
Leicester City Council Scrutiny Report 2022-23

Message from the Chair of the Overview Select Committee, 2022-23

Once again, I am delighted to have served as Chair of the Overview Select Committee during 2022-23 and am very pleased to present a report that sets out an extensive range of work by our scrutiny committees and commissions.

This year, there was a greater sense of normality across scrutiny as the programme in recent years had rightfully been largely dominated by examining how the council and the city had responded to the implications brought about by the covid pandemic. Although we ensured that scrutiny continued to examine the major impacts arising from the pandemic, this presented less distraction which allowed a greater focus on policy development and performance monitoring across all commission areas and we ensured that members had more opportunities to scrutinise those issues and services that were subject to significant public interest.

I continue to be impressed with the volume and quality of scrutiny and the number of recommendations by scrutiny to the Council's Executive and to our key partners. I am once again thankful for the involvement and contributions of the City Mayor and his team, along with officers from across the organisation in supporting and equipping our scrutiny function. I am also particularly thankful for the level of engagement from our health sector partners, and I remain committed to engaging with decision-makers beyond the local authority. In addition, I was particularly pleased with the level of involvement of young people representatives who regularly participated in several of our scrutiny bodies.

At Leicester, we take great pride in our scrutiny, and we aim to examine those issues that are central to the lives of the people in our city. We have this year continued to scrutinise the key strategic priorities of the City Council, and have investigated many matters in detail, setting up some separate informal scrutiny work to allow a broader range of evidence to be gained by commissions. Examples of this include some focussed work on the local-level response to the national 'Housing Crisis', an investigation into the barriers preventing women to participate in sport and leisure opportunities and a piece of work to understand the increasing cost of Adult Social Care packages.

I look forward to developing scrutiny throughout 2023/24. It goes without saying that all local authorities continue to face a mounting degree of pressure and challenge, and in a city such as ours, it is essential that my colleagues and I are ready to examine the implications of the circumstances that we face and to help to influence decision-making to support our residents and enhance our city.

Councillor Ted Cassidy MBE – Chair of the Overview Select Committee

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Glossary

The following abbreviations are used to describe each scrutiny body:

ASC: Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission

CYPE: Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission

EDTCE: Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission

HCLT: Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Tourism Scrutiny Commission

HSC: Housing Scrutiny Commission

HWB: Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission

JHSC: Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

NS: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission

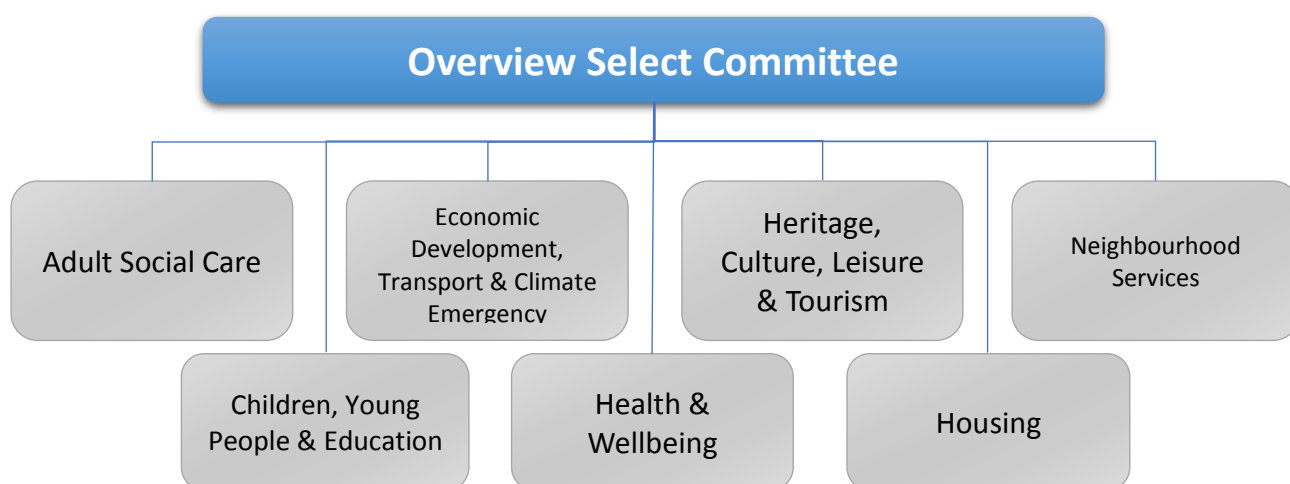
OSC: Overview Select Committee

Introduction

What is Scrutiny?

