



Doncaster
Metropolitan Borough Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 14

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Foreword

I am pleased to present this report detailing the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) and the three Scrutiny Panels during 2013/14.

A key focus for the OSMC during this period has been reviewing how the Council will seek to meet the £109m budget gap over the next three years. Whilst the Committee has supported the Council in agreeing the budget through rigorous debate and discussion, the need to deliver and implement the budget proposals remains a key challenge for the future. The impact of the budget is likely to have an effect on all service areas in future years and it is essential that the work of Overview and Scrutiny continues to support the effective delivery of services and provide opportunities for open debate and discussion on key service issues.

As well as reflecting on some of the key work undertaken during 2013/14 the report also draws attention to how Overview and Scrutiny will operate in the future. The new structure and way of working to be implemented from June 2014 will be more outcome focused, with Panels reviewing topics in depth to provide suggestions for improvement. This will build on some of the work that has been undertaken this year by the Panels reviewing important issues such as Outcomes for Care leavers, the Economic strategy and Domestic Abuse. The new structure also includes the establishment of a Health and Adult Social Care Panel which will look to develop links with the Health and Well Being Board and other partners to improve the health of people in the Borough.

As we move to 2014/15 it is essential that Overview and Scrutiny continues to contribute positively to supporting the delivery of Borough priorities through its critical friend role, its contribution to decision making and its unique role of bringing the public, partners and elected Members together to explore issues in greater detail and provide solutions.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank all officers, partners, and Councillors who have contributed to the Overview and Scrutiny process over the last 12 months. I hope that during 2014/15 our work will continue to support the delivery of the Borough's priorities by challenging performance, improving accountability and exploring potential solutions to service delivery as the Council seeks to respond to significant reduction in its resources.



Councillor John Mounsey
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee 2013/14

Impacts and Achievements 2013/14

Detailed below are of some of the key impacts and achievements resulting from Overview and Scrutiny activities during 2013/14. Further details are included in the summary of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) and Panel activities.

Holding to account - Holding decision makers to account publicly promotes good governance by increasing transparency and accountability. All Cabinet Members and Directors have attended Overview and Scrutiny meetings during the year to respond to questions from Scrutiny Members. This has been particularly useful in allowing the Executive to set out their priorities for the year and identifying the extent to which they have been delivered.

A Cabinet decision relating to prudential borrowing to develop the leisure offer at Adwick Leisure Centre was “called in” by Scrutiny Members i.e. reviewed by OSMC prior to implementation. This enabled Members to understand what the decision sought to achieve, how risks were being addressed and the financial strategy for paying back the borrowing. Following a robust debate the Committee supported the decision but highlighted the need for future decisions that impact significantly on a specific area to be subject to consultation with the wider community and Councillors.

Contribution to key policy development – Moving forward into 2014/15, review work will be a key focus for Overview and Scrutiny as this will enable it to consider important issues in detail and put forward proposals for improvement. Some of the key review work that has taken place this year includes a review of Outcome for Care Leavers undertaken by the Schools Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel (SCYP) and Domestic Abuse undertaken by the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Panel (A&C). These are detailed later in this report but all share common elements in that Members were able to engage face to face with service users or clients through site visits and hear first-hand about their experiences. This enabled Scrutiny Members to gain a greater understanding of the issues for those receiving the service, conclude how partnership activity was being co-ordinated and identify any gaps in provision. The Panels were able to put forward some practical suggestions for improvement based on the evidence they had gathered.

Pre-decision scrutiny - Pre decision scrutiny serves a useful purpose in allowing Members to review a decision before it is taken and identify any areas where it believes improvements can be made. The Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Panel (R&E) established a Strategy Working Group to review a range of key policies around Housing, the Environment and Regeneration, which enabled the group to make suggestions and raise issues to be addressed within the final versions. The OSMC reviewed the Commissioning and Procurement Strategy and put forward suggestions around clarifying some of the wording in the strategy and ensuring the necessary arrangements were in place to meet the Council’s needs if there was market failure.

