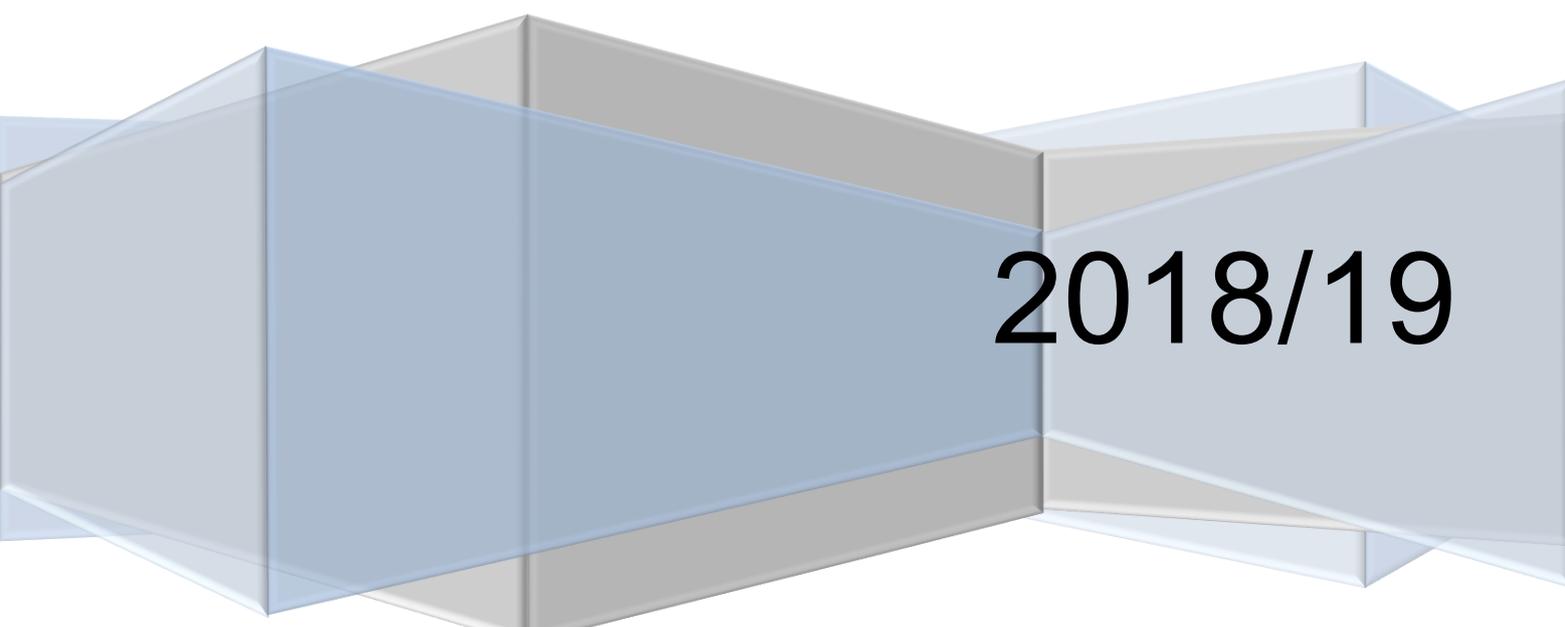


Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

A review of the work of overview and
scrutiny in 2018/19 and looking ahead to
work that will be done in 2019/20

**Cllr Jim Clark, Chairman of the NYCC Scrutiny
Board and Daniel Harry, Democratic Services and
Scrutiny Manager**



2018/19

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19

Foreword by Cllr Jim Clark - Chairman of Scrutiny Board

As Chairman of the Scrutiny Board, I am pleased to introduce the 2018/19 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report. This report provides a summary of and insight into the work that has been done over the past year and what work will be done over the next 12 months. It also offers an opportunity to reflect on overview and scrutiny practice and ensure that the highest standards are maintained.



I reported last year that the findings of the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Committee's inquiry into whether overview and scrutiny arrangements are working effectively, and an independent inspection report into concerns of financial mismanagement at Northamptonshire County Council, gave us cause to reflect upon our own arrangements. Attention on this remains valid: the taxpaying public must have confidence that North Yorkshire County Council has the right culture, governance and processes to make robust decisions.

When I look back over the past year I believe the Members of the overview and scrutiny committees and officers supporting them have worked hard to create a culture where transparency, involvement and accountability are welcomed and where challenge is seen as a vital and positive part of improving outcomes.

The report shows the broad range of issues affecting the Council, its services and local people that have been reviewed. Whilst the bulk of this work has been planned for some time, a significant amount has, quite rightly, continued to be reactive as services in the county undergo a period of change and uncertainty. The differing approaches described demonstrate just how nimble we can be and how varied our methods are.

