

# Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and  
Commissioning**

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Thursday 9 January 2025

## Notice of Meeting

Dear Member

### Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

The **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee** will meet in the **Council Chamber - Town Hall, Huddersfield** at **10.30 am** on **Friday 17 January 2025**.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view via the Council's website.

The items which will be discussed are described in the agenda and there are reports attached which give more details.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Lawton'.

**Samantha Lawton**

**Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning**

Kirklees Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair/Clerk of their intentions prior to the meeting.

## **The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee members are:-**

### **Member**

Councillor Cahal Burke (Chair)

Councillor Itrat Ali

Councillor Zarina Amin

Councillor Andrew Cooper

Councillor Jo Lawson

# Agenda

## Reports or Explanatory Notes Attached

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### Pages

**1: Membership of Committee**

To receive apologies for absence from those Members who are unable to attend the meeting.

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**2: Minutes of Previous Meeting**

1 - 6

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

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**3: Declaration of Interests**

7 - 8

Members will be asked to say if there are any items on the Agenda in which they have any disclosable pecuniary interests or any other interests, which may prevent them from participating in any discussion of the items or participating in any vote upon the items.

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**4: Admission of the Public**

Most agenda items take place in public. This only changes where there is a need to consider exempt information, as contained at Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. You will be informed at this point which items are to be recommended for exclusion and to be resolved by the Committee.

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**5: Deputations/Petitions**

The Committee will receive any petitions and/or deputations from members of the public. A deputation is where up to five people can attend the meeting and make a presentation on some particular issue of concern. A member of the public can also submit a petition at the meeting relating to a matter on which the body has powers and responsibilities.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, Members of the Public must submit a deputation in writing, at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting and shall subsequently be notified if the deputation shall be heard. A maximum of four deputations shall be heard at any one meeting.

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## **6: Public Question Time**

To receive any public questions.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, the period for the asking and answering of public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes.

Any questions must be submitted in writing at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

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## **7: Budget 2025/26 - Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

9 - 12

The Committee will be invited to consider the draft budget proposals for 2025/26, as agreed by Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024, so that the comments can be included within the consultation response and reported to Cabinet when it considers the budget at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and Council at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

Contact: Sheila Dykes – Principal Governance Officer

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## **8: Council Plan 2025/26 - Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

13 - 16

The Committee will receive a presentation in respect of the key components of the Council Plan for discussion and feedback.

Contact:  
Stephen Bonnell – Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning

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## **9: Work Programme 2024/25**

17 - 22

The latest version of the Committee's work programme for 2024-2025 will be submitted for consideration.

Contact: Sheila Dykes – Principal Governance Officer

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Contact Officer: Sheila Dykes

## KIRKLEES COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Friday 13th December 2024**

Present: Councillor Cahal Burke (Chair)  
Councillor Itrat Ali  
Councillor Zarina Amin  
Councillor Andrew Cooper  
Councillor Jo Lawson

**28 Membership of Committee**

All members of the Committee were in attendance.

**29 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED -**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**30 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

**31 Admission of the Public**

All items were considered in public session.

**32 Deputations/Petitions**

No deputations or petitions were received.

**33 Public Question Time**

No public questions were received.

**34 Corporate Financial Monitoring - Quarter 2 Report 2024-2025**

Kevin Mulvaney, Service Director Finance presented the Corporate Financial Monitoring Report for Quarter 2 2024-2025, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

The report set out:

- The revenue headlines
- Revenue monitoring, with a breakdown across each directorate;
- Key pressures on each directorate and mitigating actions
- Analysis of Reserves
- Housing Revenue Account position, variances and revenue pressures
- Direct Schools Grant headlines including pressures and mitigations
- Collection Fund
- Position in respect of the Capital Budget and monitoring for each directorate.

## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 13 December 2024

- The Medium Term Capital Plan;
- Prudential and treasury management indicators; and
- An update on savings delivery across all directorates and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The following points were highlighted:

- The projected outturn of £9.95 million overspend in respect of the Council's General Fund, which equated to approximately 2.6% of the General Fund Budget.
- Services had been reminded of the need to balance their budgets and controls remained in place in respect of recruitment and spend.
- The Finance Team were reviewing the balance sheet items, including earmarked reserves, grant reserves and any balances not used for some time, to try and bring in appropriate one-off income to the revenue account.
- An overview of the key pressures in each directorate, noting that many of these were addressed within the 2025/25 budget proposals.
- The position in terms of reserves; noting that if the budget could not be balanced at year end there would need to be a further call on reserves.
- The projected overspend of £3 million on the HRA, the majority of which related to the calculation for depreciation, and the key pressures on this budget and the position on reserves.
- The Capital Plan which had been re-profiled for this year, with further reprofiling being anticipated.
- The cost of borrowing remained high.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Regeneration, Councillor Graham Turner, was also present for the item.