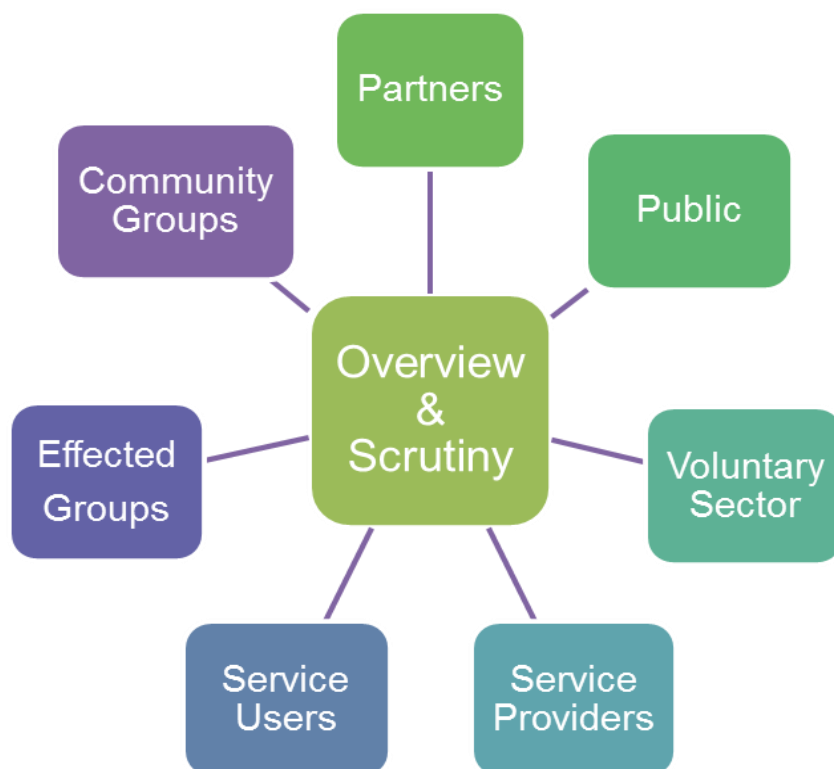
Supporting performance monitoring arrangements – OSMC and the Panels have continued to rigorously review performance. As the Council has to reshape services in response to budget cuts Overview and Scrutiny has a key role in ensuring performance monitoring arrangements remain robust and services continue to be delivered effectively. Directors and Cabinet Members have attended these meetings to answer questions particularly about how they are addressing under performance or projected overspends and this has enhanced transparency and accountability of service delivery.

Budget review and financial monitoring - OSMC Members have played an important role in supporting the Council's financial arrangements. Members were able to gain an understanding around the reasons for the budget gap and put forward suggestions for communicating this to the public as part of the Mayor's budget conversation. OSMC has regularly reviewed the budget position identifying areas where actions could be taken to address overspends. This has included establishing a working Group to review the projected overspends in CYPS. Through effective challenge OSMC's involvement will support the Directorate in delivering its services.

The Committee also contributed to the wider budget process by reviewing each of the key budget themes and reviewing the extent to which they were informed by evidence and consultation, how they supported corporate priorities and how some of the key challenges to delivery were being addressed. OSMC's comments and recommendations were addressed within the report to Council and were helpful in identifying issues around future consultation and engagement and developing capacity within communities.

Supporting regional working – The A and C Panel continued to support the work of the Yorkshire and Humber Joint Health Scrutiny Committee which considers changes to health service provision across the whole of the Yorkshire and Humber area. This focused mainly on the conclusions of the extensive review into proposals for the future delivery of Children's Cardiac Surgery nationally and how this will impact on the region. Further regional Scrutiny will take place next year when a Joint Scrutiny Committee will review the activities of the Sheffield City region Combined Authority.

Public and partnership engagement – Engaging with the public in Overview and Scrutiny can be particularly challenging however, throughout the year there have been some good examples and we would like to take the opportunity to thank the partners and community members mentioned in this report for taking part in the process. They contributed by either providing evidence, information for discussion and debate or to hold to account.



