



Oldham
Council

Report to Council

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

Report of:

Cllr Colin McLaren, Chair of the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board and the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, 2023/24

Cllr Eddie Moores, Chair of the Adults, Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board 2023/24

Officer Contact: Shelley Kipling, Assistant Chief Executive/Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Report Author: Peter Thompson, Constitutional Services

6th November 2024

Reason for Decision

To provide Council with the Overview and Scrutiny Annual report for the 2023/24 Municipal Year as require by the Council's Constitution at Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 4.1.

Executive Summary

The report outlines the statutory role of overview and scrutiny; the roles and responsibilities of the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board, the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, Adults, Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board in 2023/24; and a summary of the considerations and work undertaken by the three bodies during 2023/24.

Recommendations

Council is asked to note the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2023/24.

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

1. What is Overview and Scrutiny?

- 1.1 All local authorities with an executive model of governance established under the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) are required to have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 required local authorities to establish or designate a 'crime and disorder overview and scrutiny committee', while health scrutiny functions were introduced in 2002 and most recently defined by the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.
- 1.2 Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution, reflecting both the statutory requirements for, and the Council's approach to, overview and scrutiny describes the general role and function of overview and scrutiny as being to -
- a) play a positive role in assisting the Council and the Executive in the development of the policy framework and the budget by in depth analysis of issues arising;
 - b) conduct research and consultation in the analysis of policy options;
 - c) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options and in the scrutiny process in general;
 - d) question members of the Executive and appropriate Committees and senior Officers about issues and proposals affecting Oldham;
 - e) monitor the performance of partners and of internal and external service providers against standards and objectives, liaising with external and partnership organisations to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working;
 - f) evaluate the validity of executive decisions through the call in process;
 - g) contribute to the identification and mitigation of risk;
 - h) examine and review the performance of Committees of the Council over time;
 - i) play a positive role in examining and reviewing the performance of the Executive in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas, investigating and addressing the causes of poor performance;
 - j) question members of the Executive and of Committees and senior Officers about their decisions and performance, in comparison with service plans and targets, or particular initiatives or projects;
 - k) make recommendations to the Council, the Executive or an appropriate Committee arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process; and
 - l) demonstrate an objective and evidence based approach to scrutiny.
- 1.3 Overview and Scrutiny Committees are established and appointed to by the full Council and are made up of elected Members who are not members of the Executive (i.e. the Cabinet). While the Committees are required to be politically balanced by law, guidance dictates that the overview and scrutiny function should be approached in a non-political manner.

1.4 To deliver the expectations of the Council as to the specified roles and responsibilities, the Overview and Scrutiny bodies operate within a framework defined by the Council's Procedure Rules as set out at Part 4 of the Council's Constitution. The principal sections of Part 4 as they apply to the Overview and Scrutiny function are –

- 1.4.1 Part 4B: Access to Information Procedure Rules – sets out the procedural arrangements for the granting of exclusion from call-in and the consideration of executive business at less than 28 days' notice, the occasions when Overview and Scrutiny can require reports, and the right of access to information by Overview and Scrutiny bodies;
- 1.4.2 Part 4C: Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules – sets out the procedures to be followed in the consideration of Budget and Policy Framework related business and its passage through the executive and Overview and Scrutiny prior to submission to Council, and for the consideration of business identified as being outside of the Budget and Policy Framework;
- 1.4.3 Part 4D: Executive Procedure Rules – sets out procedures to ensure consideration of reports submitted by the Overview and Scrutiny bodies to the Executive; and
- 1.4.4 Part 4E: Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules - sets out the requirements for work programming and annual reports, the ability to establish Task and Finish Groups and other arrangements for consideration of business, for the preparation and submission of reports by overview and scrutiny bodies, the attendance of others at meetings, the 'call-in' process, declarations of interest and the 'party whip', and procedural arrangements within the Overview and Scrutiny function itself.

2. Overview and Scrutiny in 2023/24

- 2.1 The overview and scrutiny function in Oldham during 2023/24 was delivered by four Scrutiny Boards –
 - the Governance Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board
 - the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board
 - the Adults, Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board; and
 - the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board.
- 2.2 The work and contributions of each Scrutiny Board to the business of the Council is considered in turn below.