Questions and comments were invited from Committee Members, with the following issues being covered:

- The conditions for the 'safety valve agreement', associated with the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit, were still in place as agreed under the previous Government. The high needs block deficit had risen to £43 million in 2023/24 and was projected to rise to £65 million this year, in line with projections. The Council was in regular contact with the Department for Education (DfE) and they had acknowledged the pressures local authorities faced. The DfE had recognised the positive progress being made by Kirklees, including two new specialist schools, which would help reduce the deficit. The Government had placed £1 billion into the 2025/2026 budget for the sector and the Council had committed £10 million towards the safety valve agreement, with the 2025/2026 budget proposals including the first contribution of £2.15 million.
- A question was asked regarding the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme. The Council had been notified by Defra of an indicative allocation of £6 million funding for 2025/26 to recognise the cost to the authority of the collection, management, recycling and disposal of packaging waste. The level of funding in the future would be dependent on the volumes of packaging both locally and nationally and it was anticipated that the value would reduce.

## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 13 December 2024

- This funding was generated from organisations that created this waste who paid a levy into a central Government fund which was then distributed to local authorities. The draft budget proposal in relation to smaller bins had not resulted from this funding allocation and these proposals were still under consultation.
- The Council budgeted for a level of voids and turnover of housing stock and this was typically 1%, in line with other local authorities. Anything above the 1% target would result in a loss of income. There was regular communication with the relevant Portfolio Holder on how the number, and the length of time they were empty, could be reduced.

### RESOLVED -

- (1) That the Service Director, Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Regeneration be thanked for attending the meeting to update the Committee.
- (2) That it be noted that financial monitoring reports would continue to be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis throughout 2025.

## 35 Council Plan and Performance Update - Quarter 2 Report 2024-2025

A presentation was given by Andy Simcox - Service Director, Strategy and Innovation, in respect of the Quarter 2 2024-2025 Council Plan and Performance Update, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

He explained that:

- The purpose of the report was to update the Executive Leadership Team, Executive Board, Cabinet and scrutiny in respect of progress and activities related to the Council's four key priorities, as detailed in the Council Plan.
- The report included those actions delivered in quarter 2 and those planned for the next quarter. It also provided an update in respect of key council measures for 2024/2025 and included an appendix that contained updates against other measures.
- This was the second iteration of the report for 2024/25 and reflected the structural changes agreed at Personnel Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> July.
- Benchmarking data was included where possible.

### RESOLVED -

- (1) That the Service Director, Strategy and Innovation be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update in relation to the Council Plan and Corporate Performance for Quarter 2, 2024/2025
- (2) That it be noted that the quarterly reports would be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis during 2025 and Lead Members will identify any issues that they consider might require further scrutiny by their respective Panel.

## 36 Corporate Risk - Quarter 2 Report - 2024-2025

Kevin Mulvaney, Service Director for Finance and Andy Simcox, Service Director for Strategy and Innovation presented the Quarter 2 2024-2025 Corporate Risk Report, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

**RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the Service Director, Finance and Service Director Strategy and Innovation be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update in relation to the Corporate Risk - Quarter 2 Report 2024-2024.
- (2) That it be noted that the quarterly reports would be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis during 2025 and Lead Members will identify any issues that they consider might require further scrutiny by their respective Panel.

**37 Opportunities - Partnership and Funding**

A presentation was given by Stephen Bonnell, Head of Policy Partnerships and Corporate Planning and Paul Mitchell, External Funding and Resource Officer in respect of activities associated with identifying and pursuing partnership and funding opportunities that supported the Council priorities.

