

Scrutiny Protocol

Scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership

1. Introduction

1. Waltham Forest Council has determined that its Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee shall be the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee as required under Paragraph 1, Section 19 of the Police & Justice Act 2006.
2. The Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will, therefore, exercise the powers given to local authorities under Part 3 of the Act to scrutinise the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in their area and make reports and recommendations to the Local Authority and the partnership.
3. This Protocol has been produced between Waltham Forest Council Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee and the respective partners comprising the Waltham Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (SafetyNet), see attached schedule, to provide a framework for such scrutiny to take place.
4. This protocol conforms with the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 and follows Home Office guidance on the implementation of Sections 19 and 20 of the Act. Whilst continuing to observe these requirements, the Protocol may be revised by agreement between all the interested parties in order to continually improve the scrutiny process.

2. Principles of Scrutiny Operation

1. Scrutiny in Waltham Forest is positive, objective and constructive. It acknowledges good practice and recommends improvements where it feels that these would be of benefit. Scrutiny concentrates on service outcomes and seeks to add value to each service that it considers.
2. Community safety and freedom from crime and disorder for the people of Waltham Forest is dependent upon many factors including the services provided in partnership by partners in SafetNet. This shared responsibility will be acknowledged by scrutiny and will feature in scrutiny reviews.
3. Scrutiny of the reduction of crime and disorder will be successful if all parties work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust with an understanding and commitment to its aims.
4. Organisations involved in scrutiny of crime and disorder must be willing to share information, knowledge and reports which relate to the delivery and success of services in Waltham Forest and carry out duties that would be reasonably expected of them to enable crime and disorder scrutiny to be successfully undertaken.
5. At all times both officers and members of the organisations involved in crime and disorder scrutiny, representatives and members of the public will be treated with respect and courtesy. Matters of confidentiality will be treated as such.

6. Crime and disorder scrutiny will be open and transparent. Any person involved in crime and disorder scrutiny will always declare any personal or other pecuniary interest that they have either in a scrutiny exercise or during a meeting of the scrutiny Sub-Committee in accordance with the Code of Conduct relating to standards of conduct and ethics.
7. The scrutiny of Crime and Disorder will seek to improve services and service provision for the people of Waltham Forest in order to increase community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime in Waltham Forest.
8. The scrutiny of Crime and Disorder matters will be conducted so as to allow the involvement of the public and local community groups in as relevant and practical a way as possible.
9. Crime and Disorder scrutiny shall not be used as a complaints procedure. Case studies may, however, be used as part of supporting information for scrutiny exercises.
10. The function of Crime and Disorder scrutiny is independent of the respective partners comprising SafetyNet.

3. The Waltham Forest Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee

1. All dates, times of meetings, agendas and reports, and subsequent minutes, of the Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will be published to meet at least the minimum statutorily required. All such information will be circulated to elected Members and the members of the SafetyNet at least to the minimum so required.
2. The Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will advise the SafetyNet in advance of any programme of work or other scrutiny exercise that the Waltham Forest Scrutiny Sub-Committee is intending to undertake.
3. The Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will consult with the SafetyNet on any draft reports prepared by Sub-Committee before they are published.
4. Final reports will be presented to Waltham Forest Council, the SafetyNet, be published on the Council's website and circulated in accordance with the regulations on scrutiny of crime and disorder.
5. The Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will inform SafetyNet in advance of any press releases relating to crime and disorder scrutiny although the Scrutiny Support Unit may speak to the press in advance of meeting to brief them about forthcoming Scrutiny Sub-Committee meetings.
6. The Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee will at all times comply with the Constitution of Waltham Forest Council.

4. SafetyNet – The Waltham Forest Crime and Disorder Partnership

1. SafetyNet and respective partners shall recognise and assist the Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee in fulfilling its role to provide objective and effective scrutiny of crime and disorder in Waltham Forest.

2. SafetyNet and respective partners shall provide information relating to the planning and operation of crime and disorder reduction activities and strategies requested and required by the Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee. This will not, however, include confidential information that might impinge upon actual police operations or individuals, unless an individual gives consent for such information to be released.
3. SafetyNet and its respective partners shall provide the Community Safety and Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee with the information requested within 15 working days of the receipt of the request.
4. SafetyNet will respond to crime and disorder scrutiny review final reports and, or, recommendations within 28 days of receipt. A copy of such a response will be sent to the Waltham Forest Cabinet Member responsible for Community Safety, to individuals who have contributed to the review, and to other relevant parties.
5. A separate protocol and procedure will be agreed to cover references to the Scrutiny Sub-Committee from the elected members via the Councillor Call for Action.
6. SafetyNet will nominate a main contact person for each crime and disorder scrutiny exercise and maintain regular contact with the Scrutiny Sub-Committee, attending in person when invited.
7. SafetyNet will ensure that officers attending Scrutiny Sub-Committee meetings are able to answer questions openly and are given appropriate support by their line managers.

The underlines indicate some areas for further attention or thought.