



# Doncaster Council

---

19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023

To the Mayor and Members of the Council

Overview and Scrutiny Update – May to December 2022

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report updates Council on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) and the four standing Overview and Scrutiny Panels for the period May to December 2022.

## EXEMPT REPORT

2. This report is not exempt.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That the Council receive and note the update on the work of the OSMC and the four standing Scrutiny Panels for the period May to December 2022.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Reviewing the activities of Overview and Scrutiny provides an opportunity to demonstrate to the public how the function has contributed to decision-making and the improvement of services.

## BACKGROUND

5. This report includes a summary of some of the key work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny during the current municipal year. The activities of OSMC and the standing Panels include, holding decision makers to account, performance review, policy review and development and external scrutiny. Work plans are agreed early in the municipal year and reviewed at each ordinary OSMC and Panel meeting, to track progress and ensure they take account of emerging issues and future key decisions.

6. The membership of OSMC includes the Chairs of standing Panels and this seeks to ensure greater co-ordination of Overview and Scrutiny activity. The Committee meets regularly to consider issues around performance, the budget and policy framework, pre-decision scrutiny, in-depth/spotlight reviews undertaken by the Scrutiny Panels and areas of strategic importance.
7. The activities of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) and the standing Panels include holding decision makers to account, reviewing performance arrangements, policy review and external scrutiny.

The Overview and Scrutiny structure includes:

- **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC)** - The membership of OSMC includes the Chairs of standing Panels and other Members. This ensures cross party representation, greater co-ordination of Overview and Scrutiny activity and alignment to the corporate goals.
  - **Children and Young People's Panel (CYP)** – considers issues relating to improved outcomes for Children and Young People including Learning and Opportunities and delivering services to keep Doncaster children safe;
  - **Regeneration and Housing (R and H)** – considers issues relating to regeneration, economic development, strategic transport and housing;
  - **Community and Environment (C and E)** – considers neighbourhood issues, street scene and highways, community safety as well as environmental issues; and
  - **Health and Adult Social Care (HASC)** – considers issues that fall within the remit of Public Health Directorate, adult social care and the NHS. The Chair represents the Authority on Regional Health Scrutiny bodies.
8. The Overview and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs meet regularly with the Mayor and respective Cabinet Members to ensure regular communication on portfolio issues and Overview and Scrutiny work plans.

### **Summary of Overview and Scrutiny activities**

9. This report provides a snapshot of some of the key work undertaken by OSMC and the Panels between May and December 2022. A full account of the work undertaken by OSMC and the Panels is included on the Overview and Scrutiny work plan, which can be accessed through the following link <https://doncaster.moderngov.co.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13289> and minutes of meetings, which are available on the Council's website.
10. Members have all received training on the role of Scrutiny and ongoing support in terms of work planning, adding value, questioning skills and understanding their role. Importantly OSMC and the Panels have all held a number of meetings and have engaged with the public, individuals with lived experience, partners, officers and Executive Members.

11. The work plans and the OSMC/Panel remits for 2022/2023 take account of the six wellbeing goals and the Great '8' priorities outlined in Doncaster's Corporate Plan and Doncaster Delivering Together. This report aligns the activities of OSMC and the Panels to these priorities through their work plans.

## **Regenerative Council**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

12. Policy Framework and other strategies and policies - A number of Statutory Plans are considered by the OSMC and Panels, some are reviewed prior to their adoption by full Council, and this provides an opportunity for Scrutiny Members to feed in any views and comments. It also requires the Executive to respond to any specific comments and recommendations put forward by Overview and Scrutiny. These plans cut across the Delivering Doncaster Together themes and during the reporting period the following plans and strategies have been considered and supported:

Policy Framework;

- Youth Justice Plan;
- Corporate Plan

Other strategies and policies (including updates);

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy
- Economic Strategy
- Draft Asset Management Strategy;
- Home to School Travel Assistance Policy 2022-2027;
- Update on the Community Safety Strategy (and priorities);
- Update on Carers Strategy;
- Children's Mental Health Strategy;