The following key areas were outlined:

- Constant monitoring took place in respect of opportunities for funding, collaborative working or associated with wider social or economic changes such as new technologies.
- Services worked closely with a wide range of partners, nationally, regionally and locally, including local community groups. The Council had a close working relationship with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, for example on infrastructure projects.
- The importance of information sharing and communication at an early stage,
- The approach was shaped around the Council Plan priorities and those within the partnership strategies.
- Monitoring of a range of other information including best practice and benchmarking.
- An explanation of what constituted 'external funding' the various routes by which it was accessed and why it was needed
- The External Funding Framework, which set out the guiding principles to encourage a consistent and strategic approach including, the need for early consideration of funding when designing projects and services.
- The wide range of central support available to services, including support with identifying and assessing funding opportunities, bid development, communication, and the maintenance of comprehensive records including a tracking spreadsheet.
- Ongoing external development work.
- Successes and challenges.

Questions and comments were invited from Committee Members, with the following issues being covered:

- Tools and resources were now in place to minimise the possibility of missed opportunities, including a comprehensive search and alert tool, 'Grant Finder'.



## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 13 December 2024

- The significant work going into sourcing funding via the appropriate channels was acknowledged. In respect of support to try and ensure the success of bids, such as training and development of staff and working with partner agencies to ensure those involved had the necessary skills, training workshops were undertaken in respect of the 'Grant Finder' tool so that it could be used to the maximum effect to identify funding opportunities. In terms of developing bids and applying for funding, this support was currently undertaken on an ad-hoc basis on request but there were plans to include such support more formally within the training suite in the future.
- Third party and community groups often found submitting effective bids could be challenging. In response to a question about whether the Council would be able to work with such groups it was explained that the Third Sector Team provided support to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations in applying for funding and that support could also be accessed through partners such as Third Sector Leaders (TSL). It was also noted that the Third Sector Team was now part of the same service which would strengthen collaborative working.
- In respect of engagement and collaborative working it was queried whether Kirklees worked with other local authorities on projects, particularly where a project might overlap boundaries, as this could be more effective. It was advised that, to date, this had been undertaken with West Yorkshire Combined Authority led bids where it was a collaborative effort to access funding from Central Government, however the need to do this was understood and it would be considered in the future where it was possible.
- In a similar way to the Council's Risk Register it was considered that an Opportunities Register could demonstrate the work to actively seek opportunities and measure how effectively opportunities were picked up within each directorate and perhaps the tracking spreadsheet might do this and assist with learning. There was an expectation upon all senior officers to understand good practice and have awareness of what other local authorities were doing on an ongoing basis and to be able to bring that evidence into cases for service development or savings opportunities.
- It was suggested that consideration could be given to the use of Municipal Climate Bonds, which had been adopted by a number of other local authorities.
- Enabling others to take advantage of opportunities was an important and positive role of the Council, such as assisting local organisations with seed funding and the use of crowdfunding platforms such as 'Spacehive'. However, it should be noted that the proportion of fees for this platform was high in comparison to others.
- Ward budgets could also be used to draw in additional funding from private organisations to support community projects and Community Plus also provided funds to support small groups in the community. It was important that such seed funding was available so that such groups could be continued to be supported in the future.
- The Committee was advised that a piece of 'mapping' work was being undertaken to identify the different pots of money and the different teams across the Council that supported such community groups, to try and avoid duplication. The view was expressed that ward councillors were well placed to have the relevant background knowledge of the community groups in their area but the limited ward budget had affected their input.

## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 13 December 2024

- In respect of issues with staff capacity and skills and assessing the cost benefit associated with missed opportunities, the tracking spreadsheet captured opportunities which the Council had applied for, or were considering but also why a particular funding opportunity had not been progressed. The 'Go/No Go' process was an in-depth assessment used to decide if an opportunity was right for Kirklees and if the necessary resources were available to deliver a strong application and to deliver the project.
- The Local Government Minister had committed to publishing the Devolution White Paper prior to Christmas and this would provide more information about future funding arrangements. Although it was at an early stage the indications had been of a more targeted approach to funding for areas of deprivation and those most in need.
- In relation to the culture of the organisation, reference was made to a previous scheme that had encouraged Kirklees employees to put forward ideas. This could be considered, and it was noted that the team also looked at what other authorities were doing as well as ideas from 'think tanks' and arising from relevant research. The framework aimed to embed a 'think funding' mindset within the organisation and a communications initiative was planned in the near future to further promote this principle. Services were encouraged to be creative in this area and innovation was also a key element.
- In terms of Councils sharing services and staff and potential efficiencies, the possibility of shared services would be a consideration from a transformation perspective and would be discussed with services where appropriate.

