



Meeting: **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
Date: **TUESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2012**  
Time: **5.00PM**  
Venue: **COMMITTEE ROOM**  
To: **Councillors I Chilvers, M Dyson, M Hobson, D Mackay, Mrs W Nichols (Chair), C Pearson, D Peart, R Price (Vice Chair), R Sweeting**

## Agenda

### 1. Apologies for absence

### 2. Disclosures of Interest

A copy of the Register of Interest for each Selby District Councillor is available for inspection at [www.selby.gov.uk](http://www.selby.gov.uk).

Councillors should declare to the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest in any item of business on this agenda which is not already entered in their Register of Interests.

Councillors should leave the meeting and take no part in the consideration, discussion or vote on any matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Councillors should also declare any other interests. Having made the declaration, provided the other interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest, the Councillor may stay in the meeting, speak and vote on that item of business.

If in doubt, Councillors are advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

### 3. Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the proceedings of the meetings of the Scrutiny Committee held on 25 September 2012 (pages 3 to 9 attached).

### 4. Chair's Address to the Scrutiny Committee

### 5. Call In

## 6. Scrutiny Development Workshop

To consider the issues raised in Councillor Metcalfe's report on Scrutiny, (pages 10 to 15 attached).

## 7. Localism Act Topic Review

To consider the report of the Executive Director (s151), (pages 16 to 20 attached).

**Martin Connor**  
**Chief Executive**

<b>Dates of next meetings</b>
20 November 2012 (Provisional)
18 December 2012 (Provisional)
22 January 2013
20 February 2013 (Provisional)
26 March 2013 (Provisional)
23 April 2013
21 May 2013 (Provisional)

Enquiries relating to this agenda, please contact Palbinder Mann on:  
Tel: 01757 292207, Email: [pmann@selby.gov.uk](mailto:pmann@selby.gov.uk).

## Scrutiny Committee

Venue:	Committee Room
Date:	25 September 2012
Present:	Councillors I Chilvers, M Dyson, M Hobson, Mrs W Nichols (Chair), C Pearson, D Peart and R Price (Vice Chair)
Apologies for Absence:	Councillors D Mackay and R Sweeting.
Also Present:	Councillors M Crane, C Metcalfe, Joanne Crewe and Jo Evans – Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust, Dr Shaun O’Connell – North Yorkshire and York PCT.
Officers Present:	Keith Dawson – Director of Community Services, Karen Iveson – Executive Director (s151), Dean Richardson – Business Manager, Wayne Palmer – Lead Officer, Environmental Health and Housing and Palbinder Mann - Democratic Services Officer.
Press:	None

### **14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **15. MINUTES**

In response to the queries raised at the last meeting, the Chair reported that this year’s painting programme on Council houses was taking place in the small surrounding villages and any not completed would be added to next year’s list. Next year the programme would take place in Monk Fryston, Sherburn, Burton Salmon, Hillam and South Milford and the surveys for this had commenced. Additionally the following two year’s programme would be in Selby.

In response to the queries regarding performance, the Chair reported that Help-Link are monitored on performance issues, monthly meetings take place and issues that come to light on a daily basis are dealt with as

soon as possible.

With regard to the query on the garages, the Chair reported that 16% of garages were currently used to store good belonging to tenants after eviction from council property.

Councillor Packham queried how many garages there were and it was agreed this information would be emailed to him.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 13 June 2012 be APPROVED and that they are signed by the Chair.**

**16. CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Chair thanked everyone who participated in the report on developing scrutiny.

**17. CALL IN**

No items had been called in.

**18. REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY FUNCTION – SC/12/07**

Councillor Metcalfe, Executive Member for Communities presented the report following the submission of a Notice of Motion to Council relating to the operation of the Scrutiny function.

Councillor Metcalfe explained that the report had been brought about following the submission of Notice of Motion to Council. He explained that this was a good opportunity to look at the scrutiny function, the relationships between scrutiny and the Executive and any issues which needed addressing. He expressed his thanks to everyone involved in the formulation of the report.