Overview and Scrutiny engagement with during 2013/2014	
Members of the public who have attended formal scrutiny meetings for a number of issues of interest to them and to make formal statements to Scrutiny Members.	
A4E (Action for Employment)	Foundation Housing, Future 19 Housing, Advance Childcare and Riverside
Arriva Bus Company	Housing Organisation - Housing Providers
Children and Adults Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Job Centre Plus
Children and Young People	New Horizons
Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)	NHS Clinical Commissioning Group
Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner	NHS England
Domestic Abuse - People who have been affected by domestic abuse	Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH)
Doncaster Alcohol Abuse Service	Safe At Last
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals Foundation Trust	SERCO
Doncaster College	South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE)
Doncaster Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Service	South Yorkshire Police
Doncaster Women's Aid	St Leger Homes Doncaster
First Bus Company	Stagecoach Company
Foster Carers	Victim Support

Review of Overview and Scrutiny 2013/14

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee



**COUNCILLOR
JOHN MOUNSEY**

**CHAIR OF THE
OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY
MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE
(2013/14)**

A key focus for the Committee during 2013/14 has been to ensure robust measures are in place to effectively review and monitor the current budget and performance of Council Services and support the Council in delivering savings of £109m over the next three years.

Performance Review

The Committee has reviewed the Council's performance and finance on a quarterly basis focusing on those areas where performance needs to be improved and those areas where there is a concern about delivering within budget. One of the key areas identified by the Committee related to the projected overspends in Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS). To address this issue the Committee established a small working group to meet with officers and discuss the reasons for potential overspend. The Committee also agreed to receive a quarterly report from the Director of CYPS to monitor the effectiveness of these actions. In receiving information about the challenges of in house foster care provision the Committee recommended that officers should explore the possibility of regional collaboration in respect of: filling empty beds in residential care homes and

using available in house foster care provision where capacity existed in nearby neighbouring authorities

Engagement in the Budget Process

The Committee engaged early with officers in respect of the budget process 2014/15 – 16/17. During June and September the Committee was informed of the reasons for the budget gap and the potential scale of the cuts. Members were also able to contribute to ensuring there was an effective dialogue with the public to highlight the Council's financial position and the difficult decisions it would need to take over the coming years. During its review of the budget proposals the Committee held a focused and challenging session with Directors and Cabinet Members based around key budget themes and agreed a number of recommendations that were included in the report to Council. Some of the key recommendations accepted in the proposal to Council were around effective planning and management of public consultation over key budget proposals.

Strengthening Its Management/ Co-ordination Role

To strengthen its role as the Management Committee the chairs of the Panels were invited to update the Committee on their activities and progress against their work programmes to ensure there was a wider understanding of the work of Overview and Scrutiny.

Pre Decision Scrutiny

During the year the Committee has undertaken pre decision Scrutiny to provide suggestions and comments to the Executive before a decision is made. This process acts as a check in the system to help strengthen decision making by enabling the Committee to put forward suggestions for improvement. Some of the key outcomes relating to pre decision Scrutiny include:

The Commissioning and Procurement Strategy – whilst supporting the strategy OSMC recommended that it should be rewritten in plain English to make it more accessible. It also suggested that consideration be given to putting measures in place to guard against market failure on major procurement projects and to help stimulate the local economy to ensure sustainability and employment opportunities.

Digital Assumed – The committee recognised the benefits of utilising digital technology and encouraged wider marketing of the “My Doncaster” mobile app for the public to report issues around Council services. It also recommended that careful consideration be given to an Assisted Digital Strategy to support members of the public who cannot access digital technology.

Library Review - The Committee put forward a number of suggestions around increasing and enhancing the use of volunteers to support the community library model.

Corporate Plan – The Committee supported the draft Plan and made some suggestions to amend the wording to provide greater clarity and understanding of key priorities.

Holding To Account

The Committee reviewed a Cabinet decision in respect of prudential borrowing to support improvements to Adwick Leisure Centre which included the development of a soft play area and a bowling alley. The meeting was useful in clarifying concerns expressed by Members over the future pay back of the sum by Doncaster Cultural Leisure Trust. Whilst it supported the decision the Committee requested an update on developments in 12 months time and also reminded officers of the need to undertake effective consultation with elected Members on issues that have an impact in their ward.

Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel



COUNCILLOR

PATRICIA
SCHOFIELD

CHAIR OF THE
ADULTS AND
COMMUNITIES
PANEL (2013/14)

I am very pleased to present an outline of the work undertaken during 2013/2014 by the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Some of the main areas that the Panel focused on are as follows:-

Crime and Disorder Committee

The Panel has a statutory role as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee. In addition to receiving quarterly performance reports from the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership (SSDP), the Panel held a one-off meeting to identify the priorities of the SSDP and hold it to account. Representatives from the SSDP were invited to this meeting to respond to issues raised by the Panel.

Domestic Abuse (Review) - The Panel focused on one major review, Domestic Abuse and held to account the support mechanisms in place for High Risk victims. This review also involved looking at whether high risk victims were receiving timely and appropriate support, whether the partnership Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process was working effectively and if the emergency refuge and dispersed housing arrangements are appropriate. A number of site visits and meetings were held and the working group made 14 recommendations to make improvements to how this agenda is taken forward in Doncaster. Those recommendations made centred

around the education, training, and raising awareness of domestic abuse, the role of elected Members in taking this agenda forward and the provision of counselling and therapeutic services to young people.

Modernisation Plan – Over a series of meetings the Panel was able to input into the development of a draft strategy for modernising adult social care and support in Doncaster. This was set against the context of national policy direction, increasing demand and significantly reduced resources in order to shape the draft strategy before public consultation.

Health - The Panel continued to work closely with partners at NHS Doncaster. Members have continued to receive updates and consider the impact of proposals such as the relocation of upper Gastro Intestinal Services from Doncaster Royal Infirmary to Sheffield Teaching Hospital.

Public Health – The Panel considered the health protection responsibilities that have been developed by the Council. Members noted the progress that has been made in establishing a new Health Protection system for Doncaster and the arrangements that have been put in place. The Panel also supported the actions identified to be included in Doncaster's Health Protection Forward Plan for 2014-15.

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) - Children's and Adults Congenital Cardiac Services Review - In March 2011, a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Yorkshire and the Humber) was established to respond to the national review and consultation proposals for the organisation and

delivery of Children's Congenital Cardiac Services. Three years on the review is still on-going and has now recommenced to include Adults as well as Children. This follows an announcement on 12 June 2013 from the Secretary of State for Health to halt the previous Safe and Sustainable Review of Children's Congenital Cardiac Services in England. Councillor Revill represented the Council on this Committee which was shortlisted for a Centre for Public Scrutiny "Good Scrutiny" award.

Performance information for Adults and Communities, Public Health and the Safer Doncaster Partnership continued to be presented enabling Members to hold officers and Members to account and monitor progress and impacts.

Relationship with Officers and Cabinet Member - The Chair has held regular meetings with key partners such as NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, Cabinet Members and Chair and Vice Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Cabinet Members have attended the Panel a number of times throughout the year and have been questioned and held to account for the delivery of their priorities.

Schools, Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel



COUNCILLOR

RACHEL HODSON

CHAIR OF THE
SCHOOLS, CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE
PANEL (2013/14)

I am delighted to outline the work undertaken by the Panel over the last year. I am sure Members of the Panel will agree with me that the information pulled together was of a high quality and very detailed, which in turn ensured good quality debate and strong recommendations being presented to the Executive.

When Members met for the first time in June, it was agreed that the Panel's in-depth review would focus on Outcomes for Care Leavers. Formal Panel meetings provided an opportunity to consider wider improvements required to the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS), particularly safeguarding and monitoring of the new Improvement Plan, performance and statutory plans.

