



City of Doncaster Council

18th January 2024

To the Chair and Members of the Council

Overview and Scrutiny Update – May to December 2023

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 2023.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. This report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That the Council receive the update on the work of the OSMC and the four standing Scrutiny Panels for the period May to December 2023.

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 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, 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 2023. 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 - [Modern Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](https://modern.gov.co.uk) and minutes of meetings, which are available on the Council's website.
10. Training and support is available to all Members on the role of Overview and Scrutiny, work planning, adding value, questioning skills and understanding their role. Importantly OSMC and the Panels have all held 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 2023/2024 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.

Regional Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (South Yorkshire)

12. The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Doncaster's representative on this Committee, attended a number of meetings throughout the year. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) has a legal obligation to consult with the Committee with regard to substantial variations to service. It also consults with the Committee on many health issues and had asked Members to give consideration to the NHS Five Year Joint Forward Plan for South Yorkshire. The Committee's comments were noted and taken on board in the following areas:
 - Consultation - the low rate of consultation responses highlighting the need to emphasise that the Plan should be a top priority particularly with people who were vulnerable;
 - Achieving the ambitious programme – how the aims and objectives will be met from existing resources; and
 - Availability of appropriate workforce to deliver demands and maintain staff retention.
13. The Yorkshire Ambulance Service outlined its wish to attend this Committee regularly, to seek its views on the 5 year service proposals. This issue is therefore continually being monitored.
14. Meetings have also been held with the NHS to consider the Oncology review and the Integrated Care Board running costs.

Consultation with Scrutiny

15. There are a number of areas where Scrutiny Members have been asked to consider or be consulted on specific issues. This ensures the views of Members are heard and taken into account during development of proposals. These include:

Doncaster Delivering Together Investment Plan (OSMC)

16. The Committee was informed of how the 2023/24 plan would be developed in collaboration with partners. The Committee gave its support to the work being undertaken to deliver priorities.
(Great 8 Theme: Regenerative Council)

Customer Experience Strategy (OSMC)

17. Information presented focused on the work relating to Licensing, possibly establishing a citizens panel and ensuring documents were in Easy Read formats. The Committee recognised that the use of new technology was being promoted and had increased following the pandemic. The Committee acknowledged the positive progress taking place.
(Great 8 Theme: Regenerative Council)

Fairness and Well-being Commission (OSMC)

18. The Committee was provided with an update on the progress and recommendations from the Doncaster's Fairness and Wellbeing Commission. The purpose of this was to keep the Committee informed of the progress of the Commission (set up with the aim to help to address systemic inequality in our society), and an opportunity to find out more about its approach and methodology, findings, recommendations, timeline and next steps. The Committee expressed an interest in drilling down further into certain recommendations going forward as part of its future scrutiny work.
(Great 8 Theme: All)

The Community Prevention Model and Locality Plans overview (OSMC)

19. The Committee was presented with a detailed presentation outlining the current position. Members provided experiences regarding their work with key teams across the Council and Partners, including Ward and Lead locality meetings, what was working well, what could be improved and challenges and risks. It was agreed the Committee's views would be fed into the development of the Community Development Model.
(Great 8 Theme: All)

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Policy Framework and other strategies and policies

20. As part of the Scrutiny pre-decision role, 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:

- Youth Justice Plan
- Doncaster Delivering Together (DDT) Investment Plan;
- Play Parks Strategy;
- Local Lettings Policy;
- Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Allocation Policy;
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy; and
- Special Educational Need and Disability Strategy (SEND).

(Great 8 Theme: Regenerative Council)

Quarterly Performance and Financial Management

21. To support accountability and transparency, Cabinet Members (Councillors Cole, Houlbrook, Blackham, Blake and Lani-Mae Ball) have attended the Quarterly

performance meetings, to respond to questions and provided an insight into strategic delivery.