13. OSMC continues to review quarterly performance and financial management of the Council, St Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) and until 1<sup>st</sup> September Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST). This is a key role for the Committee and supports the Council's performance management arrangements by reviewing the extent to which the Council and its key partners are operating within resources and delivering value for money. It is also used as a means of identifying future work plan issues. In particular, the Committee has focused on the cost of living crisis including its impact across Council services experiencing increasing costs and demand.
14. Members acknowledged the potential risks in relation to the budget, particularly relating to the unprecedented number of children being referred to Children's services, the collection and payment of business rates, Council Tax and fees and charges. With regard to performance, the Committee seeks clarity on the actions in place, to bring about improvements to key performance and service issues. The Committee has also considered how key partners such as Doncaster Children's Services Trust and St Leger Homes of Doncaster work together to

address cross cutting issues which impact on the delivery of a range of services e.g. Rising costs, overspends, Out of Authority Placements and Capital Programme Risks. This regular review and oversight of budget and Council performance provides public accountability and transparency around the Council's financial health and the effectiveness of its service delivery.

15. Localities

This has such a significant impact on many areas, therefore the Committee wished to consider how the Local Authority and partners were working to deliver local deals and locality plans. A detailed presentation brought to life excellent examples, demonstrated by each locality, from health and wellbeing, economic inclusion to community safety and getting a decent start in life. This provided the Committee with a real picture of the positive work-taking place across the whole of the Borough where services are delivered to meet local needs.

16. Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2021/2022

This is an important document for raising awareness of the types and volumes of complaints, identifying trends, communicating lessons learned and service improvements. It has provided Members with an understanding of customer perceptions of Council services, St Leger Homes, Doncaster Children's Services Trust and Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust. The report also enables Councillors to understand the extent to which service complaints impact on performance detailed within the quarterly performance and finance meeting.

The following areas were highlighted:

- Increase in complaints (compared to a period when the volume of complaints and communications from the public had significantly decreased during the pandemic).
- Particular peaks in complaints over the four organisations.

The Panel will be receiving further information about the Customer Experience Strategy prior to consideration by Cabinet in early 2023.

17. Commissioning - Drug and Alcohol Abuse Services

The Committee reviewed commissioning services for people who suffered with drug and alcohol abuse. As part of the Committee's consideration, a meeting was held with service users, where good practice and service gaps were considered. Service users provided an important insight into the lived experience and difficulties they faced, but more significantly, the positive outcomes through support they had received. A number of recommendations were made including the continued promotion and support of the current services provided and encouraging additional focus on engagement with hard to reach groups. The recommendations and findings from the review were supported by the Executive.

**Developing the Skills to Thrive in Life and Work**

## Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel

### 18. Economic Strategy Overview 2030

The Panel was provided with an initial overview of the emerging Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030, the process that has been undertaken and the key areas. A number of key issues and concerns were raised as part of a comprehensive debate that considered:

- Engagement with businesses and its success.
- How realistic the goals were as set out in the strategy?
- Effectiveness of partnership working to help deliver the strategy.
- The ability of the strategy to achieve its goals, in particular “becoming a Greener Regenerative Economy” and “Good Employment for All”.
- Recognising the barriers in place to take the strategy forward, for example, transport links, lack of suitable office space and the availability and location of town centre car parking.

Having reviewed the key elements of the strategy the Panel was able to support its approval prior to consideration by Cabinet.

### 19. Employment

The Panel received a presentation and discussed over-coming barriers and supporting those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) into employment. This provided the Panel with an opportunity to focus on a particular area of employment following previous consideration of this area.

## **Nurturing a Child and Family- Friendly Borough**

### Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

#### 20. Education White Paper

Members received a briefing updating them on the Education White Paper, which included policy changes and recommendations from three avenues (Children’s Commissioner, Schools White Paper and SEND Green Paper) which all inter-relate and have implications for Doncaster. This provided important information and knowledge for Members when considering areas with the remit of the Panel.

#### 21. Elective Home Education / Children Missing Education and Alternative Provision

The Panel considered a report detailing an increased demand in Elective Home Education, Children Missing in Education and Alternative Provision areas since the start of the pandemic. Members were able to find out more and explore the work undertaken to ensure suitability and quality of education for young people. The debate that took place included the following areas;

- Children missing in education case closures i.e. identifying those re-registered with a school having moved into or left the area, to ensure they are safe and receiving an education.
- Reduced school timetables.
- Virtual school.
- Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP).
- Nurturing a family and child friendly borough.
- Pressures on social workers.

This provided the Panel with an opportunity to review an area that had significantly affected many young people in recent years and developed the Panel's understanding of key issues that should be borne in mind when considering wider issues around educational attainment and improving children's welfare and well-being.