I am pleased that committees have been vigilant in their focus on budgetary pressures that create overspends. In so doing, the attention was, quite rightly, not just on the management action taken in response to the pressures, but on the underlying causes and demographic trends – be they local, regional or national.

We have worked hard to create the conditions to ensure collaboration on critical areas so that decision makers see the value of scrutiny. In an Executive based system of decision making, scrutiny's independence is paramount. Scrutiny has to be more than a just a useful sounding board. It has to hold the Executive to account, providing that essential check and balance. Without it, the voice of the rest of the members of the council is diminished. Committees must be active in harnessing scrutiny member's expertise *throughout the whole process*.

To finish, I would like to thank all those Members, co-opted committee members, officers and partners that have engaged in and contributed to Overview and Scrutiny over the past 12 months.

I commend the report to Council.

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

The Local Government Act 2000 first introduced the requirement for every local authority to include provision for at least one overview and scrutiny committee.

The overview and scrutiny function is a key element of the County Council's governance arrangements and decision making process.

Although not a decision-making body, overview and scrutiny is at its most effective when it grasps the potential to influence and inform decisions made by both the Council and partner bodies affecting the County.

What does it aim to do?

Scrutiny aims to contribute to the Council's corporate outcomes in many ways, including:

- Enabling Councillors to become directly involved in the development of: policy and strategy; consultation and public engagement planning; and the performance management of the Council.
- Keeping Councillors and the public informed of key issues, priorities and initiatives.
- Enabling direct engagement with the people of North Yorkshire.
- Acting as a critical friend and providing Executive Members and senior officers with a non-partisan forum in which to test out ideas, approaches and gain feedback and suggestions.
- Providing a structure, through the call-in process, for scrutinising specific decisions of the Executive.
- Scrutinising issues of public concern beyond the remit of the Council.

What does it done over the past year?

The five thematic overview and scrutiny committees have looked at and responded to a wide range of issues. The key ones are outlined below:

Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Focusing in the last 12 months on:

- Scrutiny of the Brierley Group of companies and the development of a range of arms-length and traded services which can help generate income for the Council.
- The first 12 months of operation of the reconfigured library service.
- An in-depth review of access to over the counter banking services in the county and the role that branch banks and Post Offices have to play in rural communities.
- The work of the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership and how partners are working together to deliver the Community Safety Plan priorities.
- The implementation of the plans for collaboration between North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and the ongoing work to carry out a full service review.
- The Council's alternative investment framework.
- The Corporate Risk Register and received an update on Insurance claims, risk exposure and risk management.
- The Council's current level of compliance with the Charter against Modern Slavery.

Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Focusing in the last 12 months on:

- Withdrawal of Financial Assistance for People receiving Housing Support – including release of resources to develop the Assistive Technology offer.
- Funding for Supported Housing, the response to consultation alongside broader understanding of supported housing strategy which would set out the needs for supported housing and how they will be addressed.
- Wellbeing and Prevention Services Review and a new commissioning model for Health and Adult Services investment into delivery of Wellbeing and Prevention support.
- Community Support Mental Health, consideration of development proposals for future investment into voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver mental health support on its behalf.
- Client Contributions and proposals for charging for community-based services.
- HAS Financial Pressures, including a detailed explanation of the cause and possible implications of the projected overspend, the risks to social care services and the council as a whole.
- Delayed transfers of Care and performance against the national target for Adult Social Care days.
- Annual Report of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NYSAB) for the financial year 2017/18, outlining the future areas for development by the Board.
- Older Peoples Champion Report and a detailed account of what she had done over the last year.
- Annual Report of the Director of Public Health – A review of progress made in improving population health in North Yorkshire since 2013, viewed data and engaged with partners to jointly develop priorities for population health until 2025.
- Local Account.
- NYCC Use of Resources Peer Challenge June 2018.
- Overview of the Care Market, NYCC responsibilities, and Business Continuity Planning.

Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Focusing in the last 12 months on:

- North Yorkshire Strategic Plan for SEND Provision 0-25.
- Early Years Provision and an overview of: the service profile, recent Statutory Guidance and our delivery against place sufficiency and other duties; and an outline of the challenges and opportunities of service delivery across North Yorkshire.
- The North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board Annual report, update on activity and discussion of concerns.
- North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area: progress to date on the Area Programme.
- Young Peoples Champion Annual Update, focussing particularly on Youth Voice.