3 Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board 2023/24

3.1 Membership

Councillor McLaren (Chair), Councillor Moores (Vice Chair), Councillors Al-Hamdani, Hince, Hobin, Junaid Hussain, Surjan and Woodvine.

Substitute Members - Councillors Ibrahim, Iqbal and Sykes.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board Governance, Strategy and Resources Board role includes the scrutiny of key policy items, the annual budget proposals, proposals with significant service and or budgetary implications, risk and performance. The Board will also scrutinise proposals being developed at Greater Manchester level and by the Council's strategic partners, considering the implications for the Borough and for the Council.

The Board will also monitor and hold to account the performance of service delivery within Oldham Council and of strategic partners etc with reference to the Corporate Plan and all other strategic plans and monitor organisational risk.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board considered the following Key issues, policies and strategies during 2023/24: –

- a) Absence Trends across the Authority – the Board received a presentation which gave details on Workforce Absence Trends across Oldham Council. Members were informed that that sickness trends were largely back to pre-Covid-19 pandemic levels; the reasons for short term and long term remained similar as it has been previously, a greater complexity of sickness absence were being presented that required more specialised skills to support and manage cases and the number of staff in the workplace with at least one long term condition was increasing.
- b) The Board scrutinised four quarterly reports which presented a review of the Council performance during the fourth quarter of 2022/23 (1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023) and the first three quarters of 2023/24 (1st April to 31st December). Scrutiny Board members were invited to examine areas on under performance and where appropriate recommend remedial action. Members were invited to note areas of good and outstanding performance.
- c) The Board scrutinised a report which provided members with an update regarding the Council's performance in relation to enquiries received from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in the financial year 2022/23.
- d) The Scrutiny Board received a series of reports throughout 2023/24 on the Revenue Monitor and Capital Investment Programme. The reports provided members the opportunity to review the budget monitoring process for the financial year 2023/24. Members were therefore able to consider the key information relating to the forecast revenue budget position and the financial position of the Council's capital programme.
- e) The Board received an update from the Managing Director of MioCare Group, detailing the financial performance of MioCare Group. The 2023/24 performance was delivered in line with budget and the report also provided a strategic context for the current and future operating environment and the various considerations for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 budgets.
- f) The Board received an annual report that highlighted the potential risks to the Council from poor supervision of companies/ partnerships of which it has ownership and how governance oversight, in the past, had failed to identify this risk resulting in significant financial loss. The Board scrutinized the potential risks to the Council from the

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- partnerships in which it has an interest for its consideration and recommended, where appropriate, appropriate remedial action.
- g) At separate meetings in January and February 2024 the Board scrutinised the Administrations' budget proposals for 2024/25 and the main Opposition Group's alternate suggestions. The Scrutiny Board's various recommendations thereon were subsequently presented to and considered by the Cabinet, prior to Cabinet making a recommendation to Council on the 2024/25 budget.
 - h) A report was presented to the Board which provided an update on the Oldham Poverty Truth Commission (PTC), which had been completed at the end of 2022. The PTC, was a national model developed by the Poverty Truth Network, aiming to address poverty by fostering direct experience, relationships, and humanizing individuals and systems. The Oldham PTC brought together individuals with lived experience of poverty and those with power and influence across various sectors. It aimed to understand the causes and challenges of poverty and identify ways to address them. The commission was funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Oldham Council, and Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group.
 - i) Green New Deal Strategy – The Board were provided with an update on the Strategy that had previously been adopted in 2020 and further updated on the Oldham Community Network and Generation Oldham.
 - j) Statement of Community Involvement – The Board were consulted on the update to the Statement of Community Involvement which identifies the community involvement in the preparation and revision of the Local Plan and in the consideration of planning applications.

4. Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board

4.1 Membership

Councillor McLaren (Chair), Moores (Vice Chair), Councillors Ghafoor, Hindle, Ibrahim, Iqbal, Sheldon and Williamson.

Substitute members - Councillors Junaid Hussain, Kenyon and Surjan.

- 4.2 The Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board Overview and Scrutiny Board will look at how the Council fulfils three of its strategic priorities and is also responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions which may affect the Borough of Oldham and to exercise the functions of a crime and disorder committee including a review of the exercise of crime and disorder functions by responsible authorities and to review or scrutinise any local crime or disorder matter raised by a Member.