With regard to the named substitutes it was agreed to email the leaders of the Conservative and Labour groups to identify named substitutes from each group which could be used.

The Chair stated that one of the scheduled provisional meetings should be used for the Committee to discuss how they would take the issues raised in the report forward and to also identify training needs.

The Chair thanked Councillor Metcalfe for his attendance.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the Committee receive and note the report.**

- ii) **That the provisional meeting scheduled for 23 October be used to discuss this issue further.**

**19. ACCESS SELBY 1<sup>ST</sup> INTERIM KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR PROGRESS REPORT APRIL 2012 – JUNE 2012 AND SLA DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS REPORT – SC/12/08**

Councillor M Crane, Leader of the Council presented the report which provided details of Access Selby key performance indicators following the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of reporting for the financial year 2012/13,. An update was also provided of progress of the development plan that was included within the Service Level Agreement between The Core and Access Selby.

Councillor Crane highlighted the figure of 97% for customer satisfaction as particularly positive and also stated that the performance indicators identified as red in the report were now at amber. Concern was raised at the average time taken to process disabled facilities grants applications and it was requested that this be looked into to improve the average time.

In response to a query regarding the percentage of Council Tax debt recovered, it was clarified that this was a cumulative figure and the Council actually collected 98.7% of Council Tax.

Clarification was sought with regard to how the targets were set. The Director of Community Services explained that when Access Selby was set up, targets were set based on what could be delivered with the reduced resources available. It was explained that although national targets had been officially removed, the Council had kept some targets and these were now designated as local targets with some national ones still remaining. It was agreed that those targets which were national and those which were local should be clearly identified.

A query was raised regarding the slippage that had occurred in some areas and whether this was down to a lack of staff. It was stated that as a result of staff covering other duties, a gap had been created in the Planning Department which had been covered by agency staff. In response to concerns raised regarding the cost of agency staff, it was stated that it was more economical to employ agency staff to cover peaks in workload rather than employing additional capacity on a permanent basis.

It was queried how the introduction of universal benefit, and in particular the changes to Council Tax benefit, would impact on claimants and the Council. The Committee were informed that the Government had made it quite clear that pensioners would not be affected. It was explained that the Council needed to decide on a local scheme and how they would deal with the 10% to 13% cut in Government grant.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **That the Committee receive and note the report.**

- ii) **That the accountable officers take the necessary action to ensure that performance indicators and projects under development achieve the targets set at the beginning of the financial year, as defined in the Service Level Agreement (SLA).**
- iii) **The issue of the average time taken to process disabled facilities grant applications be looked into to see how it could be approved.**

**20. NEW SELBY WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MINOR INJURIES UNIT  
– SC/12/09**

Joanne Crewe and Jo Evans, Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust and Dr Shaun O'Connell, Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group were present to discuss issues relating to the Selby Community Hospital Minor Injuries Unit. Paper copies of the report and information relating to attendance statistics of the hospital which had been previously been emailed to Members of the Committee were distributed.

It was clarified that the hospital should be referred to as the New Selby War Memorial Hospital and not the Selby Community Hospital.

Dr Shaun O'Connell explained that the NHS locally was dealing with financial problems in North Yorkshire and the PCT had been meeting that morning to address these issues. The Committee were informed that Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust were the providers of the Minor Injuries Unit while the Clinical Commissioning Group were operating in shadow form until authorised and this was expected in April 2013.

Jo Evans explained that the Foundation Trust also provided an out of hours Service and work was also done with Yorkshire Ambulance Service. It was explained that Selby had a group of emergency care practitioners who could do fast home visits and if necessary cases can then be referred to their local GP, the Ambulance Service or MIU as appropriate. With regard to operating hours, the Committee were informed that the hospital had been received less than one patient at night. It was not ideal that staff were left in isolation overnight so it was stated that the hospital had to look at how to provide the best service and that was in hours currently commissioned.

