

Public Document Pack



**Service Director – Legal, Governance and
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Thursday 4 September 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 **10.00 am** on **Friday 12 September 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

Pages

1: Membership of Committee

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

2: Minutes of Previous Meeting

1 - 10

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11th July 2025.

3: Declaration of Interests

11 - 12

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.

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.

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.

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.

7: Council Plan and Performance Update – Quarter 1 Report 2025-2026 13 - 14

A presentation will be given in respect of the Council Plan and Performance Update Report for Quarter 1 2025-2026, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 9th September 2025.

Contact: Mike Henry – Head of Data and Insight

8: Corporate Risk - Quarter 1 Report 2025-2026 15 - 16

A presentation will be given in respect of the Quarter 1 2025-2026 Corporate Risk Report, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 9th September 2025.

Contact: Martin Dearnley – Head of Audit and Risk

9: Corporate Financial Monitoring Report – Quarter 1 2025-2026 17 - 18

A presentation will be given in respect of financial monitoring for the General Fund, Revenue, Designated School Grant, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Plan as at Quarter 1 2025-2026, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 9th September 2025.

Contact: Kevin Mulvaney – Service Director of Finance

10: Medium Term Financial Strategy 19 - 20

A presentation will be given in respect of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 9th September 2025.

Contact: Kevin Mulvaney – Service Director Finance

11: Devolution Update - Impact on Kirklees and Engagement at Regional Level 21 - 30

The report provides an update on the Government's Devolution Programme, the impact on Kirklees and engagement at regional level.

Contact: Nick Howe – Policy and Partnerships Manager

12: Allocation of Scrutiny Co-optee for 2025-26 31 - 34

A report will be submitted which seeks approval for the allocation of a co-optee to the Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2025/26.

Contact: Sheila Dykes – Principal Governance Officer

13: Lead Members' Updates

The Lead Members for the Children's, Growth & Regeneration, Environmental & Climate Change and Health & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panels will update the Committee on the work currently being undertaken by their Panels.

Contact: Sheila Dykes – Principal Governance Officer

14: Work Programme 2025-2026 35 - 40

The latest version of the Committee's Work Programme for 2025-2026 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 11th July 2025

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

In attendance: Councillor Carole Pattison, Leader of the Council
Councillor Graham Turner, Finance Portfolio Holder
Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Deputy Chief Executive
Kevin Mulvaney, Service Director, Finance
Stephen Bonnell, Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning
Alice Carruthers, Senior Finance Officer

3 Membership of Committee

Apologies were received from Councillor Andrew Cooper.

4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 9th and 21st May 2025 be approved as a correct record.

5 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

6 Admission of the Public

All items were considered in the public session.

7 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

8 Public Question Time

No public questions were received.

9 Leader of the Council and Finance Portfolio Holder - Priorities 2025/26

Councillor Carole Pattison, the Leader of Council and Councillor Graham Turner, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, were welcomed to the meeting to talk about their priorities for 2025/26.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 11 July 2025

Councillor Pattison explained that:

- The vision, eight shared outcomes, and four partnership strategies remained the same. The vision for Kirklees was to combine a sustainable economy with a great quality of life for families and communities and address inequalities.
- Delivery of the four priorities set out in the 2025/26 Council Plan, alongside partners, would help to achieve this vision:
 - Getting the basics right
 - Protecting the vulnerable and achieving inclusion
 - Thriving people and communities
 - Local economic growth
- The aim was to create a longer-term vision next municipal year, assisted by the commitment from the Government to a three-year financial settlement agreement, which was expected in November.
- Recent progress and achievements under each priority were highlighted.
- The next steps including celebrating and building on successes, taking opportunities for transformation and continuing to work across council services to deliver the priorities and focus more on customers and getting the basics right.

Councillor Turner provided an overview of the key priorities across the Finance and Regeneration Portfolio:

- The most important was the delivery of a balanced budget for 2026/2027 and proposals would be presented to Council in February 2026.
- The three-year financial settlement would aid the development of a better longer-term financial strategy and the Council was in a good position to move forward.
- The Council Plan emphasised economic growth, thriving communities and inclusive service delivery, within the Place Directorate there was a focus on regeneration, housing, infrastructure and environmental transformation.
- The aim was to review all items in the Council's Capital Plan, with the assistance of the Section 151 Officer, by September 2026.
- The Council would continue to seek out grants and pooling opportunities for investment.
- There were many active, varied regeneration projects across Kirklees; it was important that the programme of regeneration continued, to help create employment for the future and support the local economy.
- Officers were working in partnership with the University of Huddersfield and local colleges to ensure that people had the necessary skills for the workplace of the future.
- An outline was given of the work that had been undertaken to develop a new Local Plan and the next steps. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) had been submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in March 2025. Early community engagement had resulted in 650 plus responses.
- Housing growth was a key feature of the regeneration strategy, with a strong emphasis on the delivery of diverse, inclusive and future proofed housing across the district.
- There were a number of strategic sites in the delivery pipeline and the Ash View Extra Care Housing in Ashbrow was now completed; members of the Committee were encouraged to visit the site.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 11 July 2025

- Work would also continue with investors, the Government and developers to increase town centre living across the borough.