- 4.3 The Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board considered the following key issues during 2023/24: -

- a. The Scrutiny Board received a report, which advised Members that the Council had been successful in obtaining capital grant funding

from three sources administered by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

- b. The Scrutiny Board considered a report, which advised members that advance notification had been received from the Department of Levelling up, Housing, Communities and Local Government (DLUHC) that Oldham Council's Chief Executive was due to be contacted to ask that the Council participate in a deep dive around its temporary accommodation (TA) use. The context for this contact and the deep dive had been prompted by concern about the particularly acute pressures on the TA market at present, and the increase in poor quality, poor value-for-money accommodation types; including Bed and Breakfast and 'nightly paid' TA.
- c. The Scrutiny Panel received a report/presentation, that reminded members that Oldham Council had declared a climate emergency in September 2019 and had committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2025, with boroughwide carbon neutrality by 2030. The council was presently working towards its declared targets as part of the Green New Deal, and this approach ties in with that of Greater Manchester Combined Authority's 5 Year Environmental Plan. The GMCA plan had six main strands; in Oldham; three of the strands were covered as part of the Green New Deal and, the other three stands, were to be covered through the Environment Strategy, namely: Climate Adaptation and Resilience, Production and Consumption of Resources and The Natural Environment.
- d. The Scrutiny Board received a report of the Director of Environment which informed members of the opportunities and current/future challenges that exist within the cemetery service. The report outlined the current approach to addressing these challenges, as well as the plans being devised while continuing to provide a high level of service to residents during, what is often, a stressful and difficult time in their lives.
The report outlined the Service's approach towards ensuring the following: Future burial capacity that meets all residents needs; Ensuring a consistent approach to memorials and headstones at all graveyards; Tackling the risk of flooding at cemeteries; Ensuring the service meets the needs of all the residents in terms of access/out of hours burials; Ensuring that upgrades of cremators were made in a timely manner for continued compliance with legal requirements.
- e. The Scrutiny Board received a report that provided members with an update on the progress of Places for Everyone Plan: A Joint Development Plan Document for nine Greater Manchester Local Authorities (Places for Everyone Plan) and which sought approval for proposed modifications to the plan. The report provided an update on the Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan and its independent examination.
- f. The Scrutiny Board considered a report, that provided an overview of the work areas of the Strategic Transport Team, including how these fit into the Greater Manchester (GM) picture and progress and delivery against Oldham's Transport Strategy aims. Areas to be covered included:
 - GM Local Transport Plan (LTP)

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- The Bee Network
 - Bus Franchising
 - Oldham Transport Strategy – Progress & Delivery
 - Schools Active Travel Infrastructure Audit
 - Creating a Better Place
 - Oldham Bee Network Committee
- g. The Scrutiny Board was provided with an overview of the Council's Emergency Plan. Feedback and comments on the report were welcomed in addition to advice on how to raise both engagement with members and awareness of Emergency Plan Training, that was scheduled to be held in January 2024.
- h. The Scrutiny Board received a report, which sought permission to approve the publication and consultation of the draft version of a new Local Plan for Oldham. Once adopted, a Local Plan would replace the current Local Plan (the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD) which was adopted in November 2011 and any saved older planning policies from the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006.
- i. The Scrutiny Board received a report that reviewed progress of the 'Don't Trash Oldham' initiative and which detailed the outcomes and achievements over the previous twelve month period; it examined the lessons learned (what has worked and what could be improved) and proposed some new measures/targeted interventions for the future which aimed to strike a balance between new ways of working whilst addressing the ongoing environmental challenges faced by the residents of Oldham and the Council's approach in tackling such challenges.
- j. The Board received a detailed report/ presentation regarding the Oldham Green New Deal. It was noted that Oldham Council was working towards 2025 and 2030 carbon neutrality targets, with the 2022/23 Council's carbon footprint being at 6,379 tCO₂e, a decrease by 25% on the 2018/19 baseline. Oldham Borough had emissions at 841.5 ktCO₂e and per capita emissions were at 3.5 tCO₂e. Emissions had rose by 10% in the borough in 2021, with this being suggested because of covid-19 lockdowns. The Scrutiny Board noted that the Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership had been working on new initiatives for the last few years and was now moving to the implementation phase. The Council had secured 1.5 million from the DESNZ local Net Zero Accelerator Program via the GMCA to fund the implementation and expansion of the community led energy planning approach developed by Carbon Co-op.
- k. The Scrutiny Board received a detailed report/presentation that provided an update on the progress of phase 1 of the Selective Licensing Scheme, which had commenced in specific neighbourhoods of the Borough from 4th July 2022. In addition, it was outlined that the statutory consultation timescales and process prior to consideration of Phase 2 of the scheme. The Board was informed that the monitoring of this issue was important for the standard of housing in Oldham, with this being a potential local solution to a national crisis.