The Committee queried the figure of 881 people where nothing 'abnormal was detected'. It was explained that this may be down to people having a perception of injury however often no case is found.

Dr O'Connell informed the Committee that a proposal had been put before the PCT Board which was to temporarily close the Minor Injury Units at Selby, Ripon, Whitby and Malton. Joanne Crewe stated that conversations would need to be held with the Foundation Trust about these proposals and the impact of the proposals would need to be understood. Concern was raised by the Committee on the impact this would have on the residents of Selby as the

nearest hospitals would be in Pontefract and York. Dr O'Connell stated that if the Minor Injuries Unit was closed in Selby, it should be a temporary measure and the proposal was part of a package of other proposals and decisions would not be taken lightly. The NHS managers were aware of the impact on the local community however there was a difficult financial situation.

Dr O'Connell informed the Committee of the new ambulance pathway which was coming in on 1 October 2012 which was designed to take pressure off the 999 service. The new service would work with an accredited car service and the patient transport service taking patients to hospital where an ambulance was not needed.

Concern was raised that areas of deprivation in Selby and Scarborough did not receive more funding. Dr O'Connell explained that the average per head of population funding was around £1410 for North Yorkshire and York, considerably less than areas where there was more deprivation than there is in North Yorkshire.

The Committee were informed of some of the costs associated with providing treatments to patients. These included

- A cost for each visit to the Minor Injuries Unit was £54 each time.
- One callout for an ambulance costs £288.
- One visit into Accident and Emergency for a patient would cost between £54 and £210 per visit.

It was suggested that an article highlighting the costs of NHS services should be included in a future Citizenlink so that people are aware of the costs involved.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i) That the Committee receive and note the report and update.**

#### **21. THE WORK OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE DETAILING ACTIVITY, PERFORMANCE AND WORKLOAD – SC/12/10**

The Business Manager and Lead Officer, Environmental Health and Housing, presented the report which provided details of the work of the Environmental Health Service detailing activity, performance and workload.

The Lead Officer, Environmental Health and Housing explained that the work from the service included proactive and reactive work. Examples of proactive work included food hygiene inspections and examples of reactive work included infectious diseases and responding to complaints. It was explained that there were dedicated officers for proactive and reactive work.

With regard to performance information, the following were the average complaints received per year:

- 160 infectious disease complaints.
- 80 accident complaints.
- 15 health and safety complaints
- 30 food safety complaints

The Committee was informed of the new food hygiene ratings scheme. It was explained that the Food Standards Agency wished to have one scheme for everyone and funding was secured to implement a scheme in Selby. The scheme commenced in April 2012 and 300 businesses had been rated. It was explained that the ratings information could be accessed through the website. Concern was raised at the lack of ability to make business owners display their inspection results. It was explained that this was one of the concessions made by the Food Standards Agency in order to get the scheme in place as soon as possible.

With regard to nuisance complaints, it was explained that these were dealt with by Community Service Officers and referred to specialist Environmental Health teams if specialist work was required. It was queried whether the service had powers to enter properties. The Lead Officer, Environmental Health and Housing explained that it depended on whether a complaint had been received. If for example, the property was suspected of being filthy and access was not granted, then a warrant could be requested.

The Chair thanked the Business Manager and Lead Officer, Environmental Health and Housing for attending.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **That the Committee receive and note the report.**

**22. LOCALISM ACT – DEVELOPMENT OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – SC/12/11**

The Executive Director (s151) presented the report which outlined how the Scrutiny Committee could provide more in depth scrutiny on items selected from its work programme. The item identified in the report was the Localism Act.

The Committee were of the view that the provisional meeting in October could be used to discuss possible options for scoping and how this could be taken forward. Members of the Committee were also encouraged to submit their own ideas at that meeting for possible consideration.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **That the Committee receive and note the report and a further discussion take place at the next meeting on 23 October 2012/**



**23. ACCESS SELBY SERVICE PROVISION – WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING 2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR REVIEW (INFORMATION ONLY) – SC/12/12**

The Committee considered an information only report relating to the provision of services within the remit of Access Selby – Waste Collection and Recycling.

