 88,000 customers attending an event during 2015. New products and projects delivered included education programmes via the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, drama schools, and live screenings via the new digital cinema facility.

## 6. Waveney Norse Annual Progress Report



Waveney Norse was formed as a Joint Venture Company between Waveney District Council and Norse Commercial Services in 2008, and the Cabinet Member for Operational Partnerships and Lowestoft Rising attends the Committee annually to report on its operation.

A high level final accounts summary of the Partnership's financial performance during 2014/15 showed £476,467 shared profit, which, together with additional savings and efficiencies made by Waveney Norse during the year, equated to some £789,547 in total financial benefits generated by the Partnership.

Partnership achievements over the past year included contributions to a number of events and initiatives; running refuse and cleansing services with few complaints; the introduction of a new online helpdesk to plan all property services work; provision of site survey information for the public conveniences review; and contribution to the strategic car park review.

The report concluded that this had been another very successful year for WN and the Partnership, given the unprecedented levels of savings delivered, together with noteworthy achievements and improvements, efficiency and external business growth. Ongoing efficiencies, profit and in-year savings would continue to be delivered during 2015/16, and WN continued to successfully manage and deliver all Partnership services against challenging targets and circumstances.

## 7. Inspection of Suffolk County Council's Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement

Between October 2013 and March 2015 the Committee held three Extraordinary Meetings to explore "Raising the Bar" with Suffolk County Council, an initiative which aimed to raise standards of education across the County.



Following the meeting on 18 March 2015, officers from Suffolk County Council were invited to attend a further meeting to discuss a recently published Ofsted inspection report on SCC's arrangements for supporting school improvement in Suffolk, in order for Waveney's Councillors to have an input into any plans put in place by the County Council in the light of the report, and to investigate whether Waveney's Councillors could provide any assistance or advice.

Suffolk County Council's (SCC's) Assistant Director and Deputy Assistant Director for Education and Learning attended a meeting on 3 November 2015 where an extensive discussion of the report took place, as well as wider issues concerning the educational attainment of young people in Waveney. The discussion included the importance of early years education (improvement in which was higher in Suffolk than the National average), the latest unvalidated results for Lowestoft and Waveney, initiatives to attract good quality staff to the County, risk rating prior to Ofsted inspections, the aim to secure a designated "Teaching School" in Waveney, the role of the new Regional Schools Commissioners, and differences in regulation between Maintained Schools and Academies. The Committee also discussed the valuable contribution local Councillors could make in developing strong critical friend relationships with schools, providing support and a sounding board and also asking challenging but important questions about how a school's performance compares to neighbouring schools and nationally.

### ***Budget Scrutiny***

## 8. 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 8 October 2015 meeting with the consideration of the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2016/17 – 2019/20, 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 15 February 2016 the Committee considered the Draft General Fund Budget for 2016/17, which gave an opportunity for the two Committees to submit any comments to the Cabinet on the proposed 2016/17 budget prior to its referral to Full Council on 24 February 2016. A detailed debate was held, with Councillors discussing a number of areas of the proposed budget including the significant impact of the reduction in Central Government funding to local government. 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 2016/17, which was to be increased for the first time since 2010.

## **Crime and Disorder Committee Responsibilities**

### **9. 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 by monitoring the activities of the Community Safety Partnership twice yearly.



At its meeting on 11 June 2015 the Committee considered the end of year report for 2014/15 from the Community Safety Partnership. The Cabinet Member for Community Health & Safety provided information on projects commissioned by the Waveney Community Partnership during 2014/15, together with a crime review update. Projects commissioned for 2014-15 were aimed to meet the three priorities of the Partnership of Night Time Economy; Emerging Crimes; and Protecting Young People/Vulnerable Families.

Total recorded crime for the Waveney District to 31 March 2015 was 6,451 incidents, an increase of 141 crimes from the same period in 2013/14. Nationally police forces had been scrutinised over crime recording, and as a result of this review forces were seeing increases in recorded crime across a number of areas. This had led to an increase in Violence against the Person reported crime, along with an increase in sexual offences which could be attributed to a number of factors, including the national coverage of high profile sexual abuse cases and an increase in the confidence of victims in coming forward. These increases reflected the national picture.

## **Policy Development and Review**

### **10. 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 work was ongoing into the 2015/16 year.

On 8 July 2015 the Committee considered a further update report on the recommendations arising from earlier meetings of the Committee, and was pleased to note that significant progress had been made on most of the recommendations. Developments since the December 2014 meeting of the Committee, where the car parks review was last considered, included advanced progress on the divestment of the uncharged car parks at Waveney Meadow and Beccles Quay; extension of the Battery Green Car Park late night opening trial to December 2015; the trial of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) at Clapham Road Car Park having been delayed but due to commence in Summer 2015, with initial results scheduled in Spring 2016; and implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) being anticipated to require at least 4 years before implementation could be considered.