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- I. The Director of Environment submitted to the Scrutiny Board a report and gave a presentation updating Members on the status of the private hire and hackney carriage trade in Oldham. The Presentation provided an overview of the licensing policy, highlighting Oldham Council's proactive collaboration with authorities across Greater Manchester to establish and uphold minimum standards. Notable among recent changes, approved in June 2023, were amendments aimed at reducing regulatory burdens while upholding paramount concerns for public safety and maintaining high industry standards. These changes included the removal of the lower age limit for vehicles entering the taxi fleet, replacing front license plates with more practical window discs, and updating operator door signs to reflect licensing-issued signage. Such adjustments were designed to streamline processes without compromising the integrity of safety measures.
 - m. The Director of Economy submitted a report and gave a presentation which provided an update on the Creating a Better Place (CaBP) programme. Oldham's commitment to fostering a sense of belonging, safety, and pride was underscored, alongside efforts to bolster the local economy through social enterprise, business support, and employment opportunities. The CaBP programme was highlighted as instrumental in securing substantial external funding for regeneration projects, notably through partnerships such as with MUSE to develop up to 2,000 new homes in strategic locations within Oldham Town Centre. The CaBP programme had continued to make strides in regeneration efforts, delivering significant revenue savings and securing external funding exceeding £70 million. Progress includes initiatives like the Green New Deal, Broadway Green development, and housing targets achievement. Social value remains a priority, with contractual commitments ensuring community benefits such as apprenticeships and job creation.

5. Children's and Young People Scrutiny Board

5.1 Membership

Councillor Moores (Chair), McLaren (Vice Chair), Councillors Adams, Bishop Holly Harrison, Hurley, Rea and Shuttleworth.

Substitute members - Councillors Cosgrove, Jenny Harrison and Williamson.

- 5.2 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Board will examine how the Council fulfils its strategic priority of A great start and skills for life. This strategic outcome aims to:
- a. Increase the number of quality school and college places for Oldham's young people,
 - b. Expand youth activities outside of school,
 - c. Improve post-16 education and training, so everyone has options to help them increase their skills and knowledge.

Areas covered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board in scrutinising how the Council meets this strategic outcome include:

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- Educational achievement
 - School performance
 - Healthy lifestyles
 - Youth service
 - Looked after children.
 - Early Help
 - Children's Social Care
 - Child Protection
 - School Attendance and Exclusions
 - School leavers' progression to further education and training
 - Healthy schools
 - Take-up of sporting and cultural opportunities
 - Increased involvement of young people in developing services
 - Education, employment and training for care leavers
 - Children's Centres
 - Young people's fear of crime
 - Youth Offending
 - Freedom from poverty
 - Youth Justice Plan
 - Children's and Young People Strategic Plan
 - Higher Education provision including Oldham College and UCO

5.3 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Board considered the following key issues during 2023/24: -

- a. The Scrutiny Board considered from School Support Services which provided a briefing and update to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board on the (1) delivery of school places and (2) school place preference rates within the Local Authority (LA.). The report also provided an update on the delivery of additional school places and the work of the Council's Education Support Services including:
 - Allocation of school places by ward
 - The percentage of residents who are offered a school place of choice (1st or top 3 preferences)
 - Overview of the current demand for school places
- b. The Board received presentations regarding Family Hubs (Single Access Points for Families) and the Children's Transformation Programme, both of which were long-term ongoing issues for Children's Social Care Services.
- c. The Scrutiny Board received the annual report of the Cross-Party Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation, which had been produced as a record of the progress and impact of the Cross-Party Steering Group on Child Sexual Exploitation during its first year in existence (2022/23). The Scrutiny Board was advised on first meeting of the group was on 23rd November 2022 and the group had held further meetings in February, June and October 2023. Oldham Council had previously made a commitment to establishing a cross-party Steering Group at a meeting of Full Council in September 2022 which followed on from the conclusion of the Independent Review into historic safeguarding practices in Oldham, the findings of which have been fully accepted by the Council. The review focused on multi-agency responses to allegations child

sexual exploitation in the borough during the period 2011 - 2014. The Board was advised that in response to the publication of the review the Council had produced a Plan on a Page aimed at supporting survivors of child sexual exploitation and tackling perpetrators of abuse. The Board also received an update from GMP officers regarding Operation Sherwood.