The Committee while acknowledging that there had been an increase in recycling, wished to query what could the Council do to make people recycle more.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the Committee receive and note the report.**

**24. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

It was agreed that the provisional meeting on 23 October be used as a meeting date and this be added to the work programme.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the Committee receive and note the work programme and the above amendment be made.**

The Chair thanked all for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7:21pm



**Report Reference Number: SC/12/13**

**Agenda Item No: 6**

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**To: Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012**

**Author: Palbinder Mann, Democratic Services Officer**

**Lead Officer: Karen Iveson, Executive Director (S151)**

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**Title: Scrutiny Development Workshop (Covering Report)**

**Summary:**

Councillor Metcalfe, Lead Executive Member for Communities has prepared a report following the submission of a Notice of Motion to Council relating to the operation of the Scrutiny function.

**Recommendations:**

**The Scrutiny Committee are asked to discuss and consider the issues raised in the report.**

**Reasons for recommendation**

**The Committee is asked to consider the issues outlined in the report and provide its comments to contribute in improving the Scrutiny function at Selby District Council.**

**1. Introduction and background**

A report has been prepared by Councillor Metcalfe, Lead Executive Member for Communities on improving the Scrutiny function at Selby District Council. The report has been considered and endorsed by the Executive at its meeting on 6 September 2012 and approved by Council at its meeting on 11 September 2012. The Committee asked to discuss how it would take the issues forward in the report at their meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012.

**2. The Report**

The main report is attached at Appendix 1 to the agenda.

### **3. Legal/Financial Controls and other Policy matters**

#### **3.1 Legal Issues**

These are outlined in the main report.

#### **3.2 Financial Issues**

These are outlined in the main report.

### **4. Conclusion**

The Committee is asked to provide its comments on the report to contribute in improving the Scrutiny function at Selby District Council.

### **5. Background Documents**

N/A

#### ***Contact Officer:***

Palbinder Mann  
Democratic Services  
x2207  
[pmann@selby.gov.uk](mailto:pmann@selby.gov.uk)

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Report on the 'Review of Scrutiny Function' from  
Councillor Metcalfe

### Summary:

This report has been prepared for the Executive following the submission of a Notice of Motion to Council relating to the operation of the scrutiny function. It has been compiled following discussions with a number of councillors from the two main political groups and seeks through its recommendations to amend and refine the operation of scrutiny at the Council in order that the process adds value to the Council's operations.

### Recommendations:

- i. To amend the Council's Constitution to give effect to the following:
  - The Scrutiny Committee
    - to debate all call-ins
    - To have the call-in presented to the Scrutiny Committee by the "sponsor" of the call-in and one or more of his/her co-signatories
    - To hear from any other appropriate contributors, including where necessary the relevant Executive member
    - To pass any relevant and specific recommendations to the Executive or Council as appropriate
    - To comment on the validity of the call-in itself
- ii. To provide a series of development workshops to re-appraise the role of the scrutiny function to help deliver the objectives set out in paragraph 3.3
- iii. To introduce a system of named substitutes for scrutiny committees

### Reasons for recommendation

To improve the operation of the scrutiny function following discussions with elected members from across the Council.

#### 1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The catalyst for this review could be seen as the motion raised at Council on 24 July and currently standing in abeyance until the next meeting of Council on 11 September 2012. However, it is true to say that the concerns regarding the operation of the scrutiny function have been rumbling for some time and that a review of the process under Executive arrangements was, in any case, due.
- 1.2 I offered to lead a review on behalf of the Executive and this report and its recommendations are offered as a way of improving and refining the scrutiny function and hopefully addressing expressed concerns both current and longer running.