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

- In respect of improvements in air quality, it was acknowledged that reduced emissions from vehicles had contributed to this along with various measures being taken to help the flow of traffic in air quality management zones, such as at Ainley Top.
- The provision of 18 new SEND school places was welcomed and it was questioned what the plans were to ensure the necessary resources to address the growing need in this area.
- There was a myriad of plans to address this issue. The two new specialist schools would provide additional places for SEND children but these would also be better places, for example provision for girls with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs who had previously had to attend education provision outside the district. This would also have a financial benefit for the Authority.
- There had also been an increase in 'Additional Resource Provision' and schools working in clusters to better meet the needs of those attending local, mainstream schools and maximising the use of available resources.
- The backlog, associated with difficulties in getting assessments, had decreased and the Council was discussing working with other local authorities on this issue, but the demand continued to increase.
- The impact on the whole of the family was acknowledged and it was considered that a new approach to SEND would bring about improvements in the process. There were also new Government proposals in respect of Education Health and Care Plans which would make the process easier in the future.
- The excellent service provided for people with dementia and their relatives and carers by Knowl Park House, in Mirfield, was acknowledged. Provision such as this could delay the need for people to go into residential care, but the capacity was limited and there was need for more such provision. It was noted that the staff also provided wider advice and support alongside the day care services offered.
- It was considered that residents' understanding of 'getting the basics right' differed from the Council's perception. It was explained that work was underway on a transformation project focusing on customer expectations. The aim was to try and ensure that the expectations matched the service that could be provided. The importance of effective communication was a key issue, both in terms of managing resident's expectations and being able to provide a response in a timely manner.
- Whilst the improvements to the Spen Valley Greenway were welcomed it was of concern that the waste bins were not being emptied and this had resulted in an accumulation of rubbish at entry/exit points which was unsightly and potentially hazardous. Although there could be complications in terms of land ownership and responsibility it was acknowledged that this should be addressed but that there was also the need to engage with and enable the community in respect of the responsible disposal of rubbish. There had been a recent review of bins and the position in respect of the emptying of the greenway bins would be checked.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 11 July 2025

- Positive feedback was provided in terms of library services, including the engagement with scrutiny on this issue, and the improvements and progress made in Children's and Adults Services.
- The importance of the role and contribution of Elected Members both in terms of their knowledge of activities and groups in their communities, and the leadership and promotion of events, was acknowledged. It would be helpful for an assessment to be undertaken on the value of existing events and the benefits of them being maintained.
- It was noted that housing growth was not only about increased capacity, but also about ensuring that quality, suitable homes were built in the right places to help create communities. Quality housing led to better outcomes in terms of education and health.
- There was also a need to increase the numbers of people living in quality accommodation in town centres to boost economic activity and help them to thrive.
- In response to a question in relation addressing the impact of housing developments on existing services, particularly healthcare services, in areas where they were already at capacity; it was noted that there was a national shortage of doctors in the UK alongside a growing population and changes in demographics, which would continue to be challenging until the shortage could be resolved. The Council did not have control over this provision.
- The view was expressed that the Council had a responsibility, when making decisions around larger housing developments, to factor in, at an early stage, the infrastructure and services that were available; doctors, dentists, schools and how new provision could be attracted/provided to those areas, but also footpaths and linkages to ensure access to amenities. It was explained that the Health and Wellbeing Board was involved in the development of the Local Plan and information on demand and possible locations for surgeries etc, and opportunities to promote active travel would be part of the considerations. There was a robust process that was followed prior to sites being included in the Local Plan which would include issues such as local highways, traffic predictions and modelling for school places. Larger sites, in particular, would take many years to be completed and facilities, such as GP's surgeries, would follow in response to demand.
- The Government had just released the '10 Year Health Plan' which would make a difference to how the Council, and Combined Authority, planned health services and how these services were provided in the future.
- Innovative projects were also being developed, for example the University of Huddersfield was working with the NHS and the Health and Wellbeing Board on creating the first walk-in diagnostic centre, coupled to a University, in the country.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Leader and the Portfolio Holder be thanked for attending the meeting to present their priorities for 2025/26 and to give a progress update.
- (2) That the priorities for 2025/26 be noted and a progress report be presented at an appropriate time.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 11 July 2025

- (3) That it be noted that the Corporate Portfolio Holder will attend the next meeting of the Committee to outline her priorities.
- (4) That a report on the work being done in respect of 'getting the basics right' be added to the work programme and it be recommended that this work should include a strong focus on effective and timely communication.
- (5) That the Committee:
 - (i) Receive an update in respect of cyber security.
 - (ii) Consider undertaking a visit to Ash View Extra Care Housing Scheme.

10 **Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge - Kirklees Council Action Plan Progress Report**

Councillor Carole Pattison, the Leader of the Council, introduced the item in respect of the action plan developed to respond to the recommendations contained in the Local Government Association's (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge Report 2024. She commented that good progress had been made and welcomed any comments and/or recommendations from the Committee.

A presentation was given by Stephen Bonnell, Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning. This highlighted:

- The action plan, approved by Cabinet on 8th April 2025, set out 42 actions in response to the eight key recommendations from the LGA.
- Progress as at June 2025, noting that three actions had been fully completed, associated with a new approach to resourcing transformation, improving awareness of the member-officer protocol, and improvements to decision-making reports. Of the remaining 39 actions, 38 were on track for delivery, and one action, related to the Assets Property Transformation Programme, had experienced a minor delay due to external factors.
- There would be a LGA Progress Review visit in September 2025 and it was anticipated that a further 8 actions would have been completed by that point.
- A snapshot of the detail of delivery of a number of the actions.
- The LGA and the Council would publish a progress report no later than November 2025.

In response to a question about the biggest challenge arising from the peer challenge, it was explained that this was the recommendation associated with the Capital Plan. The Peer Team had described the Council's Capital Plan and regeneration ambitions as bold and well-defined but had suggested that they should be reviewed to ensure that they were affordable, viable and deliverable in current circumstances. A review of the plan had already been underway at that point and the work to complete related actions was on track. The most helpful suggestion was considered to be that to look forward and take a longer-term view.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the Leader of Council and the Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning be thanked for attending to update the Committee.
- (2) That the progress made in implementing the Peer Challenge Action Plan, to date, be welcomed.
- (3) That the meaningful engagement undertaken with scrutiny on this issue, at an early stage of development of the action plan, be welcomed.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 11 July 2025

- (4) That a further report be submitted to the Committee following the LGA Progress Review in September 2025.