- d. The Board received a report that analysed the performance of the Borough's primary and secondary schools, which showed that Key Stage (KS) outcomes for 2023 for Oldham school standards were recovering from the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in primary and are improved since the last comparable results in secondary. Most gaps to national averages are narrowing and benchmarked performance shows consequent improvement. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils continues to be a strength. The impact of additional resource over time and local partnership strategic prioritisation has been pivotal to improvement.
- e. The Board received an annual report of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) which provided Members with an overview of the management of allegations in Oldham, and the role of the Designated Officer during 2022-23. Statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out the requirements for all agencies providing services for children to have procedures in place for reporting and managing allegations against staff and volunteers. This is mirrored in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (KCSIE). The guidance highlights the need for a Designated Officer to oversee the process, by giving independent advice on thresholds and the other aspects of safeguarding when an allegation is made.
- f. The Board scrutinized the Borough's Youth Justice Plan 2023/24, which was a statutory report. In considering the report the Members were aware that it would also be considered by Cabinet and full Council prior to its ultimate approval.
- g. The Board considered and discussed the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 1 April 2022- 31 March 2023. The report was presented by Dr Henri Giller the Independent Chair of the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership. It was noted by Dr Giller for additional context that the report covered the second year of a three-year strategy, which had been developed by Oldham Council, Greater Manchester Police, and the Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group. To guarantee that all children and young people in the area receive protection and safeguarding.
- h. The Director of Education presented the 'Response to the Local area inspection on support and provision for Children and Young people who have special education needs and/ or disabilities (SEND).
- i. A report regarding the Participation of Young People aged 16-18 in Education, Employment or Training report was presented and the purpose of this annual report was to inform members of the relevant activities and initiatives, with the report offering members the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the activities in the preceding year. In considering the report Members were concerned with the issues around the transitioning phase between year 11 to 12 and year 12 to 13, with Members wanting to know what can be done to monitor those children at risk of not ending up in education, employment, and training. The response was that schools hold information and tracks students who are at risk of NEET.
- j. The Board received a report regarding repeat referrals to children's social care services. In considering the report, Members noted that the graphs in the report showing Oldham in comparison to neighbouring authorities. It was noted that the rates shown in the graph fluctuate often for referrals and repeat referrals.

The Board was informed that there had been an increase in Oldham for domestic abuse incidents, with there being a multi-agency meeting for those at high-risk domestic abuse with the aim of identifying safety plan for young children and families. Also, it was noted that there had been new systems introduced for reviewing reports, which had been implemented by the Head of Service for Oversights. It was explained to Members that a deep dive had showed that the reasons for referrals could not be predicted.

- k. The Board received a summary of the current financial position of Children's Social Care, Members noted that the Children's Services had benefited from significant additional financial investment over recent years, due to the recognition of the demand pressures that they faced. The resources had been invested to align budgets to expenditure in demand led services, strengthen the management structure and to expand the cohort of social workers.

6. Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board

6.1 Membership

Councillor Moores (Chair), McLaren (Vice Chair), Councillors Adams, Ball, Hamblett, Jenny Harrison, Sajed Hussain and Wahid.

Substitute members - Councillors Holly Harrison, Harkness and Shuttleworth.