- 1.3 I wish to place on record my thanks to the many councillors who gave their time in the three forums that I facilitated in bringing this report forward. The forums were:
- The Conservative members of the Scrutiny Committee
  - The “new members” group
  - The Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee

Each forum was marked by a candid and constructive dialogue and, for me, this underlines the common will to make scrutiny more effective and add value to the Council’s operations. I was somewhat taken aback by the way these colleagues clearly welcomed what they thought as a rare opportunity to engage in and talk through the issues surrounding scrutiny and member involvement generally, and their wish to play a more active role in the Council’s operations... a role which they felt was denied them under the current arrangements.

- 1.4 Discussions seemed to revolve around two core elements, call-in and general operation, so I will deal with these in sequence in the following paragraphs.

## 2 Call-in

- 2.1 There can be little doubt that the current call-in procedures have raised the greatest concerns across the political divide. This single topic was high on the agenda in all three forums and, although it highlighted a major common concern, it also produced a fairly unanimous suggested solution.

- 2.2 To summarise the concerns, most felt that:
- The discussion and vote by the Scrutiny Committee on whether to even hear the call-in was embarrassing both to the Committee and to potential visitors who had been invited in the event that the call-in would indeed be debated
  - The ability to deny the debate could lead to accusations of party manipulation
  - Denying the opportunity to debate a call-in undermines democratic input
  - Any informal arrangements put in place to resolve the issues seem to have failed

- 2.3 The suggested way forward is:
- To debate all call-ins
  - To have the call-in presented to the Scrutiny Committee by the “sponsor” of the call-in and one or more of his/her co-signatories
  - To hear from any other appropriate contributors, including where necessary the relevant Executive member
  - To pass any relevant and specific recommendations to the Executive or Council as appropriate

- To comment on the validity of the call-in itself

This last suggestion is geared towards exposing frivolous use of the call-in process.

- 2.4 I would support these suggested changes which, I believe, address the concerns outlined in paragraph 2.2 and would secure this important facility for calling the Executive to account and ensure it is used appropriately in the spirit of legislation and the Council's constitution.

### 3 General Operation

- 3.1 These issues were wide ranging but, again, produced a high degree of unanimity.

- 3.2 There was much evidence that there was a lack of clarity and understanding about the role of the scrutiny function as a whole. We have only operated under the revised arrangements for a little over a year but it was obvious from the discussions that revisiting the very purpose of scrutiny under Executive arrangements would not only be beneficial but necessary.

- 3.3 This reappraisal, supported by training and advice sessions for scrutiny members (and others), should cover, amongst other things:

- The creation of a functional and meaningful work programme
- Building a relationship with the Executive
- The use of task and finish groups to extend resource and effectiveness
- Effective questioning techniques
- Co-ordination of effort
- Achieving added value
- Formulating workable and specific recommendations

- 3.4 Underlying all of the discussions was the intent that the scrutiny function must be seen by all as a valuable part of the Council's operations. For this to be achieved certain conditions need to be met. Some have been explored to some extent above but the list would include the following:

- Clarity on the role of scrutiny
- Freedom and willingness on behalf of scrutiny members to challenge the Executive and hold them to account
- Willingness on behalf of the Executive to respond positively to challenge in the interests of democratic debate
- Regular attendance by members of the Executive at scrutiny to answer questions and provide contextual information on the operation of their individual remits
- Access by the Chair and/or other representatives of scrutiny to informal discussions with the Executive
- Quality of debate at, and recommendations from, scrutiny

- Structured feedback from the Executive to scrutiny on any recommendations made by scrutiny
- A meaningful work programme for scrutiny which adds value to the Council's operation and is not seen as an end in itself
- Co-ordination between the three strands of scrutiny (Policy Review, Scrutiny and Audit) to ensure best use of their combined resources
- Use of T&F groups by scrutiny to extend their resource and effectiveness (could include members not on scrutiny)
- The Executive engaging with scrutiny earlier in the process of decision making or new policy formulation to expand member involvement and explain the wider context of decision making
- Scrutiny playing a role in quashing some of the wilder statements made in the media and wider community by ensuring a debate based on evidence rather than supposition
- Scrutiny testing the performance of Council services

An additional procedural recommendation from the forums is that a named substitute system for scrutiny be implemented. Again, a recommendation I am happy to support.