The Centre for Public Scrutiny defines scrutiny as “the activity by one elected or appointed organisation or office examining and monitoring all or part of the activity of a public sector body with the aim of improving the quality of public services. A public sector body is one that carries out public functions or spends public money. Scrutiny ensures that executives are held accountable for their decisions, that their decision-making process is clear and accessible to the public and that there are opportunities for the public and their representatives to influence and improve public policy.” As such, it is important that scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that the council and its partners remain effective and accountable.

Leicester City Council’s Scrutiny Structure



As highlighted here, the council continued with the model of an Overview Select Committee supported by seven scrutiny commissions covering all facets of the council’s business. Since May 2021, the City Council has also acquired responsibility for leading the support to the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Joint Health Scrutiny Committee; an arrangement that rotates on a bi-annual basis between Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council.

For the 2023/24 municipal year, there will be changes to the scrutiny structure and this will be reflected in future versions of the annual report.

Report Structure

This annual report covers the period between May 2022-May 2023 and summarises some of the key activity and areas of influence by scrutiny throughout the year.

The report provides detail of the work of the Overview Select Commission, and each of the seven City Council scrutiny commissions along with the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Joint Health Scrutiny Committee. The annual report does not intend to draw out a large quantity of detail or highlight each recommendation, and instead sets out some of the key achievements by the scrutiny bodies, examining areas of influence and work undertaken as part of focussed reviews or task and finish work. Full detail of each scrutiny meeting can be found by accessing relevant agendas, and minutes via <https://bit.ly/3P7AOEh>

The report also does not intend to provide full detail of what is covered by each of the scrutiny bodies. Detail of the configuration of scrutiny at Leicester City Council can be accessed via <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/decisions-meetings-and-minutes/overview-and-scrutiny/our-scrutiny-system/>

By its very nature, scrutiny examines some work over a more considerable period of time, and this report also points to those strands of work that will continue or may emerge throughout 2023/24. This is reflected as part of the commission summary pages throughout the report.

Overview of Scrutiny 2022/23

In total, there were 55 public meetings across the nine scrutiny bodies. This was supplemented by further work performed by members in the form of separate scrutiny task group meetings or additional briefing sessions on topics of significance.

All meetings took place in person at the City Council's committee rooms at City Hall, though a hybrid set-up was initiated to allow some non-voting participants to join remotely. Most meetings were comprised of approximately seven elected members, with some commissions being supplemented by co-opted members or standing invitees. The Chairs of the scrutiny bodies throughout 2022/23 were as follows:

Overview Select Committee – Councillor Ted Cassidy
Adult Social Care – Councillor Rashmikant Joshi
Children, Young People and Education – Councillor Misbah Batool
Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency – Cllr Ashiedu Joel
Heritage Culture Leisure and Tourism – Councillor Elaine Halford
Health and Wellbeing – Councillor Elaine Pantling
Joint Health Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Elaine Pantling
Housing – Councillor Paul Westley
Neighbourhood Services – Councillor Aminur Thalukdar

The commissions and committees continued to examine several strands of work that featured previously, particularly in relation to pandemic recovery, but also in respect of

other key strategic priorities and emerging priorities. As in previous years, a significant proportion of scrutiny related to the consideration of executive decisions prior to them being taken, including scrutiny of the annual budget setting process and an in-depth examination of Local Plan proposals ahead of submission of the draft plan to the Planning Inspectorate. This equips scrutiny to challenge, support and influence the City Council's decision-making processes and remains a prime role of the scrutiny function. Scrutiny also strives to examine issues that emerge throughout the year that have significant implications for the people of Leicester. The work overseen by OSC in relation to the cost-of-living crisis is one of many examples where scrutiny has responded quickly in considering the implications and potential solutions for a notable emerging issue.