- 6.2 The Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board will look at the how the Council fulfils its strategic priority of Healthy, safe and well supported residents Looking after our most vulnerable residents, keeping people safe and healthy are crucial responsibilities of any local authority focusing on services for adults and public health services to monitor progress towards improving health, lifestyles and quality of care across the Borough; and providing oversight of integration and partnership working within and between the council and health bodies. The Board will also oversee the active lifestyle related functions and activity across the Borough. The Board will review and scrutinise the commissioning and delivery of local health and social care services in Oldham to ensure reduced health inequalities, access to services and the best outcomes for local people. The Board will discharge its statutory duties to:
 - a. The review and scrutiny of any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in the Council's area.
 - b. The making of reports and recommendations to relevant NHS bodies and health service providers.
 - c. Responding to proposals and consultations from NHS bodies in respect of substantial variations in service provision and any other major consultation exercises.
 - d. Referral of comments and recommendations on proposals referred to the Committee by a relevant NHS body or relevant service provider to the Secretary of State if considered necessary.
 - e. All matters relating to Healthwatch.
- 6.3 The Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board considered the following key issues during 2023/24: -

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- a. The Board considered a report which gave an update on Urgent and Emergency Care for Oldham Paediatrics. This report had previously been submitted to the former Health Scrutiny Committee meeting on 7th March 2023. The Board were informed of the 'winter pressures' of 2022/23 and also to the increase in demand for services post Covid-19. The Board was informed that these pressures combined with the regular fluctuations in demand, emphasised the challenges and objective to provide the best quality care.
 - b. The Board received a presentation regarding preparations for a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection. The Board was also informed of the areas of inspection, how the areas will be rated, The Peer Review Process, the Peer Review Outcomes, the Council's approach to Inspection, the Adult and Social Care Change Board which assesses Governance an Assurance and the role of elected Members.
 - c. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy was presented to virus meetings of the Board after it had been previously approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2023 and its five main themes were to be the subject to 'deep dives' and special one-off briefings for Members. The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Health and Wellbeing Board aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Oldham and to reduce inequalities for all ages. The responsibility for developing and delivering the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (and the Joint Strategy Needs Assessment) sat with the Health and Wellbeing Board and rests with all the members of the board.
 - d. A report was received for discussion a report from Northern Care Alliance regarding a Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection report. The Scrutiny Board was informed that an action plan had been produced which highlighted 79 'Must Do' recommendations from the Inspection report to be expedited. The NHS representatives at the meeting presented an updated report, later on in the Municipal Year, which highlighted these recommendations. These recommendations were being addressed and were on track to be completed. Members were also informed that the Northern Care Alliance had an internal accreditation process which gives an assurance on any issues.
 - e. Members were informed that in 2021, the Manchester Foundation Trust had acquired the North Manchester General Hospital site, and Salford Royal Foundation Trust acquired the remaining sites of, creating the Northern Care Alliance FT. Since then, due to the way in which digital systems and clinical rotas operate, there are some services that operate across the two providers that have not yet been 'disaggregated'. This meant that the services still needed to be split between the two organisations using an agreed set of principles: including splitting of the workforce, budget and waiting lists. The disaggregation was due to take place between January 2024 and March 2024 and includes Dexa (bone density) scanning, Ear, Nose & Throat, Trauma & Orthopaedics and Urology.
 - f. The Board considered the Borough's Alcohol and Drugs Strategy including an update on the mobilisation of the Adult Integrated Substance Misuse to Treatment and Recovery Service delivered by Turning Point. It also provided an update on the mobilisation of the Adult Integrated Substance Misuse to Treatment and Recovery Service delivered by Turning Point. The Board was informed that having a high functioning drug and alcohol treatment and recovery offer was an essential component of the range of activity required to achieve better population health and reduce demand on health and social