22. OSMC continues to review finance and performance on a quarterly basis. 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. The performance information is also used as a means of identifying future work plan issues. This is an important role for the Committee as it provides critical friend challenge to the Cabinet Members, Directors and St Leger Homes of Doncaster. (Great 8 Theme: Regenerative Council)

Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2022/2023

23. Further critical friend challenge is provided by consideration of complaints and compliments. This helps raise awareness of the types and volumes of complaints, identifies trends, communicates lessons learned and identifies service improvements. It provides Members with an understanding of customer perceptions of Council services, St Leger Homes, and the 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. (Great 8 Theme: Regenerative Council)

Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel:

Child Exploitation

24. Members examined the multi-agency approach and Child Exploitation Strategy. The discussion centred around process, local and national issues, resources, information on caseloads and partnership working, including what is being undertaken by South Yorkshire Police and throughout schools. The approach has assisted Members understanding of how the complex nature of child exploitation is being addressed in their communities and the importance of reporting any concerns promptly. (Great 8 Theme: Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough)

Child Poverty

25. Part of the Panel's investigation into the factors that influenced child poverty included a site visit to Adwick Family Hub and Woodlands Library and information provided by the Youth Council. Families explained how helpful the service was when they needed help, no matter how small, and that staff and partners understood their community's need. Councillors were able to speak with:
 - Service users, parents and foster carers;
 - Volunteer groups;
 - The local Reverend who ran a food bank via referrals from partners or the Family hub, and
 - Partners that provided support to families through the Hub.

26. The Panel provided an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the work of the Family Hubs. The Panel recognised this was a well-regarded service valued by users and the wider community.
(Great 8 Theme: Nurturing a child and family-friendly Borough)

Social care front door referrals - school experience update

27. The Panel met and received an update on social care front door referrals. Topics discussed included dental assessments, Mosaic computer system, children in need, sharing of information, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) network, re-referrals and issues around capacity, pressures and demands. This provided the Panel with a valuable opportunity to continue its look into progress and improvements made.
(Great 8 Theme: Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough)

Educational Achievement Outcomes 2023

28. The Panel received and noted the annual educational outcomes for Doncaster and noted the action taken, changes made to learning improvement and update in relation to the data, achievement and improvement across all key stage phases. This enabled critical friend challenge in considering educational achievement in comparison to regional and national trends.
(Great 8 Theme: Developing the skills to thrive in life and work)

Equitable and Inclusive Access to Education for All

29. The Panel received information on the approved future approach and proposals identified that build on the work already underway through the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy to support children and young people to thrive, wherever their starting point. This was positive in helping the Panel understand how educational provision effectively develops the skills of children and young people to address the new landscape of employment and training opportunities for young people when they leave school. The Panel agreed to review the issue in March 2025 giving the proposals time to take effect.
(Great 8 Themes: Developing the skills to thrive in life and work and nurturing a child and family-friendly borough)

Regeneration and Housing Panel

Local Lettings Policy and Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Allocation Policy

30. The Panel's input was requested prior to the development of the final proposals. The Panel's comments were reviewed, and the Policies were formally agreed. The main areas of consideration related to ensuring thorough consultation was undertaken particularly with hard-to-reach groups, personal circumstances being taken into account with banding allocation priority (and securing reasonable preference) and finally the redevelopment of the Home Choice Website.
(Great 8 Theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

Housing Retrofit progress – moving to net zero

31. The Panel considered this issue because reducing the carbon emissions from housing is a key element of mitigating the impact of climate change and to help minimise the costs to households of future energy price rises. Councillors considered the progress, advantages and difficulties of moving to the net zero target, including: Retrofit Funding, Delivery and implementation, Employment and business expansion in housing retrofit and heat pump installation. The Panel will continue to monitor progress in this area.
(Great 8 Theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all and Tackling climate change)

Transport overview

32. The Panel held an informative meeting attended by a representative from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority relating to local and regional public transport. The discussion covered a range of topics that included funding challenges, franchising proposals, ageing stock, electric vehicles, and the importance of connectivity as part of the Town Deal aimed at driving the economic regeneration of the city. The Panel agreed to bring transport and town deal to a future formal meeting as it was a key issue going forward.
(Great 8 Theme: Building transport and digital connections fit for the future)