## 22. Post Covid - Impact on Children to include Children's Mental Health (Strategy Update)/0-3 Year Olds

The Panel received an overview of continuing impacts upon children and young people following the Covid pandemic. This included updates on the response from key services, particularly in the areas of Family Hubs, the early years sector, (including support from the Early Years Inclusion team), and children and young people's mental health. Areas that were highlighted during the discussion included:

- Availability of support for children including School Mental Health First Aider, online support (Kooth App) and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- General Development Assessment (GDA) referrals.
- Early Intervention funding system.
- Social and mental health needs.

This provided the Panel with an opportunity to review a cohort that had significantly been impacted in recent years and better informed the Panel's understanding of wider impacts arising from the pandemic that impact on the health and well-being of young children currently and in the future.

## 23. SEND Strategy

The Panel received an update on progress with the SEND Strategy prior to consideration by Cabinet. The areas addressed as part of the discussion included:

- Transition of young people into employment.
- Hearing the voice of young people through the Young People SEND Board.
- Ensuring resources allocated to schools for children with SEND needs are spent correctly.
- Robustness of the Implementation Plan to delivery on the Strategy.
- Teacher training for children with Autism.

- Meeting children's aspirations met and overcoming barriers.

All the above areas were noted by officers and it was agreed that these would be addressed moving forward with the action plan.

#### 24. Education Achievement Outcomes for all Key Stages 2022

The Panel received a summary of the action taken, changes made to learning improvement and an update in relation to the data, achievement and improvement across the education phases included Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, 2, 4 GCSE, (A Level), T Levels and Applied General. The Panel asked questions based on the provisional data presented and discussed phonics, attainment for Children and Young People with Educational Health and Care Plan and the different Strategies involved including a future Schools Implementation Strategy that will be shared with the Panel. This item provides the Panel with an opportunity to receive information on educational achievement outcomes and ask questions in relation to the data provided. Improving educational attainment contributes to so many of the borough's priorities this will continue to be reviewed by the Panel moving forward.

#### 25. Children and Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

This provided the Panel with information around the age groups being tracked and monitored with targeted support allowing them to gain knowledge and have access to education, employment and training opportunities that will improve life chances, whatever their status. Members discussed areas relating to NEET that included age ranges, care leavers, those in Elective Home Education and SEND.

### **Promoting the Borough and Its Cultural, Sporting and Heritage Opportunities**

#### 26. Culture Strategy

The Panel reviewed and supported the Cultural Strategy, which highlighted the rich activity available across Doncaster's communities from art production to gardening. The Committee was inspired with the proposals and hoped to see it developed across grass roots organisations. The Committee's enthusiasm for the Strategy and its importance was strongly conveyed and issues such as future proofing, access, barriers, places to undertake cultural activities and funding were discussed in depth. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to shine a spotlight on the wealth of opportunities that exist in the Borough and requested an update in the future.

### **Building Opportunities for Healthier, Happier and Longer Lives for All**

#### Health and Adult Social Care Panel

#### 27. Adult Mental Health Overview

The Panel received an overview of support and services available to Doncaster

people experiencing mental health problems. As part of the information received, the Panel heard the story of an individual both with lived experience and of supporting others. The Panel considered the following areas:

- Mental Health ambulance pilot scheme.
- Support for Members involved in ongoing cases where people were suffering with mental health but refusing help.
- Mental health predictions.
- Co-designing local core community services.

The Panel expressed its wish to continue to monitor this issue as part of its ongoing work plan. The opportunity to hear from those with lived experiences was welcomed as a positive method of enabling Members to fully understand some of the challenges faced by an increasing number of residents in our communities.

28. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2022

The Panel received information highlighting the work undertaken to date on the 2022 JSNA, the forward plan and the enabling infrastructure. The discussion looked at future challenges such as the Cost of Living crisis and increasing health problems. Members heard that it was about understanding the drivers behind these issues as well as feeding information into the wider policy work and those areas that needed it most. Members recognised how valuable the JSNA was for the Panel in identifying future issue to be addressed through the work plan.

29. Winter Strategy

The Panel considered the partnership plans in place to ensure that Doncaster people received joined-up health and social care over the winter. The Panel questioned measures described to support the wellbeing of Doncaster people over the winter even in spite of the great pressure on health and care services. Issues raised during consideration included additional beds, urgent community response and pathways, mental health of children and younger people, cost of livings crisis and funding. Considering these issues provided the Panel with assurance that robust plans are in place to address an area with increasing demands on services and to ensure that there is an appropriate response.