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- care services. A national policy paper – From harm to hope; A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives had been published, setting out the ambition to give people with drug addiction a route to a productive and drug free life.
- g. The Board received and considered the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection report in respect of Oldham Hospital, which was presented by Karen Coverley, Director of Nursing, Oldham Care Organisation. The report indicated that the Northern Care Alliance (NCA) overarching action plan was developed and replicated by each care organisation. Set out were the 'Must' and 'Should' actions for the NCA, Oldham Care Organisation and Maternity Services.
 - h. The Board also received the Annual report for HealthWatch Oldham, in respect of 2022/23. The top three priorities, detailed in the Annual Report were: Improving Primary Care access for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, by collating their views about their current challenges; establishing an Oldham Youth Healthwatch and develop a specific platform for young people to voice their views on the local health and social care system; and tackling health inequalities- Continue to use experiences and data to identify gaps and issues on access, produce reports and work with ICP/ICS and PCNs. We will help reach key demographics such as communities facing racial injustice and the LGBT community whose views are under-represented and ensure services are appropriate for them.
 - i. The Independent Chair of the Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board (OAB), Dr Henri Giller presented the Board's Annual Report. As part of its statutory duties the Board was required to produce an Annual Report setting out the safeguarding concerns it has dealt over the last year, as well as a Business Plan setting out future ambitions and actions to help keep people safe in Oldham. The purpose of the report therefore was to share the Board's agreed 2022-23 Annual Report and 2022-24 Business Plan with members for their consideration. In considering the report, Members of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board were asked to consider and comment on the Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board 2022-23 Annual Report and 2023-24 Business Plan.
 - j. The Scrutiny Board received the Director of Public Health's Annual Report on Infant Mortality in Oldham 2022. The report was an independent view on this highly sensitive matter that was related to health and wellbeing in Oldham and examined what could be done to decrease the mortality rates. The report had been produced in collaboration with the Council's relevant colleagues and partners, and it shared experiences of some of the Borough's residents. It also detailed the most up to date data regarding Infant Mortality in Oldham.
 - k. The Scrutiny Board received a report, which explained that Borough of Oldham residents experienced many inequalities across the wider determinants of health that contribute collectively to the difference in life expectancy and healthy life expectation. The report advised that in June 2022, Oldham's Health and Well-being Board had agreed the six themes and associated actions which underpin the local health inequalities plan that was intended to be achieved over a two-year period. The submitted report sought to provide an update on the progress made to date. Scrutiny Board Members, in considering the report, were asked to consider the progress made on the local health inequalities plan.
 - l. The Board received a presentation, that provided an overview of the work done to date on the development and implementation of Oldham's Prevention Framework. In Summer 2022, the Public Service Reform (PSR) Board agreed
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to initiate the development of a comprehensive Prevention Framework for Oldham, recognizing the importance of prevention and early intervention in various key strategies. While existing strategies, such as the early help demand strategy and health inequalities plan, emphasized these principles, they had been developed independently.

- m. A presentation and report were received which provided an overview of the tobacco control work in Oldham, in the context of regional and national policy and approaches. The report also provided an overview on the role of the Oldham Tobacco Alliance, made up of partners and services from across the borough, in progressing this agenda and working together to tackle tobacco-related harm and improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Oldham. There was an update from the Community Specialist Stop Smoking Service on behalf of 'Your Health Oldham'.
- n. A report was received which highlighted the Council's roles and responsibilities under the Care Act 2014, Adult Social Care departments in Local Authorities had several commissioning responsibilities. Authorities have the duty to promote diversity and quality in service provision. Local authorities should engage in market shaping activities to ensure that any person requiring Care and Support/Support Services: a) Have a variety of providers supplying a variety of services to choose from; b) Have a variety of high quality services to choose from; and c) Have sufficient information to make an informed decision about how to meet the needs in question. Local authorities should ensure that they have effective strategies to understand likely demand for such services, ensure stability and to shape the marketplace so that the right services are available.
- o. A report was presented that provided an overview of provision delivered by sexual health services in the borough to improve the sexual health and wellbeing of Oldham's residents. There was also a presentation by representatives of HCRG Care Group and Early Break which gave an update on progress made by the services in improving sexual health outcomes and achieving budget reduction targets. It was reported that having a high functioning sexual health offered the Borough's residents an essential component in the range of activity required to achieve better population health and reduce demand on health and social care services. As per Public Health funding conditions and mandated responsibilities, the Council was required to ensure access to sexual health services for all of its residents.
- p. A report was received that detailed the Adult Social Care workforce and strategy. The workforce had been highlighted as a significant risk by a recent peer review, the Adult Social Care Management Team, and the Skills for Care report, 'The State of Adult Social Care sector and workforce in England' in reference to the wider workforce pressures in the care provider market. Recruitment and retention of staff was proving increasingly difficult in Adult Social Care as increased case complexity, increased volume of referrals post-Covid 19, and front-line staff leaving to work for agencies or other localities with better salaries, terms, and conditions, meant an increased workload for staff at all levels.

7. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programming

- 7.1 Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 4.1 requires each of the Overview and Scrutiny Boards to prepare and maintain a Work Programme. These Work

Programmes are maintained by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, in conjunction with Constitutional Services and are co-ordinated in consultation with the Scrutiny Board Chairs. This approach allows for an efficient use of resources and avoids duplication, allowing for flexibility to accommodate any urgent and/or short-term issues that may arise.