### RESOLVED -

- (1) That the Head of Policy Partnerships and Corporate Planning, Service Director, Strategy and Innovation and the External Funding Officer be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update in relation to partnership and funding opportunities.
- (2) That, to support the 'think funding' mindset, Lead Members ensure that external funding possibilities are considered, where appropriate and relevant to the issues being considered by their respective Panels.

## 38 Work Programme 2024-2025

The latest version of the Committee's Work Programme for 2024-2025 was submitted and noted.

<b>KIRKLEES COUNCIL</b>			
<b>COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC</b>			
<b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>			
Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee			
Name of Councillor			
Item in which you have an interest	Type of interest (eg a disclosable pecuniary interest or an "Other Interest")	Does the nature of the interest require you to withdraw from the meeting while the item in which you have an interest is under consideration? [Y/N]	Brief description of your interest

Signed: ..... Dated: .....

## NOTES

### Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your disclosable pecuniary interests under the new national rules. Any reference to spouse or civil partner includes any person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or as if they were your civil partner.

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.

Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -

- under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
- which has not been fully discharged.

Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.

Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.

Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) - the landlord is your council or authority; and the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.

Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -

- (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
- (b) either -

the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or

if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.



**TITLE: BUDGET 2025/26 – PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

<b>Meeting:</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee
<b>Date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	Councillor Carole Pattison
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	No No – pre-decision scrutiny
<p><b>Purpose of Report</b> The Committee is invited to consider the Council’s draft budget proposals for 2025/26, as agreed by Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024, so that the comments made can be included within the consultation response and reported to Cabinet when it considers the budget at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and Council at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The Committee is asked for its response to the draft budget proposals for 2025/26 in the context of the four areas of focus set out at paragraph 1.2 of this report.</p> <p><b>Reasons for Recommendations</b></p> <p>The Committee’s response will be reported to Cabinet and Council when these bodies consider setting the budget for 2025/26.</p>	
<p><b>Resource Implications:</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>	
<b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b>	Rachel Spencer-Henshall – Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director for Public Health and Corporate 19-12-24
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>	Not applicable
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</b>	Samantha Lawton 7-1-25

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** Not applicable

**Public or private:** public

**Has GDPR been considered?** No personal data is included in this report.

## **1. Executive Summary**

**1.1** The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is invited to consider the draft budget proposals for 2025/26, as agreed by Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024, so that its response can be reported to Cabinet when it considers the budget at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and Council at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**1.2** To help ensure that scrutiny is undertaken at a strategic level and adds value to the budget setting process, it is suggested that the Committee focus on the four lines of enquiry set out below:

- (i) To what extent are the budget proposals in line with Central Government policy, pressures and directives.
- (ii) To what extent will the budget proposals ensure that the Council is able to contribute to the outcomes detailed within the Council Plan bearing in mind the identified constraints.
- (iii) To what extent do the budget proposals demonstrate that the results of any engagement, research or other evidence have been taken into account.
- (iv) To what extent are the challenges in delivering the savings within the timescales and the capacity to deliver services with reduced resources being addressed.

**1.3** The Committee's response will be reported to Cabinet and Council when these bodies consider the final budget for 2025/26.

**1.4** An indicative order of business/timetable is set out below:

10:30 High level introduction to Council Plan and Budget by the Leader and the Chief Executive,  
followed by presentation by Service Director, Finance and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Regeneration

The relevant Portfolio Holder and Executive Director will provide an overview of the key pressures and savings for their directorate, including capital expenditure, followed by the opportunity for the Committee to ask questions:

11:00 Adults & Health Directorate  
11:25 Children & Families Directorate  
11:50 Place Directorate  
including the Housing Revenue Account  
12:15 Corporate Directorate

## **2. Information required to take a decision**

**2.1** The draft budget proposals for 2025/26 are set out in the report to Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025 which can be accessed using the following link:  
[Cabinet Report - Budget Proposals 2025/26 \(10-12-24\)](#)

### **3. Implications for the Council**

#### **3.1 Council Plan**

The Committee is asked to give consideration to the impact of the budget proposals on the priorities and outcomes within the Council Plan so that its comments can be reported to Cabinet and Council.

#### **3.2 Financial Implications**

Not applicable to this report.

#### **3.3 Legal Implications**

Not applicable to this report.

#### **3.8 Other (eg Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

Not applicable to this report.

### **4. Consultation**

Not applicable to this report but consultation on the draft budget proposals is ongoing and the results will be reported to the Cabinet and Council when the final budget for 2025/26 is considered.