30. Update from Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals

An annual update from the Chief Executive of Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals provided the current position on a range of strategic issues that included future aspirations, challenges and impacts. Members considered a number of specific topics that included; Urgent and Emergency Care, Ambulance Data, Transfer of Care, Elective, Cancer and Diagnostics, Finance, Winter Planning, Health and Wellbeing, Estates and Infrastructure.



As part of the debate, the following areas were considered:

- Treatment of Carers in Hospital.
- Ambulance/Handover Waiting Times.
- Did Not Attend (DNA).
- Recruitment and Staffing.
- Virtual Wards.

This provides the Panel with a recurring opportunity to look at particular areas that feature on the work plan, such as the Carers Strategy and Action Plan as well as other areas of concern.

### 31. Access to Primary Care (CQC)

The Panel gave consideration to comprehensive set of data and information, which covered:

- a. The findings of the latest GP Patient Survey.
- b. Current access to primary care across Doncaster.
- c. National, South Yorkshire and Local approaches to improvement.
- d. Primary Care Estate development across Doncaster.

The Panel also discussed the following areas:

- Role of Nurse Practitioners being recognised and rewarded appropriately for their additional responsibilities and role within the practice.
- Impact of new housing developments on local GP Practices and how those practices would be able to meet increasing demands.
- Telecommunication Systems in GP Surgeries.

The Panel was able to form a good understanding on the present position, ongoing challenges and future opportunities faced by Primary Care and further their knowledge of the potential impacts on our communities moving forward.

### 32. Carers Strategy Update Action Plan

Further to considering the Carers Strategy 2022-25 earlier in the year, the Panel received an update on completed actions and next steps to be delivered across the partnership as part of the Strategy and Carers' Action Plan 2022-23. There was input from both people with lived experience and partner representatives. Those in attendance provided statements and an overview of their experiences of being a carer and supporting others who were carers.

The Panel considered a range of issues including locality working, treatment of carers (within hospitals) and information and communication. The Panel noted and supported the information provided by Carers and partners and requested a further update in approximately 12 months' time, as part of the Panel's work plan

for 2023-2024. The Panel also identified this as an area, where actions could be further investigated through other areas on the work plan, such as the update from Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital.

### 33. Integrated Care Partnership Strategy Development

Members were previously provided with an outline of the changes around how the NHS operated in England and how the CCG's (Clinical Commissioning Groups) would become part of the Integrated Care Strategy (ICS) and possible impacts on local provision.

As part of an update, the Panel learnt more about:

- The national planning context for 2022/23 and beyond.
- The South Yorkshire approach.
- The Doncaster approach.
- Next steps.

This update was essential for the Panel to keep up-to-date on major changes affecting residents and services across Doncaster and South Yorkshire. The Panel look forward to future updates, which will also assist in the development of the Panels work plan.

## **Creating Safer, Stronger, Greener And Cleaner Communities Where Everyone Belongs**

### Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel

#### 34. Crime and Disorder Committee

Areas highlighted through this discussion have been used as a basis for further work through the Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel at its Crime and Disorder meeting, where Members considered the demands and delivery of the Community Safety Strategy. At its meeting in October 2022, the Committee focused on the following;

- Update on Community Safety Strategy priorities.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Violence Women and Girls Strategy.
- Safer Streets.

There will be a further update at its meeting in February 2023, to consider areas of concern, in particular impacts from the cost of living crisis on crime including in the town centre.

#### 35. Community Assets/Community Asset Transfer Review The Communities and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel is in the process of undertaking a review of the Community Asset Transfer Process, over a number of evidence gathering sessions consideration was given to:

- The process, how it works and legal considerations.
- Challenges and issues, including examples of good practice of Community Asset Transfers which have been brought from Ward Members, Officers and another Local Authority.
- Research from Locality (a national membership network supporting local community organisations).
- Lessons learnt.

The Panel has benefitted from receiving a range of information and evidence. It is in the process of finalising the review and will be proposing evidence-based recommendations for further consideration in early 2023.

### Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Panel

#### 36. Section 106 Agreements

Members were provided with information on Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which enabled them to develop a better understanding of how it was monitored, what it was used for and variations to Section 106 agreements.