11 Council Financial Outturn and Rollover Report 2024/25

Kevin Mulvaney, the Service Director, Finance gave a presentation on the financial outturn and proposals for capital rollover for 2024-2025, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 8th July 2025.

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

The presentation went through:

- The revenue headlines.
- The outturn position with figures for each directorate.
- The high-level variations for each directorate with an indication of key savings and pressures.
- Analysis of the directorate variances at outturn.
- Analysis of General Fund Reserves.
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) position at outturn.
- HRA reserves.
- Direct Schools Grant headlines and the position in relation to the statutory override and an upcoming consultation.
- The position on the Collection Fund; Council Tax and Business Rates.
- Outturn for the Capital Budget including figures for each directorate.
- Refreshed Capital Plan 2025/26 to 2031/32.

The following points were highlighted:

- The outturn position had improved to a £5.6 million overspend, down from £9.9 million at Quarter 3 which represented approximately 1.5% of the revenue budget.
- 79% of the target for savings had been delivered.
- The year-end position on reserves and balances stood at £61 million, with the general reserve maintained at £25 million.
- Use of the voluntary revenue provision reserve to fund the overspend and create a budget contingency reserve.
- The review of the Capital Plan to ensure it reflected the ability to deliver.

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

- The total amount of arrears for Council Tax at the end of March 2025 was £33.8 million, but this went back to the year 2000. It had increased by £6.5 million from the previous year and the bad debt provision had been increased as a result. There could be a number of reasons for the increase; Council Tax had increased by 4.99% and some residents had had difficulty in paying which had contributed, there had also been changes to the council tax reduction scheme, which may have had an impact. Some residents may be behind but would catch up during 25/26. Provision was in place to assist and advise residents on the support available.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 11 July 2025

- The Council's overall target was to recover 98.5% of all Council Tax. Work was undertaken to recover arrears from previous years wherever possible.
- In respect of the historic DSG deficit, this was a national issue affecting many local authorities. The reform proposals in relation to SEND, to be set out in an upcoming consultation, were not known at this stage but the hope was that these would benefit not just Kirklees but local authorities nationwide. Measures were being taken to reduce the overspend and reduce the in-year deficit to try and alleviate the pressure, but this was an issue that needed to be resolved at national level.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Regeneration and the Service Director, Finance be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update in relation to the Council's Financial Outturn and Capital Rollover Report 2024-2025.
- (2) That it be noted that these reports will continue to be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis and that Lead Members will identify any issues within their remit that they consider might require further scrutiny by their respective Panel.

12 Council Plan and Performance Update - Quarter 4 Report 2024/25

Stephen Bonnell, Head of Policy and Partnerships, presented the Council Plan and Performance Update Report for Quarter 4 2024-25, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 8th July 2025:

- The first section of the report provided details on Council activity and delivery against the four priorities within the Council Plan 2024/25.
- The second section provided the latest data against the Council's key measures for 2024/2025 and showed a range of improvements and challenges, which were summarised in the form of charts indicating direction of travel.
- The third section gave an update on the population outcome indicators that tracked progress against Kirklees shared outcomes. It was noted that these could be influenced by regional, national and international factors.
- Benchmarking data against the key measures was included, where available, to assist in contextualizing the demand and performance trends and enabling comparison of Kirklees with regional and national rates.
- The next quarterly report would be against the priorities contained in the 2025/26 Council Plan.

In response to a question, Councillor Pattison explained that the greener, healthier Kirklees priority for 2024/25 had been integrated into the Thriving Communities priority for 2025/26.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the Leader of the Council and the Head of Policy, Partnerships and Corporate Planning be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update in relation to the Council Plan and Corporate Performance for Quarter 4 2024/2025.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 11 July 2025

- (2) That it be noted that these reports will continue to be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis and that Lead Members will pick up on any items within the remit of their Panel that may require further scrutiny.

13 Corporate Risk - Quarter 4 Report 2024/25

A presentation was given by Alice Carruthers, Senior Finance Officer, in respect of the Quarter 4 2025/2026 Corporate Risk Report, with reference to the report submitted to Cabinet on 8th July 2025.

Councillor Graham Turner, Finance and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, introduced the item.

It was explained that:

- The report reflected the position at the end of Quarter 4.
- No new risks had been added or removed during the quarter.
- There had been no increase in risk scores and three risks had seen a reduction in score. Budget Monitoring and Management and Medium-Term Financial Sustainability had decreased due to the significant progress made in stabilising the financial position of the Council whilst recognising the need for continued focus. Adults Safeguarding reflected a reduction in the likelihood of the risk materialising.
- The risks relating to Adult Social Care Assurance Framework and Data and Insight for Operational Delivery of Adult Social Care would be reviewed following the CQC inspection in Quarter 1 2025/26.
- An overview was given of those areas currently having a red rating.
- Work was ongoing on the risk register for Quarter 1 2025/26.
- The reporting now provided clarity where transformation priorities aligned to risks.
- The register was continually under review taking account of thematic trends, cumulative impacts, horizon scanning and emerging risks, both internally and externally.

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

- The CQC Kirklees Inspection outcome was an item on the 2025/2026 Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel Work Programme.
- An outline the emerging risks including changes to waste strategy, delivery of corporate infrastructure projects and ensuring effective controls around CCTV.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the Portfolio Holder and the Senior Finance Officer be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update in relation to the Corporate Risk - Quarter 4 Report 2024-2025.
- (2) That it be noted that the quarterly reports will continue to be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis and Lead Members will identify any issues that they consider might require further scrutiny by their respective Panel.