### **5. Engagement**

5.1 Cross-party budget meetings have brought all the group leaders together to receive regular updates on the development and delivery of the Council's budget. The forum provides group leaders with an opportunity to ask questions, and to provide feedback as part of this process. It is attended by the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive and also includes the Service Director for Finance. The first meeting took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and it continues to meet on a two-weekly basis.

5.2 Engagement with each political group will be undertaken between 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025

5.3 The public consultation to support the 2025/26 annual budget was launched on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and will run up until 15 January 2025.  
The consultation was made available online and was supported by information providing an overview of what the Council does and the funding challenges the Council was currently facing. The supporting information also provided a summary of the proposed areas for savings which are included in the budget documentation.  
The consultation asked the public for their opinions on the draft budget, and whether they would be impacted by any of the savings proposals.  
The consultation was promoted to citizens, communities, businesses and partners. Feedback from the consultation will be collated, analysed and used to help inform final decision making related to the budget. A summary of the consultation results will be provided alongside the budget at Cabinet on the 11 February, and at Council on the 5 March 2025

### **6. Options**

Not applicable

**7. Next steps and timelines**

The Committee's response will be reported to Cabinet when it considers the budget at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and Council at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**8. Contact officer**

Leigh Webb – Head of Governance.

**9. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Report to Cabinet 10-12-24 – Budget Proposals 2025/26.

**10. Appendices**

None

**11. Service Director responsible**

Samantha Lawton, Service Director Legal, Governance and Commissioning



**TITLE: Council Plan 2025/26 – PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

<b>Meeting:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC)
<b>Date:</b>	17 January 2025
<b>Cabinet Member</b> (if applicable)	Councillor Carole Pattison
<b>Key Decision Eligible for Call In</b>	Yes No – pre-decision scrutiny
<p><b>Purpose of Report</b> The Council Plan for the 25/26 financial year will be considered for approval at Cabinet on 11 February, and Council on 5 March 2025 alongside the Council Budget.</p> <p>OSMC will be provided with a presentation during the meeting setting out the key components of the plan for discussion and feedback. The discussion will particularly focus on the updates to the plan, which include four strategic priorities for the Council and associated areas of focus for each priority.</p> <p>This paper provides OSMC with background to the plan and an overview of the plan’s approach and contents ahead of the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b> OSMC is asked to provide comment on the key components of the Council Plan, as presented to them during the meeting on 17 January 2025.</p> <p><b>Reasons for Recommendations</b> OSMC feedback received during this discussion will be considered by Cabinet members and any changes agreed will be incorporated into the final plan to be considered by Cabinet and decided at Council.</p>	
<p><b>Resource Implications:</b> The Council Plan sets out the strategic framework for the Council’s budget and is to be considered alongside the Council’s budget for decision at Council in March 2025.</p>	
<b>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> &amp; name</b>	Rachel Spencer-Henshall – Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for Public Health and Corporate Resources 07.01.25
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>	Kevin Mulvaney 07.01.25
<b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</b>	Samantha Lawton 07.01.25

**Electoral wards affected:** All

**Ward councillors consulted:** Not applicable

**Public or private:** Public

**Has GDPR been considered?** No personal data is included in this report.

## 1. Executive Summary

The Council Plan for the 25/26 financial year will be considered for approval at Cabinet on the 11 February, and Council on 5 March 2025 alongside the council's budget.

OSMC will be provided with a presentation at the meeting setting out the key components of the plan for discussion and feedback. The discussion will particularly focus on the updates to the plan, which include four strategic priorities for the Council and associated areas of focus for each priority.

This paper provides Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) with background to the plan and an overview of the plan's approach and contents ahead of the meeting.

## 2. Information required to take a decision

2.1 The Council Plan sets the overarching strategic direction for the services and activities relating to the business of the council.

2.2 The plan is part of the Council's Policy Framework as set out in Article 4 of the council's constitution. As such, it is approved at Full Council.

2.3 The plan doesn't attempt to list all of the council's services and programmes. It summarises the council's role alongside partners in delivering our vision and shared outcomes and sets out how the council is prioritising our activity in the current context with the resources available.