Many of the scrutiny bodies have also performed an extensive level of work in addition to that taking place as part of formal scrutiny meetings. Several focussed task group reviews continued throughout 2022/23 and others were also initiated during the year. It is commonplace for the suggestion behind this work to originate at a formal meeting, often when it is apparent that the level of scrutiny required is extensive and requires a more detailed process of evidence-gathering. Examples of this work include the Housing Scrutiny Commissions' work in understanding more about the local impacts of the national housing crisis and the Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Tourism Scrutiny Commission's investigation into barriers preventing women participating in sports and leisure opportunities. Upon the completion of all task group work, the relevant decision-maker submits a report back to a commission meeting that details a response to the scrutiny recommendations.

Scrutiny continues to gather the majority of its evidence from City Council service departments, though it has always been necessary for this to be supplemented with input from other organisations and stakeholders. During 2022/23, scrutiny sought evidence from a range of partners, particularly across the health sector and via housing tenant representatives. Moreover, the process of empowering the voice of young people across scrutiny was developed during 2022/23, with representatives regularly participating in OSC, CYPE and HWB.

During the 2023/24 scrutiny year, there are ambitions to expand public and stakeholder engagement as part of the scrutiny process, particularly when performing more in-depth investigations and inquiries. Scrutiny chairs will also be considering a broader range of methodologies when carrying out such informal scrutiny.

The following pages document some of the key achievements and highlights of each of Leicester's nine scrutiny bodies, drawing on areas of significance during the past year and referring to some of the priorities for taking scrutiny forward during 2023/24.

Overview Select Committee

The Overview Select Committee is the City Council's overarching scrutiny body. The committee primarily scrutinises the work overseen by the City Mayor, the council's strategic priorities and cross-cutting issues including equalities, property and the Council's finances. The Committee also engages with leaders and decision makers from key partner organisations across the city.

The major Overview Select Committee scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

The Survey of Leicester - the Committee closely examined the findings of the survey to ensure that efficient services were being provided to city residents. Some issues cited that required further investigation were the level of people who experience loneliness and the number of residents who were not digitally literate. It was recommended that the commissions considered relevant information arising from the survey outcomes in more detail.

Council Budget Monitoring - scrutiny continued to carry-out regular monitoring of council budgets. The committee was reassured by officers that accurate budget forecasts would alleviate their concerns relating to Adult Social Care services meeting the increasing demands in the city. The committee was also able to question the financial viability of the major capital developments across the city. OSC also carried influence on the decision surrounding the proposed changes to the district heating charges for council housing residents and requested some alternative proposals to support tenants which were agreed.

Leicester's Marketplace - OSC debated the purchase of property within the vicinity of Leicester Market, which resulted in a withdrawal of a formal proposal to review the decision, as OSC were satisfied that officers and the City Mayor had provided adequate evidence and reasoning for the purchase.

Leicester Draft Local Plan - the committee collated scrutiny comments and recommendations from all the commissions contributing to the final drafting of the local plan. Examples of recommendations included requesting that the council should act to minimise the impact of new developments on existing inequalities, to preserve green spaces as much as possible and for new housing developments to consider increasing the minimum space standards.

Cost of Living Crisis - The Cost-of-Living Crisis was of great concern to members across the commissions and OSC received regular updates concerning initiatives and financial assistance available to help people and families. Scrutiny was given a greater understanding of the plethora of support schemes established by officers and volunteers, with particular praise being given to the Pop-Up-Pantries initiative to provide meals for children. There was also great interest in the work between the council and schools in supporting those families with the greatest level of need and members developed enhanced knowledge of the avenues of support that they could promote to constituents.