Review work – The main review undertaken was "Outcomes for Care Leavers". The young people were particularly frank and honest with their views and opinions which gave Members an appreciation of the challenges facing a young person when leaving local authority care. I am pleased to report that the Executive accepted all recommendations made by the Panel, including the following:

- a review into the possibility of starting the leaving care process

earlier in a young person's life, for example 14 plus;

- Promotion of the young people mentor programme with the Doncaster Council staff and community and encouraging its value, the offer of positive guidance and friendship; and
- Investigation into additional support, guidance and signposting to young people leaving care, who have additional needs but fall short of meeting the Adult Services care criteria.

Two spotlight reviews were also undertaken on:-

- How the issue of young people running away from local authority care was addressed. Members questioned and acknowledged how the strategic response across the multi-agencies was working more effectively with energies focused on those with greatest need. It was hoped that numbers would continue to decrease, with a small number of repeat missings.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities where Members supported the work on going but highlighted the important role of Councillors who were School Governors and stressed that this be promoted.

The inquiries of the Panel have involved participation not only from Doncaster Council officers but partners including Advanced Childcare, Doncaster College, South Yorkshire Police and Health. More importantly there was increased participation from young people and foster carers.

Visits have also been made by the Panel to assisted housing establishments for young people in care who were in the transition of moving to independent living.

Children's Trust – Due to the changes proposed for the CYPS, the Panel monitored service improvement progress. This included the improvement plan, financial plan, recruitment of permanent social work staff and reduction in agency staff and foster care placements. In addition to the Director and officers from the CYPS representatives from iMPower, Roger Thompson, Chair of the Safeguarding Board and Malcolm Newsam, Project Director for Children's Services attended meetings to provide updates and evidence of Improvements being made and how the establishment of the Children's Trust was developing.

Educational Attainment – The Panel regularly considered the attainment of children across the borough through performance reports, paying particular attention to attainment by those on free school meals and looked after children. Members requested detailed information on examination and test results for Doncaster children and young people aged 5, 7, 11, 16 and 18, addressing trends, national, statistical, neighbour and regional comparators. The report also addressed the current Ofsted outcomes for good and better education provision in Doncaster compared with national and regional averages.

To conclude, I would like to thank officers for their time and contribution in assisting the Panel in fully understanding the areas considered and wish them and the Panel all the best for 2014/15.

Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

COUNCILLOR



TONY REVILL

CHAIR OF THE
REGENERATION AND
ENVIRONMENT
PANEL (2013/14)

I am happy to present an outline of the work undertaken during 2012/13 by the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The three main areas that the Panel focused on included Quality Bus Partnership, Waste and Recycling/Environment and Regeneration (Next Wave of Projects):

-

Strategy (Policy Development) - The Panel agreed to set up a group to support the development of a number of ongoing policies. To date these have included Economic Strategy, Environmental/Green Infrastructure Strategy and Cycling Strategy, Housing Strategy Refresh, Homelessness Strategy and Local Flood Management Strategy. The involvement of the group resulted in better awareness, new and amended actions or provided consideration to how the actions within the strategies are implemented. The final versions of these strategies have since been approved by Cabinet.

As an example some of the recommendations made by the Working Group in respect of the Cycling Strategy, that were incorporated into the final Strategy, include:-

- Develop the town centre bike park
- Carry out a range of publicity and marketing events to promote Doncaster as a cycle friendly town
- Continuing to engage with the community across the Borough through a cycle forum open to all
- Investigating allowing cyclists to utilise town centre pedestrian streets
- Auditing existing routes and develop new design standards to ensure routes are of a high standard suitable for cycle use

Quality Bus Partnership - Consideration was given to developing a voluntary Bus Partnership Agreement (BPA) enabling all parties to coordinate investment by increased priority, higher quality vehicles, more affordable ticketing and better marketing which has been successfully demonstrated through the Sheffield BPA. Presentations were provided from Doncaster MBC, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and bus service providers. The Panel supported the development of a Voluntary Bus Partnership Agreement.

Regeneration (Next Wave of Projects)/Economic Strategy – The Panel was provided with a detailed look into the economic future of the Borough focusing on masterplan regeneration projects and provided a response to the Economic Strategy. The Panel also met with representatives from providers including Serco and A4E as well as Job Centre Plus to hold to account local performance regarding the Department of Work and Pension (DWP) Work Programme.