2.4 The plan is developed alongside the budget in line with our Annual Business Planning Cycle and will go to Full Council alongside the budget in March for decision. The timings align the Council Plan with the financial year and the setting of the budget, with the Council Plan setting out our strategic priorities for the forthcoming financial year, and the budget setting out how resources have been aligned to deliver upon those priorities

### 2.5 Key Features of the Council Plan

The 2025/26 Council Plan retains and reasserts a number of long-term cross-directorate principles, which we have been working to for several years alongside partners across the district. Most of these can only be delivered in partnership. These include:

- **Vision** - Our vision for Kirklees is "to be a district that combines a strong, sustainable economy with a great quality of life - leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives."
- **Shared Outcomes** – These eight outcomes describe the impact the council and our partners are looking to have. These are summarised as: Healthy and Well, Best Start, Independence, Aspire and Achieve, Sustainable Economy, Shaped by People, Safe and Cohesive, and Clean and Green. It also includes an outcome we have chosen for ourselves: a commitment to be 'Efficient and Effective'.
- **Our Key Partnership Strategies:** Environment Strategy, Inclusive Economy Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Inclusive Communities Framework.
- **Approach** - How working with People, Partners and in our Places is central to the way that we do things.
- **Values and Behaviours** - Our People Strategy, and values of 'Kindness, Inclusion and Pride', and supporting behaviours.

The 2025/26 Council Plan will include several changes setting out the direction and priorities of the Council for the 25/26 financial year. These include:

- **Four strategic priorities.** Underneath each of the four broad priorities, more details will be covering:
  - What the priority means
  - Why it is important

- Areas of focus, setting out some of the key areas of work we are undertaking to progress the priority in the 25/26 financial year

The Council Plan is still in development, so to ensure OSMC receive the most up-to-date information on this new content, this will be provided in a presentation at the meeting.

### **3. Implications for the Council**

#### **3.1 Council Plan**

The Committee is asked to consider the approach and contents for the 25/26 Council Plan, so that its comments can be reported to Cabinet and Council.

#### **3.2 Financial Implications**

The Council Plan provides the overarching strategic framework for the Budget, which sets out the resources available for delivering upon the priorities contained with the Council Plan.

#### **3.3 Legal Implications**

The Council Plan is included in the Policy Framework for the Council, as set out in Part 2, Article 4 of the Council's Constitution, and as such, it is the decision of Full Council whether to adopt any Council Plan.

#### **3.4 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

Our Council Plan restates our commitment to our People Strategy, which sets out how we will achieve our shared outcomes with the support of healthy, motivated and flexible staff with the right skills, values and behaviours to work in partnership with people and places.

### **4. Consultation**

Public consultation on the associated draft budget is ongoing and the results will be considered as part of the further development of the Council Plan ahead of consideration at Cabinet and Full Council. OSMC's feedback will be considered as part of the further development of the plan.

The Leader provided an initial overview of the current administration's thinking around new priorities at an OSMC session in September 2024. The current set of priorities and areas of focus are further developments from that presentation and discussion.

### **5. Engagement**

The vision and shared outcomes are the product of partner engagement when they were first developed. The Shared Outcomes indicators and measures and any updates are discussed and agreed at a partnership level with the Partnership Executive.

All four council directorates have been engaged in developing the areas of focus in the plan.

Leading Members have been updated on the ongoing development of the plan

The Leader provided an initial overview of the current administration's thinking around new priorities at an OSMC session in September 2024. The current set of priorities and areas of focus are further developments from that presentation and discussion.

### **6. Options**

OSMC is asked to provide comment on the key components of the Council Plan, as presented to them during the meeting on the 17 January 2025.

## **7. Next steps and timelines**

OSMC feedback received during this discussion will be considered by Cabinet members and any changes agreed will be incorporated into the final plan to be considered by Cabinet and decided at Council.

## **8. Contact officer**

Stephen Bonnell, Head of Policy, Partnerships, and Corporate Planning

## **9. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Current Council Plan, approved by Council on 6 March 2024 [Agenda for Council on Wednesday 6th March 2024, 5.30 pm | Kirklees Council](#)

## **10. Appendices**

None.