#### 37. Housing Allocations Review 2022/2023

The Panel were involved from an early stage on the Housing Allocations Review 2022/2023 and considered the outcomes of the review and robustness of the extensive public and stakeholder consultation. Members were keen to understand more about how the outcome of the consultation process had affected the housing policy and the fourteen proposed changes to Doncaster Council's Housing Allocations Policy. The Panel provided their support to the recommendations for changes to the policy.

#### 38. Housing Stock Conditions (Private Sector)

Members were provided with an overview of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey 2022, which will provide the Council with some evidence of current private sector housing condition. This helped provide important information to the Panel and enhanced Members' knowledge around future issues and challenges that the Council may face.

### Tackling Climate Change

#### Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel

#### 39. Environment (Biodiversity Net Gain - Biodiversity Offsetting)

Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that seeks to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was before the development occurred. The Panel received an insight into what was taking place within the Council and in particular, looked at its bearing on planning decisions, consultation feedback, current housing developments, impact of S106 and land viability.

40. Flood Planning Preparation

Over recent years, the Panel has undertaken reviews into the effects of flooding across the Borough. As part of its overview role, Members were provided with an update on the work carried out by the Council’s Flood Risk Team, the Local Authority’s winter readiness arrangements and borough’s overall flood risk. The challenges faced in delivering flood alleviation schemes, including funding projects, were also addressed. The Panel will continue to monitor the position moving forward.

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED**




41. There are no specific options to consider within this report as it provides the Council an opportunity to review the activities undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny over the period May to December 2022.


**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

42. Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 23 b) requires the Chair of OSMC to take a half yearly update report to Full Council to provide an overview of the work being undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny.

**IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES**

43.

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 Tackling Climate Change				✓
 Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work				✓
 Making Doncaster the best				✓

	place to do business and create good jobs				
	Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all				✓
	Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs				✓
	Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough				✓
	Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future				✓
	Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities				✓
	<b>Fair &amp; Inclusive</b>				✓
<p>Overall Comments:</p> <p>The work of Overview and Scrutiny supports the Council's contribution to all of its key priorities. Regular review of the Overview and Scrutiny work plan enables the Committee to ensure it remains relevant and is responding to important issues for citizens and the borough. The work plan update helps support openness, transparency and accountability as it summarises outcomes from overview and scrutiny activities. Citizens are able to contribute to the work of overview and scrutiny by attending meetings or contributing to reviews.</p>					

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [SF Date: 9/1/23]**

44. In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 23 b the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is required to take a half yearly update report to Full Council, to provide an overview of the work being undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny and progress against any priorities set out in the Annual Report.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (MS Date: 23.12.22)**

- 45 There are no specific financial implications attached to this report.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES (SH Date: 03.01.23)**

46. There are no specific HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (PW 03/01/23)**

47. There are no specific technology implications in relation to this update report.

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

48. To maximise the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function it is important that the work plan is manageable. Failure to achieve this can reduce the overall impact of the function. National research has identified that over ambitious work plans that include too many items are a common cause of frustration for Scrutiny Members as they fail to achieve any outcomes. The Overview and Scrutiny work plan will continue to be reviewed at each ordinary meeting of OSMC and officers will advise on the capacity available to undertake any additional work.

## **CONSULTATION**

49. The Chairs of OSMC and Scrutiny Panels have been consulted in respect of feedback on the progress against work plans.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

50. Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan 2022/23 and minutes of Overview and Scrutiny meetings.

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

51.

- OSMC – Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
- CYP – Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel
- CQC – Care Quality Commission
- CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy
- NEET – Not in Education Employment or Training
- SEND – Special, Educational Needs and Disabilities
- EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan
- GDA - General Development Assessment
- CAMHS – Children and Adult Mental Health Services
- SLHD – St Leger Homes Doncaster
- DCST – Doncaster Children’s Services Trust
- HASC – Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel
- R and H – Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Panel
- C and E – Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel
- JNSA – Joint Needs Strategic Assessment
- CCG – Clinical Commissioning Group
- ICS – Integrated Care System

- DDT – Doncaster Delivering Together

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

Caroline Martin, Senior Governance Officer

Phone Number 01302 734941 | Email address [caroline.martin@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.martin@doncaster.gov.uk)

Christine Rothwell, Senior Governance Officer

Phone Number 01302 735682 | Email address [christine.rothwell@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:christine.rothwell@doncaster.gov.uk)

Andrew Sercombe, Governance & Member Services Manager

Phone Number 01302 734354 | Email [andrew.sercombe@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.sercombe@doncaster.gov.uk)

**Scott Fawcus**  
**Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services**