The new Regulatory Regime for Social Housing and implication for the Council

33. Members were updated by Strategic Housing and St Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) on the new regulatory regime being introduced by the Regulator for Social Housing from April 2024. Members learnt that this would bring a stronger and more proactive regulatory regime to drive up standards in social housing and hold landlords to account for the service they provide to their tenants. Members were informed about emerging priorities and discussed several areas including key performance indicators, stock condition surveys, the impact of possible rent increases (that could be created by regulatory body fees) and demand for rental properties. It was a key issue that would be monitored by the Panel who welcomed the early consultation on these potential changes.
(Great 8 Theme; Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all and Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs)

Health and Adult Social Care Panel

Substantial Variation – Bentley and Rossington Primary Care Estate Development – Integrated Care Board (ICB)

34. The Panel was consulted on whether the ICB had met its statutory duties in relation to the new health centres / community hubs at Bentley and Rossington. This is a statutory consultation and the Panel considered a number of areas that could ultimately impact on the communities including travel and access,

communication, pharmacy location and easy read documents. The Panel was satisfied with the proposals presented.

(Great 8 theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

Public Health Protection Annual Report

35. Members highlighted there had been a continued response to the health protection challenges presented by Covid-19 but that the service had now moved from core response to pre-pandemic levels of emergency planning, resilience and response. Many issues were raised but the main focus related to bowel programme screening for people with learning disabilities, cervical screening work and infection prevention control to prevent covid and respiratory conditions. The Panel considered ways to promote preventative screening and measures within their communities to promote long term health improvement.

(Great 8 Theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2023

36. The information received by the Panel sets out the work undertaken on the 2023 JSNA, the forward plan and the enabling infrastructure. The discussion highlighted that for the first-time that women's health in Doncaster had deteriorated below figures shown for men. This was an area the Panel would continue to monitor throughout the year.

(Great 8 theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

Mental Health aged 18 to 25

37. The Panel gave consideration to information provided to young adults (aged 18–25) experiencing mental health problems in Doncaster. An update was also provided on a new provision established in Doncaster ('Better You'), which offers mental health support to young adults aged 18-25. The meeting was attended by partners including RDaSH, NHS ICB, and service providers through Better You. Members also listened to the lived experience of an individual who themselves had benefitted from this new service. A discussion took place that included the transition of young adults from Children's Mental Health Services to Adult Mental Health Services, the Better You offer, referrals supporting individuals into employment, care leavers who access the service and other initiatives that support young adults.

(Great 8 Theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

Winter Strategy

38. The Panel considered the support planned in Doncaster this winter and how it will be coordinated. Some of the key areas and comments raised by the Panel during the meeting included winter predictions, discharge planning and communication. This allows scrutiny the opportunity to look at challenges and

pressures that could be faced during winter against how robust the Council and partners winter plans are. The Panel recommended that consideration be given to delivering wider publicity (including a school campaign), to encourage greater handwashing to prevent viruses from spreading.

(Great 8 Theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

Update from Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals

39. 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 and as part of the debate including: Emergency department waiting times and ambulance handover; Reducing long waits for elective care, Recruitment and Staffing; and Virtual Wards.

(Great 8 Theme: Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel

Safer Doncaster Partnership

40. As part of its statutory role the Panel was presented with a 6 month update in respect of the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership (SSDP) crime and re-offending theme, with a particular focus on retail crime. Members considered retail crime trends and offences, support for first time offenders, support for businesses in the city centre and outside of the city, and finally prevention and police publicity campaigns. This meeting provided the Panel with an opportunity to focus in detail on one aspect of crime that has worsened over the last 12 months and to find out more about why and what actions were being taken to address the position.

