



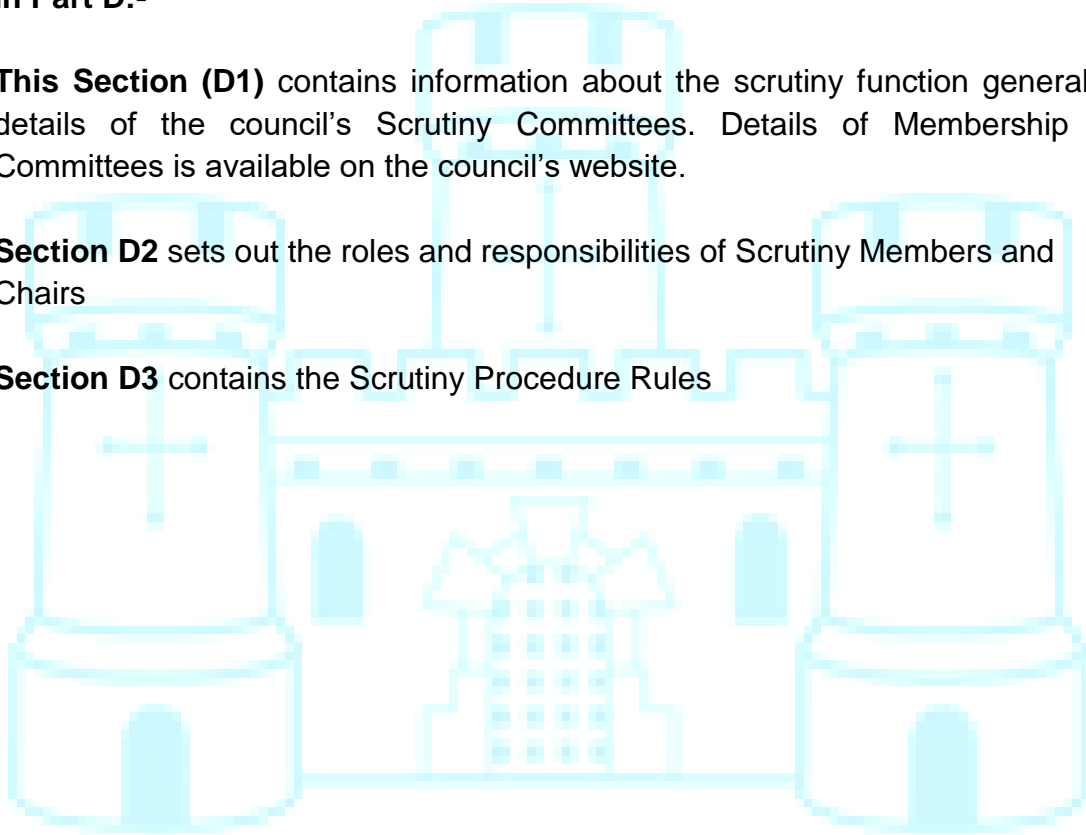
**Part D – Scrutiny**  
**Section D1 – Scrutiny Committees**

**In Part D:-**

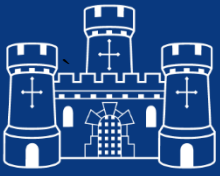
**This Section (D1)** contains information about the scrutiny function generally, and details of the council's Scrutiny Committees. Details of Membership of the Committees is available on the council's website.

**Section D2** sets out the roles and responsibilities of Scrutiny Members and Chairs

**Section D3** contains the Scrutiny Procedure Rules



NEWCASTLE  
UNDER LYME  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



**PART D - Scrutiny**  
**Section D1 – Scrutiny Committees**

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- Introduction and Composition
- Terms of Reference





## 1. Introduction

1.1 Effective scrutiny arrangements are an essential part of good governance in any local authority. Scrutiny is essential in achieving value for money and best practice and to ensure that there are appropriate checks and balances on the exercise of powers.

### Core Values

1.2 The council's scrutiny arrangements aim to reflect the following core values:

- (a) Holding the Cabinet and our partners to account
- (b) Working to make a difference to outcomes for the public of Newcastle-under-Lyme
- (c) Ensuring the greatest possible public engagement in scrutiny

1.3 Council has appointed three Scrutiny Committees:

- (a) Finance, Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee
- (b) Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee
- (c) Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee

1.4 These Committees are responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the work of the authority at large (which includes the organisations that we work in partnership with). In particular, the scrutiny function is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of the Cabinet.

1.5 The Cabinet Members with Portfolios of direct relevance to the remit of the Committee shall attend committee meetings when requested and will hold regular meetings with the Chair and Vice Chair to promote close working relationships between the cabinet and the committee.