On 8 July 2015 the Committee also considered options to begin the consultation process on recommendations to vary the Council's Car Parking Fees and Charges. Consideration of these options continued to the Committee's next meeting on 6 August 2015, where individual car parks were considered in detail. 15 recommendations were made to the Council's Cabinet for consideration, including changes to both car park tariffs and to the Parking Order, all of which were taken forward for implementation.

## 11. Public Conveniences Review

This review looked at public convenience provision within the District, which is a discretionary service costing £390k pa to run, as well as capital costs. During the review, data on the 28 facilities provided by the Council was collated, including a breakdown of condition, usage and costs for each, and also taking into account value to the community. Potential options for the future of these services were considered by the Committee and included closure of low use/value facilities, potential divestment, rationalisation of opening times, and charging or leasing options.



At its meeting on 10 September 2015 the Committee undertook an initial analysis of the data, and asked for a further report to be brought setting out potential options for each facility in greater detail. This report was considered on 8 October 2015, and the Committee made a number of recommendations to Cabinet on the future of public conveniences in Waveney. These recommendations were considered by Cabinet on 4 November 2015, which resolved that an approach be made to specialist private sector providers of public convenience facilities to obtain proposals for outsourcing provision of the service. The Committee has asked to be kept informed of progress with the review.

## 12. Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan 2015/16

Waveney's Food and Safety Team is responsible for the enforcement of food safety law in over 1,200 food businesses in the District, and is the enforcing authority for health and safety issues in over 2,200 businesses. It is also responsible for a range of other work including ship inspections, infectious disease investigations and some licensing work. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Framework Agreement and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) National Local Authority Enforcement Code require 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 2014/15 Service Plan, concentrating on key achievements delivered as well as areas for service improvement. Councillors were particularly pleased to hear that, since the introduction of the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme in Waveney three years ago, the Council had seen a 51% increase in the number of premises achieving the highest rating of 5. This represented an additional 228 premises that had improved standards of hygiene to achieve the top rating and was an excellent achievement. The Committee thanked officers for this comprehensive report, which showed the huge amount of work undertaken by the team.

### *Requests from Cabinet and Full Council*

## 13. The Living Wage and the National Living Wage

The Living Wage was discussed at three previous meetings of the Committee, and in February 2015 Full Council resolved to pay the Living Wage to all direct employees from 1 April 2015. At its meeting on 11 June 2015, the Committee had requested a report on the implications of the Living Wage being extended to employees employed by the Council's partners, and this was considered on 3 December 2015. However, since the report was requested, the Chancellor had announced that a new National Living Wage (NLW) for employees aged 25 and above would be introduced on 1 April 2016. The new NLW was effectively a rebranding of the existing National Minimum Wage, and would be mandatory on all employers, including suppliers to local government.



Given that the introduction of the NLW would be mandatory for all employers, the Committee agreed that it was no longer appropriate to consider seeking accreditation to the Living Wage Foundation.

#### 14. 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 Community Governance Review (CGR) of the un-parished areas of Lowestoft.

The Committee established a Task and Finish Group which met on 30 October 2015 and 24 February 2016 and discussed the process for CGRs. The Task and Finish Group adapted model Terms of Reference, commonly used throughout the country for such CGRs, to produce bespoke draft Terms of Reference for a CGR of the unparished parts of Lowestoft and recommended these for approval by Cabinet and Full Council.

The Terms of Reference were approved, and a CGR will be completed within 12 months, including three periods of public consultation between April and November 2016.

#### **Community Leadership**

#### 15. Draft East Suffolk Business Plan 2015-2023

Whilst the Council had had a Business Plan since 2012 (replacing the earlier Corporate Plan), following the recent local and national elections, and as part of the greater integration with Suffolk Coastal District Council, it was a good time to refresh the plan and to make it an integrated business planning approach for East Suffolk.



The Plan contained clear outcomes, and detailed what would be delivered together over the next four years, under the Vision: “To maintain and sustainably improve the Quality of Life for everybody growing up in, living in, working in and visiting East Suffolk”. Scrutiny Councillors’ views on the focus, content and style of the Plan will be taken into account when preparing the final document. Additionally, scrutiny scoping forms will now ask Councillors to show how any suggestion for scrutiny has the potential to contribute to the Plan’s Critical Success Factors.