## **11. Service Director responsible**

Andy Simcox, Service Director Strategy and Innovation

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

**MEMBERS: Councillors; Cahal Burke (Chair), Itrat Ali, Zarina Amin, Andrew Cooper and Jo Lawson**

**SUPPORT: Sheila Dykes, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer**

<b>FULL PANEL DISCUSSION</b>		
<b>THEME / ISSUE</b>	<b>APPROACH / AREAS OF FOCUS</b>	<b>OUTCOMES / ACTIONS</b>
<b>1. Leader's Priorities 2024/25</b>	The Leader will attend to set out her portfolio priorities for 2024/25.	<p><u>20 September 2024</u> The Leader set out her priorities for 2024/25 for the Committee's information. She would be invited to attend to update on progress at an appropriate point.</p> <p>Informal meetings with the Chair and the Leader take place on a monthly basis throughout the year.</p>
<b>2. Finance Portfolio Holder's Priorities 2024/25</b>	The Portfolio Holder will attend to set out his priorities for 2024/25.	<p><u>20 September 2024</u> The Portfolio Holder set out his priorities for 2024/25 for the Committee's information. He would be invited to attend to update on progress at an appropriate point.</p> <p>Informal meetings with the Chair and the Portfolio Holder take place on a monthly basis throughout the year.</p>
<b>3. Corporate Portfolio Holder's Priorities 2024/25</b>	The Portfolio Holder will attend to set out his priorities for 2024/25.	<p><u>20 September 2024</u> The Portfolio Holder set out his priorities for 2024/25 for the Committee's information. He would be invited to attend to update on progress at an appropriate point.</p> <p>Informal meetings with the Chair and the Portfolio Holder take place on a monthly basis throughout the year.</p>

<p>4. <b>Corporate Financial Management</b></p>	<p>To provide oversight of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Corporate Financial Monitoring Reports</li> <li>• Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li>• Budget 2025/26</li> </ul>	<p><u>20 September 2024</u> Updates provided in respect of the Quarter 1 Corporate Financial Monitoring Report and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p><u>13 December 2024</u> Update provided in respect of the Quarter 2 Corporate Financial Monitoring Report.</p> <p><u>17 January 2025</u> Pre-decision scrutiny of the draft budget proposals 2025/26.</p> <p>Further dates TBC</p> <p>The Chair is briefed by the Service Director, Finance on a regular basis throughout the year.</p>
<p>5. <b>Corporate Performance</b></p>	<p>To provide oversight of the Quarterly Performance Management Reports</p>	<p><u>20 September 2024</u> Quarter 1 Report - Update provided to allow Lead Members to identify any issues for consideration by their Scrutiny Panel</p> <p><u>13 December 2024</u> Quarter2 Report - Update provided to allow Lead Members to identify any issues for consideration by their Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>Further dates TBC</p>
<p>6. <b>Corporate Risk</b></p>	<p>To provide oversight of the Quarterly Corporate Risk Reports</p>	<p><u>20 September 2024</u> Quarter 1 Report - Update provided to allow Lead Members to identify any issues for consideration by their Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p><u>13 December 2024</u> Quarter 2 Report - Update provided to allow Lead Members to identify any issues for consideration by their Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>Further dates TBC</p>

7. <b>Council Plan</b>	Pre-decision scrutiny in respect of the latest version of the Council Plan	<u>17 January 2025</u> Pre-decision scrutiny of the Council Plan 2025/26.
8. <b>Kirklees Communities Partnership Plan (Crime and Disorder) and Domestic Abuse Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual pre-decision scrutiny of the refresh of the Kirklees Communities Partnership Plan, in accordance with statutory requirement under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.</li> </ul>	<u>4 April 2025</u>
9. <b>Government Policy / Legislation</b>	To maintain an overview of potential and forthcoming changes relevant to local government and to consider the potential impact on the Council at an early stage, with specific focus on any changes in respect of financial settlements and the approach to funding.	<u>20 September 2024</u> Noted and Lead Members to identify any areas of interest for their Panel.  Briefing Notes provided to Lead Members on an ongoing basis throughout the year.
10. <b>Libraries and Customer Service</b>	<u>Libraries:</u> Pre-decision in respect of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation design</li> <li>Early findings and implications for the model/strategy</li> <li>Post-decision in respect of the plans for implementation</li> </ul> <u>Customer Service:</u> The Committee will review the information provided from the first stage of implementation of the integrated Libraries and Customer Services Centre functions in Dewsbury and Huddersfield, with a view to providing feedback in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning from the integrated approach to access information and implications for how citizens access services from the Council</li> </ul>	<u>20 September 2024</u> For information presentation in respect of the proposed future delivery model for the Libraries Service and planned consultation noted. The Committee welcomed the positive engagement with scrutiny on this issue and noted the proposed arrangements for further consultation.  <u>Informal – 1 November 2024</u> Re Consultation design and process