- A review of the Looked After Children Strategy, prior to Executive consideration, of how NYCC will support and care for looked after children and care leavers and how we will know how well we are doing.
- Children's Services OFSTED Report August 2018 and consideration of findings and implications
- Elective Home Education: A review of what the Children and Young Peoples Services Directorate knows about the prevalence and experience of North Yorkshire children of compulsory school age whose parents opt, as is their right in law, to educate their child at home instead of sending them to school.
- Children and Young Peoples Services Financial Pressures - the areas presenting with the most significant financial pressures as at October 2018 and the management action that has been taken in response to the pressures.
- School Attainment.
- Support for underperforming primary, secondary, special and PRUs according to the school improvement strategy prioritisation categories – including the current position in April 2019, and a North Yorkshire area profile.
- School Governance and the extent to which North Yorkshire schools are transparent and open about their decision making, focussing on (the changing) Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Governors

Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Focusing in the last 12 months on:

- York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership – review of annual report and progress against key milestones and performance measures.
- Review of the Highways Maintenance Contract and strategic options proposals for the new Highways Maintenance Contract.
- Review of Highways England's plans for the road network in North Yorkshire
- Adult Learning and Skills Service post inspection action plan.
- 20 mph speed limit policy.
- SEND Home to School Transport – proposed changes and the impact of those changes one year on.
- Rural bus services and community transport in North Yorkshire
- Electric charge points for electric/hybrid vehicles.
- Vehicle Activated Speed Signs.
- Mobile phone coverage project.
- Resources and Waste Strategy - consultation response to the government's consultation.

Scrutiny of Health Committee

Focusing in the last 12 months on:

- The transfer of hyper acute stroke services from Harrogate District Hospital, after April 2019, to Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust and York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.
- Changes by made by Clinical Commissioning Groups to the way in which the eligibility criteria for the Patient Transport Service, which they commission from the Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS), are applied.

- The services that have been put in place as part of the delivery of the integrated prevention, community care and support contract in Scarborough and Ryedale that was won by NHS Humber Foundation Trust.
- Workforce pressures at the Friarage Hospital, Northallerton and the changes to critical care services that came into effect as of 27 March 2019.
- Mental health in-patient facilities in Harrogate and the decision not to go ahead with the proposed building of a new mental health in-patient unit at Cardale Park, Harrogate.
- The provision of mental health services in the county and the gaps in investment and services that have arisen over the past 20 years in the county, when compared to neighbouring local authorities.
- The closure of enhanced minor injury treatment services that had been commissioned from GP surgeries.
- The NHS East Coast Review, which takes in services provided at and from Scarborough Hospital.

Overview and scrutiny functions are also supported through the following bodies:

- Scrutiny Board – this is made up of the Chairs of the five thematic overview and scrutiny committees and enables co-ordination across all five thematic overview and scrutiny committees.
- Police, Fire and Crime Panel - which scrutinises the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. There is also a Complaints Sub-Committee which meets on an ad-hoc basis.
- Looked After Children’s Members Group – this is not a formal committee but acts as an informal advisory group to the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children's and Young Peoples Services. The group performs a role consistent with statutory guidance for local authorities to promote the health and well-being of looked-after children.

In addition, the North Yorkshire Scrutiny Network, an informal partnership group for overview and scrutiny leads across the county, is supported by the team.

In-depth reviews

Extended pieces of overview and scrutiny can be undertaken, where a more in-depth analysis of the issues is required. Over the past 12 months, a number of these have been undertaken. Examples include:

Health and Social Care Integration: Joint Scrutiny Evaluating the success of Integration

After a comprehensive review of Workforce issues within health and social care - reported in last year’s Annual Report - the task group turned its attention to the wider issues regarding integration of health, social care and related services. Whilst there is a general acceptance at a national and local level that the integration of services is a good thing which will lead to improvements in service delivery, many aspects of what integration means remain unclear, often with little detail about what should be integrated and why.

The group aimed to:

- Understand what services are being delivered, what is planned, and what the impact of these services has or will be upon patient/service user outcomes.
- Establish whether the potential benefits are being realised in the integrated services are currently delivered.
- Assess whether the current approaches to integrated health and social care services being developed, trailed and implemented are the most appropriate.

With so many different health partners operating to complex boundaries in North Yorkshire, co-ordination on a wide scale will remain an ever-present challenge. So for scrutiny, undertaking an assessment of such an expansive and complex picture was always going to be demanding.

The group compiled a comprehensive call for evidence which was then sent to major stakeholders and partners. This established a baseline of information on activity across the county, yielding invaluable information on current thinking, best practice and how the progress of integration might be assessed. These returns led members to wonder whether whilst there is a common interest in integration, there are different interpretations of what it means in practice. This was one of many lines of enquiry which the group pursued, in informal sessions, with selected strategic leaders from partner organisations and bodies responsible for health and social care.

The group will present its findings to the June meetings of the two parent committees - Care and Independence and Scrutiny of Health.