- 3.5 It is in all of our interests to secure a meaningful and effective scrutiny function and to promote democratic input to the overall decision making process. The responsibility for decisions will remain with the Executive but, in order to avoid the feeling amongst the wider membership of the Council that they have little or no part to play, information, communication and involvement needs to be enhanced.
- 3.6 The Executive needs to value the role of scrutiny but, by the same token, scrutiny needs to enhance its reputation by its deeds to earn that trust and sense of value. This is a two way street which requires commitment from us all.
- 3.7 Success will not be achieved overnight. Some cost may be involved and I will bring forward a further recommendation for a support resource for scrutiny as part of the forthcoming budget round. In the meantime, I ask the Executive to support the thrust of this report along with the recommendations above.



**Report Reference Number: SC/12/14**

**Agenda Item No: 7**

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**To: Scrutiny Committee**  
**Date: 23 October 2012**  
**Author: Palbinder Mann, Democratic Services Officer**  
**Lead Officer: Karen Iveson, Executive Director (S151)**

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**Title: Localism Act - Development of the Scrutiny Committee**

**Summary:**

This report outlines how the Scrutiny Committee could provide more in depth scrutiny on items selected from its work programme.

**Recommendations:**

- i. That the Scrutiny Committee be developed to allow it to focus on and scrutinise one or more topics in substantial depth each year.
- ii. That the Localism Act be the first topic for in depth consideration by the Scrutiny Committee and that the Committee choose one of the areas of the Act for review as outlined in the report.
- iii. That the Committee give consideration to the way they wish to review the chosen topic.

**Reasons for recommendation**

The development of the Scrutiny Committee in this way will allow for it to not only scrutinise the work undertaken in different areas, but also add value to the development of policy and procedures by Selby District Council. This development would allow efficient, flexible and in depth scrutiny led by Members rather than just the consideration of reports.

The consideration and review of an area of the Localism Act will help to promote understanding of its implications and the effect on Selby District Council and its residents. It is also envisaged that the scrutiny of this area would support the work being done by the Council as a result of the new legislation.

**1. Introduction and background**



- 1.1 The Council is looking to develop the work of the Scrutiny Committee and its role in scrutinising the activity of the Council. It is proposed that this development take the form of offering the opportunity for the Committee to lead a review looking in substantial depth at one or more topics on its Work Programme each year.
- 1.2 The Localism Act was given Royal Assent in November 2011. The main aim of the Act is to transfer more power away from national Government to Local Authorities and give them new freedoms and flexibility.

The Act contains numerous changes for Local Government including:

- Abolition of the Standards Board
  - Clarifying the rules on predetermination for Elected Members
  - Greater local control of business rates
  - Community right to challenge
  - Transparency over senior council officials pay
  - Abolition of regional strategies
  - Neighbourhood Planning
  - Reforming the Community Infrastructure Levy
- 1.3 The Localism Act is on the Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme and was due to be discussed at the 25<sup>th</sup> September meeting. This topic has been identified by the Chair as offering the potential for in depth consideration and review by the Scrutiny Committee. As the Localism Act is extensive in its coverage it is felt that Scrutiny could focus the review on just one aspect of the Act and give it detailed consideration.
  - 1.4 Following discussions with the Chair, three areas of the Act have been identified for possible further and in-depth consideration by the Scrutiny Committee, these are:
    - Community Right to Challenge
    - Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders
    - National Non-Domestic Rates

## **2. The Report**

- 2.1 The suggested areas for consideration have been drawn from a wider range of different areas of work that the Localism Act will impact upon. They have been identified as areas where there may need to be changes made to Council policy and/or working procedures. As yet these areas and the actions being taken by the Authority are not due to be considered by Full Council, the Executive, or any other Committee.