7.2 Updated Scrutiny Work Programmes for each Board were submitted to each meeting on an ongoing basis, keeping Members and the public informed as to business due to be considered and, through parallel consideration of the Key Decision Document, allowing Members to identify any further items for consideration.

7.3 Moving from 2022/23 to 2023/24 saw the implementation of the new overview and scrutiny structure, with the introduction of the four Scrutiny Boards. As Chairs we worked with Constitutional Services towards the end of the Municipal Year to review Work Programmes and ensure that ongoing work and issues were not lost as the new arrangements took shape.

8. Overview and Scrutiny and Procedural Arrangements

8.1 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Boards hold certain procedural responsibilities within the Council's Constitution. These were:

- General Exception – where 28 days' notice of the intention to take a Key Decision is not or cannot be given, 'General Exception' procedures apply. These include a requirement to obtain agreement in writing from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (or nominee) that the matter about which the decision is to be made is urgent and cannot be deferred.
- Special Urgency – where General Exception procedures cannot apply and a decision is needed urgently, 'Special Urgency' procedures apply. These include a requirement to obtain agreement from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (or nominee) that the matter about which the decision is to be made is urgent and cannot be deferred.
- Decisions contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework - should such a decision be required urgently, and it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the full Council, the decision may be taken if the Chair of a relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees that the decision is a matter of urgency.
- Executive business in private – where 28 days' notice of the intention to take an executive decision at a meeting in private is not or cannot be given, the matter can be considered in private should the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board agree that the matter is urgent and cannot reasonably be deferred.

8.2 In 2023/24 there were eight instances of General Exception, five instances of Special Urgency, no instances requiring agreement to either the consideration of matters outside the Budget and Policy Framework or the consideration of business in private.

9. Council Support for Overview and Scrutiny

9.1 The Overview and Scrutiny structure is supported by all Officers of the Council. The Overview and Scrutiny function should expect all Council Officers to provide the same level of support as those Officers provide to the executive, regulatory and other functions within the Council's decision-making arrangements.

9.2 The Overview and Scrutiny function received the following specific support during 2023/24:

- Statutory Scrutiny Officer – the Council is required by the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) to designate a statutory Scrutiny Officer with the functions of: (a) promoting the role of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees,
(b) providing support to the Council's overview and scrutiny committees and the members of those committees,
(c) providing support and guidance to all Members and Officers of the Council in relation to the functions of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees.

This role has been filled by Shelley Kipling, Assistant Chief Executive.

- The Constitutional Services team undertake lead roles in respect of the four Scrutiny Boards, maintaining Work Programmes, ensuring and chasing up actions, and co-ordinating scrutiny activities held outside of the formal Committee meetings, in addition to the general governance activities that are provided in respect of all other formal bodies, ensuring that the Board and Committee meetings were convened and held in accordance with relevant legislative and procedural requirements.

9.3 The scrutiny function also benefitted from the active support given by the Council's partners across the statutory and voluntary sectors who prepared reports for consideration and attended Committee meetings to assist Committee members in their scrutiny considerations.

10. A New Structure for Overview and Scrutiny

10.1 From 2024/25 the Council will be operating a further Scrutiny Body – the Joint Scrutiny Committee for the Northern Care Alliance. A report was presented to the Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board which presented the proposed Terms of Reference and Working principals for the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the Northern Care Alliance and in doing so received the Scrutiny Board's support for the establishment of such a body and accordingly to recommend its establishment to Council (which was subsequently approved by Annual Council on 22nd May 2024).

10.2 The purpose of a JHOSC is to scrutinise services provided by the Northern Care Alliance relating to the health of the population in Bury, Oldham, Rochdale and Salford and contribute to the development of policy to improve health and reduce health inequalities in respect of services provided by the hospitals.

10.3 The Committee comprises member representatives from Bury, Oldham, Rochdale and Salford Councils (three from each authority). The JHOSC has delegated powers, on behalf of the four local authorities, to undertake all the necessary functions of health scrutiny in accordance with part 4, Health Scrutiny by Local Authorities, of the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013, relating to

18. Appendices

18.1 Overview and Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference are found at Appendix 1.