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise on what role other partners do, and need to, play in supporting people in communities with information, support, and advice (This will include a visit to the Huddersfield Centre)</li> </ul>	
<b>11. Corporate Safeguarding Policy</b>	Update report following the rollout of the refreshed policy (adopted by Cabinet 8 March 2022 / Council 13 July 2022)	<p><u>2nd August 2024</u></p> <p>The Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asked that the points raised be taken on board in the future development of this work.</li> <li>Welcomed the Safeguarding Champion role as an excellent initiative, with the added value it provided being well illustrated by the examples given.</li> <li>Requested that a progress update be placed on the Work Programme further to the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment in 2025.</li> </ul>
<b>12. Inclusion and Diversity</b>	<p>Monitor work in relation to inclusion; including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-decision scrutiny of the revised Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.</li> </ul>	<p><u>2nd August 2024</u></p> <p>The Committee asked that the points and feedback raised, including the recommendations set out below, be taken into account in taking the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detail should be provided in respect of the Key Performance Indicators, including the reporting mechanisms.</li> <li>Reference should be made to the important role of Elected Members and how they could contribute and add value in terms of delivery of the objectives of the strategy.</li> <li>The statistics in respect of social isolation and loneliness and fuel poverty should be updated.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024-27 was approved by Cabinet on 10th September 2024. The comments made by the Committee, and the amendments made in response, were detailed in the report to Cabinet.</p>



<b>13. Final Report – Scrutiny of Social Connectivity in Kirklees</b>	Scrutiny work in relation to social isolation and loneliness, with specific reference to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission of Final Report</li> </ul>	<u>20 September 2024</u> The Committee received an Action Plan to respond to the recommendations in its report on social connectivity in Kirklees. The positive response to the recommendations from the Cabinet Member was welcomed.
<b>14. People Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress report in respect of Phase 3 and outcomes from Phase 2</li> <li>• Pre-decision scrutiny of revised strategy 2025</li> </ul>	<u>28 February 2025</u>
<b>15. Armed Forces Covenant</b>	Update on the work of the Armed Forces Covenant Board	<u>4 April 2025</u>
<b>16. Procurement</b>	Report further to the implementation of the Procurement Act 2023 to provide an update in respect of how the work is progressing and an assessment of its impact.	<u>4 April 2025</u>
<b>17. Opportunities</b>	How the Council seeks to identify opportunities for supporting outcomes, including relationships with local/regional/national partners, learning from other councils, and monitoring government activity. Overview of the work being undertaken in respect of the Council's external funding framework, including how opportunities for funding are identified (to include those in partnership) and the work to improve the way this is done. To cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horizon scanning opportunities</li> <li>• Examples of successes</li> <li>• How the Council works with partners through this process</li> <li>• How the Council is building relationships with key funders</li> <li>• Corporate coordination activity to ensure the above is efficient and effective</li> </ul>	<u>13 December 2024</u> The Committee considered information in respect of the Council's approach and activities associated with identifying and pursuing partnership and funding opportunities to support the Council priorities. Lead Members made a number of comments for consideration by officers and undertook to support the 'think funding' mindset through ensuring that external funding possibilities were considered where appropriate and relevant to the issues being covered by their respective Panel.

18. Overview of Scrutiny Work Programmes	Maintain an overview of the Work Programmes of the four Panels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s</li> <li>• Environment and Climate</li> <li>• Growth and Regeneration</li> <li>• Health and Adult Social Care</li> </ul>	<u>2nd August 2024</u> Initial Work programmes agreed.
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**LEAD MEMBER BRIEFING ISSUES**

THEME/ISSUE	APPROACH / AREAS OF FOCUS	NOTES
Inclusive Economic Strategy	Pre-decision scrutiny	This has been considered previously by the Growth and Regeneration Panel and the final strategy is due to be considered by this Panel in December prior to submission to Cabinet.
Culture and Tourism Strategies	Pre-decision scrutiny of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture Strategy (10 year) prob go to Cabinet</li> <li>• Tourism Strategy (3 year)</li> </ul>	Timescale TBC
Communications Strategy and Business Plan	Update on activity	Timescale TBC
Technology Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on activity</li> <li>• Pre-decision scrutiny of revised strategy</li> </ul>	Timescale TBC
Asset Management Strategy	Pre-decision scrutiny	Timescale TBC
Corporate Landlord	Overview of the operation of the Corporate Landlord function	Chair’s Briefing 18-10-24