1.6 The Scrutiny Committees have a mandate to undertake reviews and scrutinise action (or inaction) in relation to general subject areas or in respect of particular matters before, during, or after a decision is made. They assist Council and the Cabinet in developing the Budget and Policy Framework and in monitoring the performance of the authority. They can make recommendations for change and have powers to intervene in the decision making process in certain circumstances.

### General Functions

1.7 General functions of the Scrutiny Committees include to:-



- (a) review and scrutinise the performance of the council, its partners and any appropriate external organisations against any relevant plan or target
- (b) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the council's functions
- (c) review and scrutinise the provision and performance of services
- (d) review and scrutinize current policies and assist and advise on future policy development
- (e) make reports and/or recommendations to Council, the Cabinet, or an outside organisation in connection with the discharge of any functions
- (f) consider any matter affecting the council, its area or the people who work or live in the borough
- (g) exercise the right to call-in for reconsideration decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet
- (h) To respond to direct requests from the Council or the Cabinet when appropriate

### **Powers**

- 1.8 The Scrutiny Committees may hold scrutiny enquiries and set up Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups on a time-limited basis, although there shall be no more than three active Task and Finish Groups at any one time.
- 1.9 Scrutiny Committees may appoint or co-opt advisors or assessors, undertake site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations.
- 1.10 Scrutiny Committees may ask witnesses to attend to address them on any matter under consideration and may question members of the Cabinet and Chief Officers about their performance in relation to significant and/or major projects.

### **Joint Working**

- 1.11 The Borough Council is a signatory to Joint Working Arrangements between the Borough and District Councils in Staffordshire and Staffordshire County Council whereby scrutiny activity is based on three levels of responsibility:
  - (a) The County Council may lead on matters that can best be dealt with at a county level.



- (b) For some matters, the County Council may ask a lead District/Borough Council to carry out the scrutiny, and this may be singly or jointly with other District/Borough Councils.
- (c) District and Borough Councils will lead on those matters that can be best dealt with at a district level.

1.12 Under the Joint Working Arrangements, one member representative of the Borough Council shall be entitled to attend, with full voting rights, meetings of the County Council's Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In addition, a named Substitute member is permitted to attend when the full member is unavailable. The member and the substitute member shall be appointed at each Annual Council meeting.

## **2 Finance Assets and Performance Scrutiny Committee**

### **Introduction and Composition**

- 2.1 This Scrutiny Committee is concerned with how the council plans and then uses its resources to deliver services against the objectives set out in the various Council plans and strategies objectives.
- 2.2 The committee comprises 11 members constituted on a politically proportionate basis in line with the political composition of Council

### **Terms of Reference**

- 2.3 This committee is concerned with how the council, as a whole, performs. It scrutinises how the council develops and implements its various plans and strategies. It scrutinises how the council plans for and uses its finances (including income generation) and other assets including plant and machinery, equipment, vehicles, land and buildings and staff. In scrutinising the council's performance, it will also consider how the council performs alongside the organisations in works in partnership with. More information on this committee's remit is available on the council's website.

## **3 Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee**

### **Introduction and Composition**

- 3.1 This Scrutiny Committee is concerned with how the council interacts with and influences the borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme as a place.



- 3.2 The committee comprises 11 members constituted on a politically proportionate basis in line with the political composition of Council

### **Terms of Reference**

- 3.3 This committee scrutinises how the council influences, affects and interacts with the natural and built environment. It also scrutinises how the council influences, affects and interacts with the local, regional and national economy. More information on this committee's remit is available on the council's website.

## **4 Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee**

### **Introduction and Composition**

- 4.1 This scrutiny committee is concerned with how the council interacts with and influences all factors that impact on the health and wellbeing of those who live and work in the borough.
- 4.2 The committee comprises 11 members constituted on a politically proportionate basis in line with the political composition of Council. In addition, Staffordshire County Council may appoint one member from its Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to sit as a co-opted member on this committee. That member may contribute to all of the discussions at this committee but may only vote on matters relating to health and wellbeing
- 4.3 In addition, there shall also be 2 non-voting co-opted members, representing the young people of the Borough drawn from the Student's Union at Keele University and the Student Representative Body at Newcastle College. Both establishments are to be invited to nominate a co-opted member at each Annual Council.

### **Terms of Reference**

- 4.4 This committee scrutinises policies, strategies and initiatives that are intended to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the people who work and live in the borough. It scrutinises things such as leisure, open-space and cultural provision, crime and anti-social behaviour, homelessness, health and other behaviours or environmental factors that affect health and well-being. More information on this committee's remit is available on the council's website.