14 Allocation of Co-optees 2025/26

The Committee considered a report in respect of the allocation of co-optees to the Scrutiny Panels for the 2025/26 municipal year.

Members of the Committee expressed their appreciation for the contribution made by the co-optees to the work of the panels.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the allocation of scrutiny co-optees for the 2025/26 municipal year, as set out in paragraph 2.2, be agreed.
- (2) That the existing serving co-optees be thanked for their continued commitment and contribution to the work of scrutiny in Kirklees.
- (3) That the retired co-optees, Jonathan Milner, Jane Emery and Gary Kitchin, be thanked for their contribution to the work of scrutiny.

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KIRKLEES COUNCIL			
COUNCIL/CABINET/COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC			
DECLARATION OF INTERESTS			
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.

Agenda Item 7

ITEM 7

Please click on the link(s) below to access the relevant Cabinet report:

[Council Plan and Performance Update Cover Report - Quarter 1 2025-2026](#)

[Council Plan and Performance Update Report - Quarter 1 2025-2026](#)

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ITEM 8

Please click on the link(s) below to access the relevant Cabinet report:

[Corporate Risk Cover Report - Quarter 1 - 2025-2026](#)

[Corporate Risk Report - Quarter 1 - 2025-2026](#)

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Agenda Item 9

ITEM 9

Please click on the link(s) below to access the relevant Cabinet report:

[Corporate Financial Monitoring Cover Report - Quarter 1 - 2025-2026](#)

[Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1 - 2025-2026](#)

[Budget Savings Delivery Update - Quarter 1 - 2025-2026](#)

[Breakdown of Outturn Capital Budget Changes since Outturn Report](#)

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ITEM 10

Please click on the link(s) below to access the relevant Cabinet report:

[Council Budget Strategy Update](#)

[General Fund Summary 2026-2027 to 2030-2031](#)

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DEVOLUTION – IMPACT ON KIRKLEES AND ENGAGEMENT AT REGIONAL LEVEL

Meeting	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	12th September 2025
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Councillor Carole Pattison
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No No
<p>Purpose of Report The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 10th July 2025, following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper on 16th December 2024.</p> <p>This paper provides Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) with a summary of the Bill’s contents, to support OSMC in considering the potential impact on Kirklees and engagement at regional level.</p>	
<p>Recommendations That Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider and note the contents of this paper.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has requested an update on the government’s devolution programme, to enable the Committee to monitor the impact on Kirklees and engagement at regional level.</p>	
<p>Resource Implication: There are no resource implications associated with implementing the recommendations set out in this report.</p> <p>Some future duties, roles and responsibilities for local authorities will have resource and financial implications, and may present potential risks, including proposals for Neighbourhood Governance and Community Right to Buy. In addition, further powers for the Strategic Authorities (currently ‘Combined Authorities’) might have resource implications for local authorities, including the requirement for increased officer time engaging with Strategic Authority programmes to ensure they support local ambitions. These are considered in the report.</p>	
<p>Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</p>	<p>Rachel Spencer-Henshall – Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for Public Health and Corporate Resources, 27th August 2025</p> <p>Kevin Mulvaney, 01 September 2025</p>

<p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</p>	<p>Leigh Webb (sub. for Samantha Lawton), 27th August 2025</p>
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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 English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 10th July 2025, following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper on 16th December 2024.
- 1.2 The Bill sets out a package of measures that will establish a more consistent and simpler model of devolution; establish a standardised framework of devolved powers, duties and functions; reform the local government sector; and empower communities.
- 1.3 This paper presents to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee an overview of the Bill's contents, considering the potential impact on Kirklees and engagement at regional level.

2. INFORMATION REQUIRED TO TAKE A DECISION

Background

- 2.1 The proposed legislation presents a wide range of new provisions covering strategic authorities and their functions, reforms to local government, police and crime commissioners and fire and rescue authorities, local audit, neighbourhood governance and terms in business tenancies about rent.
- 2.2 The Bill includes measures under the following sections:
 - Part 1 of the Bill introduces the new devolution architecture for England, centred around the new category of “strategic authorities” (SAs), which is a new status for Combined Authorities
 - Part 2 outlines the powers and duties which existing and future SAs will have, and the process by which new powers and duties can be conferred on SAs by Government in the future, along with the specific functions, and voting and governance arrangements that SAs will receive at each level of the enhanced devolution framework.
 - Part 3 is focused on measures designed to strengthen local government and communities.
 - Part 4 strengthens the accountability of the local government sector by reforming the local audit system.
 - Part 5 concerns the banning of upwards only rent review clauses for commercial leases to prevent vacant shops and regenerate high streets in communities across England.

- 2.3 The Bill has now started its legislative journey through Parliament, and it is intended that it will become law by the end of March 2026, so the relevant measures can be put in place by April 2026, including new 'integrated settlements' (see section 2.11) and new unitary councils and mayoralities in other regions.