2.1.1 Outlined below are the three areas with some initial ideas for themes to be considered:

Community Right to Challenge

The Community Right to Challenge lets communities challenge to take over local services that they can run differently and better. The Committee could look at how this process should be managed and by which area of the Authority. It could consider how decisions would be scrutinised and the influence of Selby District Council on service delivery post successful challenge. Also it could look at the mitigation of potential challenges by engaging with community groups through Communities Selby.

Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders

The Committee could consider the process of providing support for Local Communities to develop Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders. How such work could be used to generate revenue for the Authority and the arrangements for scrutinising the Plans and Orders prior to accepting them. Also the Committee could consider the potential changes required to the Planning Committee in terms of budgets, Members and Member training to accommodate any new work that would result from Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders. It does need to be noted however that the Planning Committee is a regulatory function and not a Scrutiny function.

National Non-Domestic Rates

The Committee could consider the changes to the Authority's discretionary powers for offering rate reliefs and the opportunities and risks this presents for use as an economic development tool for the District. The Committee could also scrutinise the plans for the process of making discretionary relief awards and receiving appeals against award decisions.

- 2.2 It is envisaged that the role of the Scrutiny Committee would develop and through the further in depth scrutiny, would allow the Committee to add value to the work of Selby District Council. It is thought consideration of the Localism Act presents a good opportunity to trial in depth consideration by the Committee as it is an expansive topic.
- 2.3 In depth scrutiny would allow Committee Members to take a more proactive role in scrutiny. Concern has been raised regarding the amount of officer time that would be required for research and report production. However it is thought such demands could be reduced if Members took the lead in researching and reporting on their investigations. This would also allow Members to accurately represent their views and recommendations on the topic being considered.
- 2.4 Other advantages include the possibility of inviting non Committee Members to participate in the work, the inclusion of external partners,

the flexibility to concentrate on particular topic and arrange informal meetings not restricted by normal Committee rules.

2.5 When considering the review of the chosen topic, the Committee will have to also take into account the following factors:

- A specific title for the review
- The rationale behind the review
- Purpose and objectives of a review
- The outcome of the review.
- The methodology/approach for the review.
- The time it would take the review.
- Any resource requirements.
- Any risks associated with the review.
- Any publicity which would be expected.

It is expected that once an area to review is chosen by the Committee, a scoping paper will be produced outlining responses to the above points.

2.6 The Committee would also need to decide on the format in which they would wish to carry out the scrutiny of the topic. Possible suggestions include:

- A Task and Finish group made up of Members of the Scrutiny Committee with invites to other Members of the authority and external partners with meetings held outside of the normal calendar of meetings of the Scrutiny Committee.
- A Task and Finish group made up solely of Scrutiny Committee Members with meetings held outside of the normal calendar of meetings of the Scrutiny Committee.
- Meetings held on the provisional Scrutiny Committee dates currently scheduled to discuss Call-In items.
- The arrangement of additional formal meetings.

### **3. Legal/Financial Controls and other Policy matters**

#### **3.1 Legal Issues**

**None**

#### **3.2 Financial Issues**

Additional hours of research and report writing may be required by the relevant business areas to prepare the necessary information and reports for the Scrutiny Committee to review a topic in such depth. If meetings were held

outside of the normal meeting calendar, this would also require additional resources such as officer time.

The Scrutiny Committee only has a limited budget of £600 which could limit the scope of any officer led research. However the proposed development of the Scrutiny Committee would provide for Committee or Task and Finish Group led research by Members supported with more limited officer time.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The proposals for the Scrutiny Committee to carry out in depth reviews of topics would allow efficient and flexible Scrutiny to be undertaken and contribution to policy and procedures of Selby District Council.

#### **5. Background Documents**

“Localism Act 2011” Briefing Presentation from J Lund, Deputy Chief Executive.

**Contact Officer:** *Palbinder Mann*  
*Democratic Services Officer*  
[pmann@selby.gov.uk](mailto:pmann@selby.gov.uk)  
*ex 2207*

**Appendices: N/A**