(Great 8 Themes: Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs)

Community Assets/Community Asset Transfer Review

41. The approved Corporate Budget for 2023/24 provided a savings target of £1m for running costs for the Council's property portfolio. The Panel met to find out more about what was being done to take this forward and how it was impacting on other areas through a range of information and evidence. The discussion involved the review process, portfolio and different types of assets and also impacts such as on services and staff. Regarding its Corporate Assets Policy Review completed earlier in 2023, the Panel was updated on work to be undertaken on the Community Assets Transfer Policy which would take into account the recommendations it made during its previous review.

(Great 8 Theme: Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs)

Renewal of City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order

42. Prior to consideration by Cabinet, Members were able to review the revised Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and the robustness of the public consultation on the future of the city centre PSPO. Responses were provided to a number of areas that included lessons learnt and challenges, impact on city centre economy (and night-time economy), issues from the city centre that dispersed across boundaries into other areas and how effective the engagement had been as part of the public consultation.
(Great 8 Theme: Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs)

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2023 – 2029

43. Prior to its adoption the Panel considered the proposed Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2023 – 2029. The Strategy was supported with a recommendation that further information be sought on whether the strategy can form part of the Local Plan as a planning policy document or ensure its principles are reflected within the Local Plan.
44. It was concluded that robust consultation had been undertaken, despite there being a small number of public responses. Other issues raised included the role of flood wardens, surface water and planning applications, future preparedness and the monitoring and identifying potential areas that may be flooded in the future.
(Great 8 Theme: Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs)

Street scene

45. The Panel was provided with an update on the service. This included highlighting improved performance, whilst addressing the difficulties faced with fly-tipping enforcement, cleaning resources for the largest geographical City Council including rapid response work, graffiti, collection of volunteer waste collections, street bins and street sweeping. Members learnt about the new initiatives to tackle fly-tipping, for example, development of a community garden in an identified hotspot area. Other cleansing responsibilities were addressed for example, response to flooding, snowfall, safe disposal of roadkill and weed spraying. Members were able to use this information to aid their understanding and better inform the community.
(Great 8 Theme: Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs)

Joint Scrutiny Meeting - Children and Young People and Community and Environment Scrutiny Panels

Play Parks Infrastructure Policy

46. The Panels jointly had early sight of the Play Parks Infrastructure Policy which had been commissioned to monitor and assess the quality of Doncaster's

existing parks and set out visions and principles for what should be included in each. Members took part in a discussion that enabled them to express their concerns and consider the improved outcomes to be achieved through this policy. The discussion provided an opportunity to look at issues impacting their communities and users, the aims of the policy, maintenance and inspection requirements, quality of equipment, funding opportunities and availability of data. (Great 8 Theme: Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs and Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all)

OPTIONS CONSIDERED






47. 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 2023.




REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

48. 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

49

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				✓
Fair & Inclusive				✓
<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 (NC 2/1/24)

50. 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 15/12/23)

51. There are no specific financial implications attached to this report.

HUMAN RESOURCES (SH 15/12/23)

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

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (PW Date: 14/12/23)

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

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

54. 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

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

56. Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan 2023/24 and minutes of Overview and Scrutiny meetings.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

57.

- OSMC – Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
- CYP – Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel
- CQC – Care Quality Commission
- SEND – Special, Educational Needs and Disabilities
- CAMHS – Children and Adult Mental Health Services
- SLHD – St Leger Homes Doncaster
- 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
- ICS – Integrated Care System
- ICB – Integrated Care Board
- DDT – Doncaster Delivering Together
- RDaSH – Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber Foundation Trust
- PIDMAS - Patients Initiated Digital Mutual Aid System

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

Christine Rothwell, Senior Governance Officer
Phone Number 01302 735682 | Email address christine.rothwell@doncaster.gov.uk

Caroline Martin, Senior Governance Officer
Phone Number 01302 734941 | Email address caroline.martin@doncaster.gov.uk

Andrew Sercombe, Governance & Member Services Manager
Phone Number 01302 734354 | Email andrew.sercombe@doncaster.gov.uk

Scott Fawcus
Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services