Overview of the bill

Strategic Authorities

- 2.4 The Bill defines a new tier of authority in England, "strategic authority" (SA). There will be three levels of SA which will determine the powers conferred by Government:
- Foundation Strategic Authorities – includes all non-mayoral CAs and CCAs
 - Mayoral Strategic Authorities – includes all mayoral CAs and CCAs, and
 - Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities
- 2.5 Strategic Authorities will operate across seven areas of competence: transport and local infrastructure; skills and employment support; housing and strategic planning; economic development and regeneration; environment and net zero; health, wellbeing and public service reform; and public safety.
- 2.6 The revised Devolution Framework - a standardised set of legal powers, funding commitments, and partnership/collaboration arrangements with government - sets out what Strategic Authorities are entitled to at each level of devolution. The Bill will give the legal powers in the Framework automatically to each level of Strategic Authority. This replaces the current model in which individual arrangements are negotiated with each region and require separate legislation. New powers will be able to be conferred on multiple Strategic Authorities at once without individual negotiation.
- 2.7 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is an Established Mayoral Strategic Authority (EMSA), with the functions and funding associated with that tier, and will be designated by secondary legislation once the bill reaches royal assent.
- 2.8 A full explanation of the new Devolution Framework, including the statutory functions of EMSAs related to the seven areas of competence, can be found here: [Devolution Framework Explainer - Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities](#)
- 2.9 As an Established Mayoral Strategic Authority covering an area with five unitary local authorities, West Yorkshire will be less affected by the legislation than other areas. However, the new powers are still significant and include the duty to produce a Spatial Development Strategy, enabling the Authority to strategically plan for development across the whole area, and a bespoke statutory health improvement and health inequalities duty. The Bill will also enable WYCA to become the Fire and Rescue Authority for the area, subject to secondary legislation.
- 2.10 WYCA will retain powers in relation to education; bus operator grants; roadworks; traffic regulation; and traffic signs and crossings. WYCA also holds the powers of the former Passenger Transport Executive.
- 2.11 The Bill formalises the right to an Integrated Settlement for Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities, including West Yorkshire, from 2026 where the criterion is met in terms of readiness conditions. An integrated settlement provides Strategic Authorities with more flexibility over government funding pots. In place of numerous individual pots related to

specific government programmes, projects, and services, the SA will have to report on a set of outcomes and outputs and will have an amount of flexibility on redistributing funding across these pots in order to deliver on the required outcomes. It should be noted that the flexibility is not unlimited. Final details on which funding pots will be included in the integrated settlement for West Yorkshire have not been announced, though Greater Manchester's and West Midlands's integrated settlements are available online here: [Integrated Settlements Outcomes Frameworks for 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

General Mayoral Powers

- 2.12 The Bill will give Mayors of Strategic Authorities new powers known as 'the Mayoral Powers of Competence'. The Mayoral Powers of Competence are made up of:
- **The General Power of Competence** – a broad general power enabling Mayoral Strategic Authorities, and their mayors, to do anything an individual can legally do.
 - **A Power to Convene and a Duty to Respond** - enabling Mayors to convene local partners to address local challenges. It will also place a duty on local partners to respond to a Mayor's request when they make use of the power to convene. The specific local partners covered will be set out in subsequent secondary legislation.
 - **A Duty to Collaborate** - ensuring that Mayors have a formal process by which they can collaborate with neighbouring Mayors to deliver projects and strategies together.
- 2.13 A 'right to request' will enable Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities to request an extension to their powers and duties. The right to request is the right for SAs individually or collectively to request further powers from government departments, and the onus will be on the government department to explain why that power should not be devolved. The government have indicated that there will be a timeline to respond to any right to request and that any powers that are devolved will be so at fiscal events.
- 2.14 Specific Strategic Authorities will also have the ability to pilot devolved powers before the government decides whether to add them to the Devolution Framework and make them available to all Strategic Authorities.

How Strategic Authorities operate

- 2.15 Strategic Authorities will be provided with the ability to pay allowances to elected members who have special responsibilities, and the Bill will enable Mayors to appoint and remunerate commissioners to lead on one of the seven 'areas of competence'.
- 2.16 In Mayoral Strategic Authorities, a majority vote which includes the mayor will be required to approve decisions on the use of most functions.
- 2.17 Changes will be made to the scope of the precept so it can be spent across all Strategic Authority functions.
- 2.18 The Bill will revert all mayoral and PCC elections back from First Past the Post to the supplementary vote system.

Local Government

- 2.19 The Bill will abolish the “committee system”, standardising to the leader and cabinet model of executive governance, and it will prevent the establishment of any new council-level mayoralities but will not abolish the existing 13 council mayoralities.

Audit

- 2.20 In December 2024, the government published a [strategy and consultation](#) on measures to overhaul the local audit system. The strategy set out a clear purpose for local audit and its users, proposals for simplified and proportionate financial reporting, improvements to the system’s capacity and capability, and ways to build strong relationships between local bodies and auditors.
- 2.21 The Bill introduces provisions to enable the establishment of a new public body, the Local Audit Office, to oversee local audit and simplify and streamline the current system. Its remit will include:
- coordination of the local audit system
 - standard-setting
 - contracting auditors
 - appointing auditors to local bodies
 - quality oversight and reporting
- 2.22 It will also support and enable wider measures to address challenges, including reforms to financial reporting; strengthening audit capacity and capability; and establishing public provision of audit to support the private market.
- 2.23 The Bill introduces a provision to make it compulsory for local authorities to have an audit committee and for that committee to have at least one independent member. In Kirklees, an Independent Member was already appointed to the Council’s Corporate Governance and Audit Committee in March 2023.
- 2.24 MHCLG published a [response to consultation feedback](#) on Local Audit Reform back in April which included 16 further commitments, including measures that will be taken forward separately to this Bill.

Neighbourhood governance

- 2.25 The Bill will introduce a requirement on all local authorities to establish effective neighbourhood governance. The intention is to empower ward councillors to drive forward the priorities of their communities, moving decision-making closer to residents, and providing opportunities to organise public services to meet local needs better.
- 2.26 The Bill provides the Secretary of State with the power, by way of regulations, to define a neighbourhood area and to specify the parameters of what arrangements will be appropriate to meet this duty.
- 2.27 The details of the obligations on local authorities will be set out in regulations that will be made after the Bill is in force. Before those regulations are made, government will be undertaking a review as to the best way to achieve the aims, including speaking to the sector to ensure they can contribute and share existing good practice.