Monitoring of Previous Scrutiny

Work - The Panel monitored the progress of recommendations made following a review undertaken during 2012/2013 in relation to Careers, Advice and Guidance (including Apprenticeships). The Panel learnt that the priorities of the Work, Skills and Enterprise Board (which they had supported) were being taken forward and as a result, the authority was now performing better than comparator areas. A recommendation made by the Panel to have a Governor as a champion to challenge Headteachers was accepted.

Performance - Performance information has been presented on a quarterly basis for both Regeneration and Environment and St Leger Homes of Doncaster to provide the opportunity to hold Officers and Members to account and contribute effectively and support improvement.

Relationships with Officers and

Cabinet Member - The Chair and Vice Chair have had regular meetings with the Director and Cabinet Members have attended the Panel a number of times throughout the year. This gave the Panel the opportunity to regularly question and hold them to account on a number of issues, for example, progress with key priorities. The Chair and Vice Chair have continued to meet with the Mayor and four Cabinet Members (whose portfolios fall within the remit of Regeneration and Environment).

Moving Forward & Priorities for 2014/15

Strengthening Scrutiny Arrangements

A major piece of work undertaken during 2013/14 was to review and refresh the Overview and Scrutiny function. The purpose was to identify improvements and take account of best practise from leading Councils. A cross party working group was established to assist in the review and following a series of meetings new arrangements to be introduced during the 2014/15 municipal year were agreed by Council in January 2014..

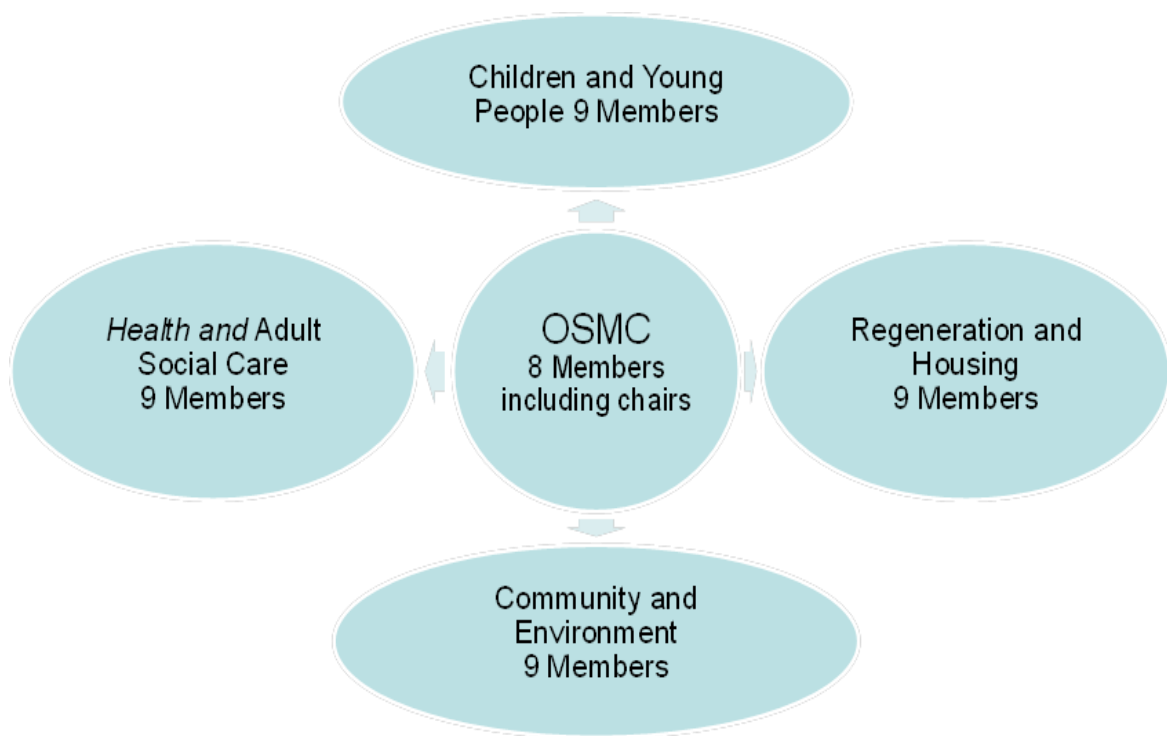
Key features of the new arrangements include:

- OSMC operating as a business committee for the Overview and Scrutiny function covering all aspects of Council and partnership activity (except Health). Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairs will be included within the membership of OSMC and they will have a key role in co-ordinating the overarching Overview and Scrutiny work programme.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Panels will focus mainly on undertaking a small number of in depth reviews and report their findings and recommendations back to OSMC.
- A new Panel established to focus on health scrutiny and adult social care with specific powers to hold health colleagues to account.

Work undertaken by the Panel's will be based around the following areas:-

- **Children and Young People's Panel** – Will consider improved outcomes for Children and Young People including the Children and Young Peoples Service Directorate, the Children's Trust and other areas undertaken by partners.
- **Regeneration & Housing** - Key areas will include improving the economy, regeneration, economic development, strategic transport and Housing.
- **Community & Environment**– This will focus on neighbourhood issues, street scene and highways, community safety as well as environmental issues; and
- **Health and Adult Social Care** – Will consider improving the health of our Borough including issues that fall within the remit of the Public Health Directorate, links with the Health and Well-being Board, adult social care and wider health and statutory health issues.

Overview & Scrutiny Revised Structure 2014/15



It is anticipated that this new structure will be more outcome focused. Whilst OSMC retains a strategic overview the Panel's will be reviewing issues in depth seeking to support the delivery of priorities and adding value and a unique perspective to future policy development.

These new arrangements will be monitored and reviewed during the course of the year to ensure improvements are maintained.

Overview and Scrutiny Priorities 2014/15

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee will:

- Introduce a new way of working that is more outcome focused;
- Agree and monitor the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny Panel work programmes and manage and co-ordinate Overview and Scrutiny activities;
- Continue to focus on ensuring performance is effectively monitored;
- Continue to review how effectively the Council's finances are being managed, particularly in respect of delivering the savings identified through the budget process;
- Engage with the Executive to review the proposals to meet the outstanding budget gap for 2015/16 – 2016/17; and
- Where appropriate undertake pre-decision scrutiny and ensure effective Overview and Scrutiny of key policy issues.

Schools Children and Young People will undertake in depth reviews on the following areas:

- Local Authority's relationship with Academies and educational attainment;
- Children with disabilities – support for families; and
- Fostering and adoption.

Regeneration and Housing will consider:

- Regeneration- Asset Disposal Programme and Strategy; and
- Housing - Delivering Council's Affordable Housing Programme.

Community and Environment:

- Environment - Review of the waste collection contract.
- Neighbourhoods/Communities - Review of support and relationships with communities and voluntary sector activity,
- Community Safety - Review of the activities and effectiveness of the Community Safety partners.

Health and Adult Social Care will address:

- Overview of How the NHS works including roles of Public Health, CCG and NHS England – Integration;
- Better Care Fund - to consider extent to which it is meeting national and local challenges;
- Care and Challenges RDASH/DRI and response to Francis Recommendations - Joint Workshop - Health and Well-Being Board and Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny;
- Health and Well Being Strategy – oversight and challenging progress;
- NHS England - Call to Action/5 year strategy for specialised services; and
- Influencing the independent sector to deliver high quality care for older people in residential homes.

Contacting Overview and Scrutiny

For further information about this Annual Review or any aspect of Overview and Scrutiny work in Doncaster please contact:-

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All reports considered at Overview and Scrutiny Panel meetings (unless exempt items) are available to the public. You can see them by visiting Doncaster Council's Website or by requesting a copy from the Overview and Scrutiny Team.

The Overview and Scrutiny Team is happy to respond to any enquiries about the work of Overview and Scrutiny. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more about the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Panels' work programmes for the forthcoming year, or if you have any comments that you would like to make.