#### 16. Draft Enabling Communities Strategy



Whilst Waveney had not previously formally adopted an Enabling Communities Strategy, the principles and ethos of enabling communities had underpinned the way in which the Council worked. Additionally, one of the three clear priorities for the Council set out in the Draft East Suffolk Business Plan was enabling communities, and it was therefore a good time to formally publish an Enabling Communities Strategy.

The Strategy will provide a framework for an integrated approach to working with and supporting communities across East Suffolk, and is about developing vibrant, resilient and sustainable communities that are strong, resistant and quick to recover from setbacks. Councillors will be a prime resource in terms of delivering some of the aims of the Strategy, and the Committee was asked to review an initial draft, in particularly ensuring that it said what it should say, and set out the right ambitions. The issues raised at the meeting will be taken into account in the preparation of the final Strategy.

## **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.

On 21 July 2015 Members of the Committee attended a full day's scrutiny training session alongside Scrutiny Members from Suffolk Coastal District Council, as part of the Joint Member Development Programme.

## The work programme of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2015/16

Meeting	Topics covered
11 June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Safety Partnership Year End Report</li> <li>• Overview &amp; Scrutiny Annual Report – 2014/15</li> <li>• Scrutiny Arrangements and 2015/16 Scrutiny Work Programme</li> <li>• Appointments to Outside Scrutiny Bodies</li> </ul>
22 June 2015 - Audit & Governance Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee joined 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 Annual Update</li> <li>• Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan 2015/16</li> <li>• Car Parks Update – Progress Report (Exempt)</li> </ul>
6 August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car Parks Update – Progress Report (Exempt)</li> </ul>
10 September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Conveniences</li> <li>• Environmental Enforcement</li> <li>• East Suffolk Business Plan</li> <li>• Draft East Suffolk Enabling Communities Strategy</li> </ul>
8 October 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Consideration with Audit &amp; Governance Committee of Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> <li>• Public Conveniences</li> </ul>
3 November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suffolk County Council – Ofsted inspection report on SCC arrangements for supporting school improvement in Suffolk</li> </ul>
3 December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the Living Wage and the National Living Wage</li> <li>• Waveney Norse Annual Progress Report</li> </ul>
7 January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Partnership Report on Sentinel Leisure Trust</li> </ul>
14 January 2016 – Audit & Governance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee joined the Audit &amp; Governance Committee to discuss the Housing Revenue Account Budget and Capital Programme</li> </ul>
15 February 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Consideration with Audit &amp; Governance Committee of Draft General Fund Budget 2016-17</li> </ul>
10 March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Governance Review of the Unparished areas of Lowestoft</li> </ul>
13 April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marina Theatre Annual Report</li> <li>• Flooding: Emergency Planning and Recovery Update</li> </ul>



## Looking Ahead to 2016/17

### Future Focus for Scrutiny Activity

As we look forward to the 2016/17 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.

The Committee held a work programme setting workshop on 25 May 2016, and decided to have a “rolling” work programme in future, to enable the Committee to be more responsive to changing needs and circumstances. The Committee’s forward work programme will therefore not be programmed a year in advance, as in previous years. Reviews which have been programmed 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 subject to change)
9 June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview &amp; Scrutiny Annual Report</li> <li>• Scrutiny Arrangements/Work Programme/Outside Scrutiny Bodies</li> </ul>
Audit & Governance Committee – 20 June 2016	<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>
6 July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice of Motion referred from Full council</li> <li>• Waveney Youth Council – Update</li> <li>• Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan</li> </ul>
4 August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year End Community Safety Update</li> </ul>
8 September 2016	
6 October 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint consideration with Audit &amp; Governance Committee of Medium Term Financial Strategy</li> </ul>
1 November 2016	
1 December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waveney Norse Annual Progress Report</li> </ul>
5 January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Partnership Report on Sentinel Leisure Trust</li> </ul>
Audit & Governance Committee – 12 January 2017	<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>
9 February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint consideration with the Audit &amp; Governance Committee of the Draft General Fund Budget 2017/18</li> </ul>
9 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marina Theatre Trust Annual Report</li> </ul>
No meetings to be held during April and May 2017 due to pre-election period for Suffolk County Council Elections in May 2017	

Other reviews to be programmed in during 2016/17 include an Asset Management Service Progress Report, Car Parks Update Progress Report and Update on the Public Conveniences Review.

## **Scrutiny Budget**

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.

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

For further information regarding how the scrutiny function operates at Waveney District Council, please contact a Democratic Services Officer on (01502) 523614 or email: [scrutiny@eastssuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@eastssuffolk.gov.uk). Alternatively, visit our website at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk).

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@eastssuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@eastssuffolk.gov.uk).