Community Right to Buy

- 2.28 The Bill will introduce a ‘Community Right to Buy’ which will replace the current community right to bid policy introduced in the Localism Act 2011.

- 2.29 Under 'Community Right to Buy', when an Asset of Community Value (ACV) is put up for sale by its owner, community groups will be given the first opportunity to purchase this asset. The community group and asset owner will either negotiate a price for the asset, or an independent valuer will set a price based on the market value. Under Community Right to Buy, the moratorium on the sale of the asset will be extended to 12 months, giving community groups more time to raise funding to meet the agreed purchase price. Asset owners will be able to ask the local authority to check that community groups are making sufficient progress on the sale 6 months into the moratorium. This measure applies to assets which have been listed by the local authority as of community value.
- 2.30 The definition of an ACV will also be expanded to help protect a wider range of assets, including those that support the economy of a community and those that were historically of importance to the community. Asset owners and community groups will be able to appeal the local authority's decision on whether an asset is of community value.
- 2.31 The introduction of a new type of asset of community value, the Sporting Asset of Community Value (SACV) will automatically designate all eligible sports grounds as such. Other facilities – such as car parks – that the ground depends on to function effectively will also be eligible for SACV listing.
- 2.32 Once the legislation comes into effect, local authorities will implement Community Right to Buy at a local government level, supported by a New Burdens payment and statutory guidance provided by Government. Local authorities will be responsible for:
- Listing assets in accordance with the new definition
 - Triggering the 12-month moratorium period
 - Conducting a review at 6 months if requested by asset owners
 - Overseeing price negotiations between asset owners and community groups
 - Paying compensation to asset owners if there is a legal case
- 2.33 The Government will also provide guidance for community groups and asset owners to ensure the process is clear and easy-to-follow. Community Right to Buy will include a compensation scheme to compensate asset owners for costs or expenses incurred due to the delay to sale caused by the moratorium period, as well as for legal costs of a successful appeal to the first-tier tribunal. Community groups will also be entitled to claim compensation to cover the legal costs of a successful appeal to the first-tier tribunal. The aim is to help to absorb the costs of successful appeals to the first-tier tribunal but also act as a 'deterrent for illegitimate or frivolous appeals'.

Upwards Only Rent Reviews (UORR)

- 2.34 Upwards only rent review (UORR) clauses are common clauses in commercial leases. At pre-agreed points within a lease, the rent will be reviewed, and UORR clauses ensure the new rent can only increase or stay the same, even if the market has declined.
- 2.35 Stakeholders, including small businesses and academics, report that UORR clauses are artificially inflating commercial rents and pricing out small businesses from town centres.
- 2.36 The Bill will ban UORR clauses in new commercial leases in England. Instead, landlords will have to choose between offering fixed rents for the duration of the agreement or signing up to a review clause which allows rents to fall as well as rise. The provisions aim to make commercial leases fairer for tenants.

Initial scoping of workstreams to implement the Bill (WYCA)

- 2.37 A [report to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#) on 24th July confirmed that initial scoping of the workstreams to implement the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, including the integrated settlement, has led to the identification of the following workstreams:
- Implementation of the required Governance and Accountability changes
 - Development of partnership activity to ensure key stakeholders are involved and engaged in relevant workstreams
 - Implementation of the Devolution Framework
 - Integrated Settlement Implementation/Readiness
 - Development of a Financial Strategy and the underpinning systems for delivery
 - Implementation of the organisational change required for the success of the programme
- 2.38 The report confirms that the programme and detailed timelines for implementation of the Bill will be developed in more detail now that the draft Bill has been placed before Parliament and also details preparations that are already underway in relation to Integrated Settlement Implementation/Readiness. Kirklees officers are regularly engaged on the work WYCA is doing to prepare for the additional powers and a sample of local authority officers have been interviewed as part of the integrated settlement readiness checks.

3. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL

3.1 Council Plan

A key area of focus for the Council within the 2025/26 Council Plan is ensuring Kirklees responds to and maximises the benefits from national changes in devolution, particularly the opportunities that are likely to emerge through the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority. The English Devolution Bill will support a range priorities and areas of focus set out in the Council Plan, including work to foster thriving communities, enabling place-based responses to challenges and opportunities, and work to enable local economic growth, working with regional and national partners.

3.2 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

The introduction of a duty on local authorities to make appropriate arrangements for effective governance of any neighbourhood area will have resource requirements. It is the LGA's view that if the government moves ahead with its intention to standardise the neighbourhood area committee model, then councils should receive new burdens funding to reflect that delivering this model effectively will require additional resources.

Community Right to Buy will impact asset owners by delaying sales due to the extended moratorium period and restrictions on selling on the open market once a community group activates the Right of First Refusal. Local authorities will also bear recurring costs for the administration and functioning of the process as well as compensations payments to asset owners where relevant. The Government's [final stage impact assessment](#) confirms that each local authority will receive a new burdens payment, a portion of which will be to compensate for the new administrative burden of Community Right to Buy.

In addition, further powers for the Strategic Authorities (currently 'Combined Authorities') might have resource implications for local authorities, including the requirement for increased officer time engaging with Strategic Authority programmes to ensure they support local ambitions.

Potential financial and resource implications will continue to be monitored as new roles, responsibilities and duties become clearer.

3.3 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Statutory processes will need to be followed as appropriate to progress with implementation of the English Devolution Bill. Potential legal implications will continue to be monitored as new roles, responsibilities and duties become clearer.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

3.5 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

There are no significant risk or human resource implications directly arising from this report.