Over the counter banking services

In 2018/19, the Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed access to over the counter banking services in the county and the role that branch banks and Post Offices have to play in rural communities. The outcome of the review was taken to the meeting of the Executive on 26 March 2019

User Participation

The Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee wanted to be confident that our social care services are person centred and are locally appropriate. Rather than adopt a full task group method, members attended and participated in user-led meetings of service users - North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board, the North Yorkshire Disability Forum, and the Scarborough Dementia alliance.

As a piece of scrutiny work, this gave members a good opportunity to draw their own – largely positive - conclusions about how well the directorate follows best practice by planning with individuals and service users to put them and their carers in control.

Other Approaches

Work with Area Constituency Committees

The Council's six Area Constituency Committees have started to work more closely with the five thematic Overview and Scrutiny Committees. To date, the areas of common interest have mainly been in health. The Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee has taken the lead on the scrutiny of changes to the provision of health services at the Castleberg Hospital at Giggleswick. The

Scarborough and Whitby and the Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committees have taken the lead on the scrutiny of the NHS East Coast Review.

Government guidance on overview and scrutiny

In January 2017, the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Committee launched an inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government. The Committee considered whether overview and scrutiny arrangements are working effectively.

Recommendations were made and in response the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government stated that new guidance on overview and scrutiny in local government would be published later in 2018. The original deadline was October 2018. The deadline was moved to December 2018 and the guidance is still awaited.

The guidance will be statutory guidance, issued under section 9Q(1) of the Local Government Act 2000. This means that councils will have to 'have regard to' the guidance in the way that they work and the decisions they make.

Joint Scrutiny

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny arrangements are in place for the Integrated Care Systems for the North East and Cumbria and West Yorkshire and Harrogate. Nothing is yet in place for the Humber Coast and Vale system.

A one-off meeting of a discretionary Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to look at changes to mental health services in the greater Harrogate area met on 15 February 2019. North Yorkshire County Council, City of York Council and Leeds City Council all participated. This followed on from scrutiny of proposals at the Council's Scrutiny of Health committee meeting on 14 December 2018.

Notice of Motion

In 2018/19 a number of different Notices of Motion were reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny, with more to be similarly reviewed in 2019/20. This included:

- The long term sustainability of small and community hospitals in the county
- Changes to the way in which the eligibility criteria for the Patient Transport Service are applied
- Phasing out of single use plastics and the support for plastic free initiatives within North Yorkshire
- The adoption of the Charter against Modern Slavery.

Priorities for 2019/20

Each overview and scrutiny committee has a work programme in place that looks 12 months ahead. This work programme is built upon a range of data, information and analysis, including: performance data; inspection reports; national research and policy; consultations and public engagement events; the County Council Plan; and local issues raised by elected members, members of the public or highlighted in the media.

Some of the themes for overview and scrutiny in 2019/20 are summarised below:

- 20mph speed policy (task group review commencing May 2019).

- Re-organisation of the Local Enterprise Partnership to create a merged Leeds City Region with York and North Yorkshire LEP.
- Review of the Highways Maintenance Contract and review of Highways England's plans.
- Minimising the use of single use plastic – the County Council, other local authorities, businesses and the public (task group to be formed from Autumn 2019 onwards).
- Annual review at the Scrutiny of Health Committee of NHS commissioner and provider finances, budgetary pressures and financial recovery plans.
- The Scrutiny of Health Committee and the Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee working together on the scrutiny of the development of the Castleberg Hospital in Giggleswick.
- The changes to critical care services at the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton and the impact this has upon patient care and outcomes.
- Scrutiny of the arms-length and traded services.
- The ongoing review of the reconfigured library service, the role of volunteers and the work of the Stronger Communities Team.
- The implementation of plans for collaboration between North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- The Council's investment strategy
- How NYCC uses Assistive Technology to enable people to live more independent lives for longer.
- Take up of Direct Payments as a part of personal budgets. How NYCC is ensuring that Direct Payments enable more choice and control over the support people receive.
- Review of Respite and Short Breaks Proposals.
- Learning Disabilities: Progress against the Health and Well Being Board Strategy; and Understanding Co-production.
- The support provided to adult carers of adults in North Yorkshire - specifically to provide an objective view of these services and whether they provide value for money.
- Disabled Children Service.
- Young people and Sex Education; Managing Risk and Safeguarding.
- Teacher recruitment: the Rural Challenge.
- Young Carers - especially those who support adults with mental health issues
- Supporting children in and out of education who have medical condition, especially as chronic (life threatening) illness.
- Additional session on Elective Home Education.

How to find out more about Overview and Scrutiny

Further information on Overview and Scrutiny is available on the North Yorkshire County Council website - <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/23665/Scrutiny>

Or contact the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, Daniel Harry
E: daniel.harry@northyorks.gov.uk or T: 01609 533531.

Members of the public are welcome to attend any meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Committee papers are available from the North Yorkshire County Council website as follows - <http://democracy.northyorks.gov.uk/>