Community right to buy may impact the Council's proposed Capital Receipts Schedule, should it highlight certain sites for listing as an ACV or SACV. There is a potential risk to the Council, therefore, in terms of its delivery of a targeted level of capital receipts, in alignment with the Council's budget and Capital Strategy. A requirement to hold the asset at our cost, for an extended period, may also create further revenue pressures for the Council.

Potential risks and impact will continue to be monitored as new roles, responsibilities and duties become clearer.

4. CONSULTATION

The government has signalled a commitment to consulting the sector in relation to its plans for effective neighbourhood governance. Government also consulted on proposed changes to the Audit System in December 2024.

5. ENGAGEMENT

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee are provided with regular updates from the Head of Policy, Partnerships, and Corporate Planning, around potential national legislative and policy changes that may impact local government including devolution. Regular reporting linked to the Devolution Bill will be provided through this reporting in the current municipal year as well as at designated OSMC meetings as required.

6. OPTIONS

6.1 Options Considered

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider and note the contents of this paper.

6.2 Reasons for recommended Option

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has requested regular updates on the Government's devolution programme, to enable the Committee monitor impact on Kirklees, and engagement at regional level.

7. NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINES

- 7.1 The Bill has now started its legislative journey through Parliament, and it is intended that this will become law by the end of March 2026, so integrated settlements and other measures in the Bill can be implemented for the 2026/27 financial year and ahead of the May 2026 local elections. The Second Reading of Bill is taking place on Tuesday 2 September, and the Committee Stage is expected to occur after the party conference recess (around mid-October).
- 7.2 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has requested further updates on devolution on the following dates:
- 12 December 2025
 - 27 February 2026

8. Contact officer

Kelly Hollis, Policy and Partnerships Officer
Kelly.Hollis@kirklees.gov.uk

Nick Howe, Policy and Partnerships Manager
Nick.Howe@kirklees.gov.uk

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Documents related to the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill can be found on the [Parliament website](#) including:

- English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill
- Explanatory Notes
- Delegated Powers Memorandum

10. Appendices

None

11. Service Director responsible

Andy Simcox, Service Director Strategy and Innovation

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REPORT TITLE: APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINY CO-OPTEE FOR 2025/26

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Date:	12 September 2025
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Not applicable
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No
Purpose of Report: Allocation of Additional Co-optee for 2025/26	
<p>Recommendations</p> <p>That the allocation of an additional scrutiny co-optee for the 2025/26 municipal year, as set out in paragraph 2.2, be agreed.</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <p>An additional co-optee has been recruited and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is required to confirm this appointment and allocate them to a Scrutiny Panel.</p>	
Resource Implications: Not applicable	
Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	Rachel Spencer- Henshall 3-9-25
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Not applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?	Samantha Lawton (Leigh Webb – 22-8-25)

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Not applicable

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 An additional co-optee has been recruited and the Committee is required to confirm their appointment and allocate them to one of the Scrutiny Panels.

2. Information required to take a decision

- 2.1 At the start of the municipal year 2025/26 there were a total of three co-optees involved in scrutiny. An additional co-optee has since been recruited and a further recruitment exercise is to be undertaken later in 2025.
- 2.2 The table below shows the current co-optees and their allocated Panel for the 2025/26 municipal year.

It is proposed that the new co-optee, Kevin Evans, be allocated to the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Panel.

Name	Allocation 2025/26
Helen Clay	Health and Adult Social Care
Chris Friend	Regeneration and Growth
Kim Taylor	Health and Adult Social Care

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

Co-optees may have specific skills, knowledge and experience which can assist scrutiny in its work, providing an alternative, external perspective. Their input helps to contribute to transparency, effective and accountable decision-making, and policy development across the whole range of services the Council provides and towards achievement of the priorities and shared outcomes set out within the Council Plan.

3.2 Financial Implications

Not applicable.

3.3 Legal Implications

Not applicable.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable.

3.5 Other (eg Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

Not applicable.

4. Consultation

No consultation was appropriate in respect of the contents of this report.

5. **Engagement**
No engagement was necessary in respect of the contents of this report.
6. **Options**
 - 6.1 **Options considered**
Not applicable
 - 6.2 **Reasons for recommended option**
Not applicable.
7. **Next steps and timelines**
Subject to the decision of the Committee, Kevin Evans will be advised of the confirmation of his appointment to the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Panel and will receive an appropriate induction and ongoing support.
8. **Contact officer**
Sheila Dykes, Principal Governance Officer
Tel 01484 221000
Email: sheila.dykes@kirklees.gov.uk
9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**
None
10. **Appendices**
None
11. **Service Director responsible**
Samantha Lawton, Service Director, Legal, Governance and Commissioning

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

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

SUPPORT: Sheila Dykes, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer

FULL PANEL DISCUSSION		
THEME / ISSUE	APPROACH / AREAS OF FOCUS	OUTCOMES / ACTIONS
1. Leader's Priorities 2025/26	The Leader will attend to set out her portfolio priorities for 2025/26.	<p><u>11 July 2025</u> The Leader set out her priorities for 2025/26 and gave an update in respect of recent outcomes. She responded to questions and comments from Committee Members.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a report on the work being done in respect of 'getting the basics right' be added to the work programme and it be recommended that this work should include a strong focus on effective and timely communication. - the Committee receive an update in respect of cyber security. <p>Informal meetings with the Chair and the Leader take place throughout the year.</p>
2. Finance Portfolio Holder's Priorities 2025/26	The Portfolio Holder will attend to set out his priorities for 2025/26.	<p><u>11 July 2025</u> The Portfolio Holder set out his priorities for 2025/26 and gave an update in respect of recent outcomes. He responded to questions and comments from Committee Members.</p> <p>Informal meetings with the Chair and the Portfolio Holder take place throughout the year.</p>

3. Corporate Portfolio Holder's Priorities 2025/26	The Portfolio Holder will attend to set out her priorities for 2025/26.	<p><u>25 July 2025</u> The Portfolio Holder set out her priorities for 2025/26. She responded to questions and comments from Committee Members.</p> <p>Informal meetings with the Chair and the Portfolio Holder take place throughout the year.</p>
4. Corporate Financial Management	<p>To provide oversight of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Corporate Financial Monitoring Reports • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Budget 2026/27 - Pre-Decision Scrutiny 	<p><u>11 July 2025</u> The Committee was provided with a comprehensive update on the outturn for 2024/25. This facilitated Members to be aware of the current position and challenges and gave them the opportunity to put questions and offer challenge to the relevant Cabinet Member and Section 151 Officer. It also provided Lead Members with important background information to be taken into account, as appropriate, when considering issues within the remit of their Panel or to also them to pick up on any items within the remit of their Panel that may require further scrutiny</p> <p><u>12 September 2025</u> <u>12 December 2025</u> <u>16 January 2026</u> – Budget Proposals <u>27 March 2026</u></p> <p>The Chair is briefed by the Service Director, Finance on a regular basis throughout the year.</p>
5. Corporate Performance	To provide oversight of the Quarterly Performance Management Reports	<p><u>11 July 2025</u> The Committee was provided with an update on the Quarter 4 Council Plan and Performance Report 2024/25 as part of the ongoing engagement on this issue. It provided the Committee with an overview of performance and outcomes and gave Members the opportunity to question and offer challenge to the relevant Cabinet Member and lead officers. Lead Members</p>

		<p>were also able to use this knowledge to identify any issues within the remit of their Panel that may require further scrutiny.</p> <p><u>12 September 2025</u> <u>12 December 2025</u> <u>27 March 2026</u></p>
6. Corporate Risk	To provide oversight of the Quarterly Corporate Risk Reports	<p><u>11 July 2025</u> The Committee was provided with an update on the Quarter 4 Corporate Risk Report 2024/25 as part of its ongoing oversight of this issue. This gave the Committee an overview of this important area and the actions and mitigations being taken in each case. Members were able to question and offer challenge to the relevant Cabinet Member and lead officers. Lead Members were able to use this knowledge to take forward any issues within the remit of their Panel that may require further scrutiny.</p> <p><u>12 September 2025</u> <u>12 December 2025</u> <u>27 March 2026</u></p>
7. Council Plan	Pre-decision scrutiny in respect of the latest version of the Council Plan	<p><u>12 December 2025 – Informal</u> <u>16 January 2026</u></p>
8. Transformation Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-annual progress reports in respect of delivery of transformation projects and activities. • Lead Members will be invited to request briefings on the detail of those within their Panel’s remit where they consider this will assist their work. 	<p><u>12 December 2025</u></p>
9. Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of Action Plan Implementation. 	<p><u>11 July 2025</u> A progress report was given in relation to the Council’s Action Plan to respond to the recommendations made by the LGA</p>

		Peer Challenge in November 2024. The Committee had previously considered the Action Plan in advance of its approval by Cabinet. The Committee had welcomed the early engagement with Scrutiny on this issue and the progress made in implementation to date. It requested the submission of a further report following the LGA Progress Review in September 2025.
10. Kirklees Communities Partnership Plan (Crime and Disorder) and Domestic Abuse Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	TBC
11. Government Policy / Legislation	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.	June/September/December/February
12. Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early learning from the ten integrated library hubs on how citizens can be supported and enabled to access the support and information they need, using a place-based approach, and how this will be used to plan for the future. Raising awareness of, and the role of wider services and partners in promoting, the integrated hubs How the service works with volunteers and how they are supported to build on their particular areas of interest. <p>(Including a visit to the Huddersfield Centre)</p>	<u>24 October 2025 slip to later (addit mtg with visit?)</u>
13. Corporate Safeguarding Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update report on progress further to the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment in 2025 	<u>24 October 2025</u>
14. Social Connectivity in Kirklees	Progress update in respect of Action Plan	<u>27 February 2026</u>

15. Digital Strategy	Pre-decision scrutiny	<u>24 October 2025 – Informal</u>
16. Tourism Strategy	Pre-Decision Scrutiny of New Strategy (3 Year strategy)	<u>24 October 2025</u>
17. Culture Strategy	Pre-decision scrutiny of Culture Strategy (10 year)	TBC
18. Communications Strategy and Business Plan	Update on activity	<u>11 July 2025 – Informal</u> Members received an update in relation to the Comms Strategy and Business Plan and proposed actions for 2025/26.
19. Devolution	Update in respect of devolution and the impact on Kirklees and engagement at regional level.	<u>12 September 2025</u>
20. External Funding Opportunities	Update in respect of activities associated with identifying and pursuing partnership and funding opportunities that support the Council priorities.	<u>27 February 2026</u>
21. Scrutiny Work Programmes	Maintain an overview of the Work Programmes of the four Panels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s • Environment and Climate • Growth and Regeneration • Health and Adult Social Care 	<u>25 July 2025</u> The Panel’s Work Programmes were submitted for consideration and approved. Lead Members updates are provided at each meeting.

LEAD MEMBER BRIEFING ISSUES

THEME/ISSUE	APPROACH / AREAS OF FOCUS	NOTES
Inclusion and Diversity	Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2024-27 approved by Cabinet on 10th September 2024. Progress Update	
People Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Update Phase 3/4 • Pre-decision of revised strategy 2025 onwards 	

Armed Forces Covenant	Progress Update	
Customer Expectations	Progress Update	