Possible Overview Select Committee Scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

- **Council Budget monitoring** – Scrutiny to continue to examine council budgets on an ongoing basis.
- **Cost of Living Crisis**– to continue to receive updates on the council's response to the crisis at appropriate points.
- **Key Strategic Priorities** – to receive a report that outlines the priorities set out for the new electoral term.
- **Customer Services** – to understand more about the channels of customer service and how the city council is transforming the overall customer experience.
- **Corporate Estate Annual report** – to receive a further report on corporate estate management.

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission

This commission focuses on matters relating to the delivery of statutory adult social care functions, such as care services to allow independence in own homes, care services for those that require care away from home and policies that underpin a broad range of social care issues.

The key Adult Social Care scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Health and Social Care Reforms - Commission members were keen to hear about the latest developments and the implications of the reforms on city residents. This included the implementation plans and the ongoing funding challenges for councils providing adult social care services.

Scrutiny Review into 'Cost of Care and Budget Impacts' - Members completed an investigation that examined the implications of increased care package costs and the ways of managing budget pressures, with particular focus on the impact on service users. The commission produced its own report that detailed several recommendations for consideration. Also related to this work, members welcomed separate briefings on several complex key topics to better understand the issues and impacts regarding market stability plans and fair cost of care.

Draft Carers Strategy - Scrutiny influenced the consultation outcomes of the strategy by raising issues relating to community engagement behind the strategy and probed into the reasoning behind barriers to engagement. As a result, further work was undertaken with scrutiny throughout the year, and there was also a general recommendation for the council to review the corporate consultation / public engagement processes with a view to exploring different approaches in the future.

Leicester Local Plan and Extra Care Accommodation Needs – when examining the Leicester draft local plan, members raised issues relating to future planning of adult social care and developments in the city e.g.: the future requirement for extra care accommodation as per the council's adopted strategy on this matter.

Performance and Monitoring and Assurance Plans - Scrutiny continued to monitor the performance of major areas of service delivery. Members praised the social care service for the well-prepared assurance plans for adult social care.

Cost of Living Crisis Impacting on Adult Social Care Services- The commission scrutinised key topics in the media such as the 'cost of living crisis' impacting on adult social care services in the city and the care homes inspection processes. Members keenly carried out joint scrutiny for cross-cutting topics (with the Health & Wellbeing scrutiny commission), such as Winter Care planning and understanding more clearly the new integrated care structures for Leicester.

Possible Adult Social Care Scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

- **Recommissioning of Homecare**– scrutiny is keen to play a part in the process of establishing new contracts for future service provision.
- **ASC Service Assessments/Inspections** – the commission intends to continue to have oversight of external service assessments and inspections.
- **Joint Scrutiny work** – to examine a number of issues alongside the Public Health and Health Integration Scrutiny Commission including mental health service provision, substance misuse, winter planning and safeguarding adults.

Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission

The Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission is responsible for examining children's social care, education & attainment and support provision for children and young people and families. Diocesan, trade union and school governor representatives work with elected members on this Commission.

Key scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Children out of School - the commission examined this matter and were informed there had been a significant increase in the number of children classified as home-educated, with the impact of COVID being considered as a significant factor in the increase.

Continued Response to the Covid Pandemic – a Public Health-led report was presented to the commission that set out the impact of the pandemic on children and young people in the East Midlands.

Education Performance Report 2022 - The commission considered a strategic view of the performance of schools across the city in the context of the economic background of communities in the city, and the continuing impact of the effects of COVID on schools and communities. This included examining key data sets relating to performance across various key stages, between different demographics and in comparison with other local authorities.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – a number of key policies in relation to SEND support were examined throughout the year, including SEND school transportation arrangements.

Youth Justice Plan 2022-23 – members inspected the annual plan which highlighted the positive impact of the council's work with young people in the criminal justice system.

Possible CYPE scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

Family Hubs – to understand more about the programme for developing hubs across the city and how they will serve to extend early-years provision into communities.

Implications from the Pandemic – to develop an understanding of the outcomes of studies into the wider impacts of the pandemic, particular in relation to children and young people.

Provision of Taxi Framework for Vulnerable People – to consider further scrutiny in relation to the support provided to children and families.

Children's Safeguarding – to continue to have the opportunity to examine the current arrangements to ensure that children and young people in Leicester are safe and protected.

Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission

This commission reviews a range of matters which include regeneration, public transport and cycling provision, adult learning and job provision and climate emergency policy.

The key scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Traffic Regulation Orders – scrutiny of TROs has become standard practice and has served as a method for increasing public engagement by examining relevant schemes and issuing comments to be taken into account in the decision-making process. Scrutiny influenced the delivery of the Lutterworth bus lane extension scheme as well as a transport development along Beauville Drive.

Leicester’s Draft Local Plan – this commission made a number of recommendations that related to ensuring that that climate change, carbon neutral and air quality issues were appropriately considered for future planning and new developments in the city.

Transport and Connecting Leicester Projects – scrutiny praised the Leicester Bus Partnership’s work in the city concerning the improvements to the bus services network and the launch of the new Green Hopper free city centre bus service. Scrutiny examined major future transport plans and development projects such as the railway station improvement plans and the continuing development of the waterside area.

Energy Costs and Cost of Living - scrutiny of the council budget raised concerns surrounding the impact of rising inflation, a surge in energy costs and the rising cost of living that will affect businesses and families across the city.

Employment Hubs and Construction - members were interested in the progress of employment hubs and work relating to the enhancement of construction skills that had been carried out to help younger people. Future updates on the outcomes were requested.

Place Marketing and Inward investment – scrutiny praised and congratulated officers for achieving a major award for its place marketing work.

Possible EDTCE scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

- **Transport and Connecting Leicester** – to receive further reports on the transport plans and major development projects.
- **Carbon Neutral Roadmap** – to develop understanding in relation to achieving targets relating to the council’s climate emergency and zero carbon plans.
- **Employment, Adult Skills & Learning** – to understand more about the provision of services across the city.
- **Flood Protection** – to learn more about how the council and its partners are working to protect the city against major flooding.

Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Tourism

Scrutiny Commission

This commission is responsible for scrutinising a range of service areas which include parks and play areas, museums & heritage interpretation, festivals & events and sports services.

The key scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Review into ‘Encouraging Women to participate in Sports and Physical Activities in the city’ – scrutiny undertook investigatory work on this matter which involved sports and leisure activities and sought views from the public. A series of recommendations were agreed that related to combining fitness activities with other activities such as health promotion and family events, engaging local people as mentors and community champions to support and empower women, and exploring a range of new initiatives with providers.

Heritage & Museums – Scrutiny praised the expansion of the heritage panels project to include a greater provision within neighbourhoods. Members carried out a site visit of the Jewry Wall museum development project to help monitor progress and also contributed ideas for when the project is complete, such as exploring more ways in integrating learning opportunities with schools and educational establishments.

Tourism and Hotel Industry – the commission made inquiries relating to post-pandemic recovery of the industry, particularly in relation to hotel occupancy.

Sports and Physical Activities Strategy – members influenced the development of this strategy with comments and suggestions and by dovetailing valuable evidence from the ‘women in sports’ review findings. There was particular keenness in enhancing the awareness of opportunities available to different communities across the city.

Sports Capital Programme - scrutiny expressed concerns about the impact of the rising energy costs on the running of sports and leisure facilities. Members welcomed the programme of improvements and refurbishments across leisure centres across the city, particularly the steps undertaken to source renewable energy.

Possible scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

- **Women in Sport review report** – to receive a report back from Executive on progress on actions and recommendations made by scrutiny.
- **Arts Council National Portfolio funding 2023-26** - following the good news of securing the Arts Council funding, this area of work to come back to scrutiny for a progress report during 2023/24.
- **Tourism and Hotel industry** – further examination of the latest position regarding the overall tourism offer in Leicester.

Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission

This commission is responsible for examining the health services received by all Leicester residents, which includes the services provided by the local authority's public health team along with those delivered by the NHS and health sector partners.

The key Health and Wellbeing scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Covid and the Vaccination Programme - commission members monitored the latest position and challenges, including substantial datasets and the take-up of the vaccines across the city.

Rough sleepers Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programme - joint work with Housing scrutiny was carried out, including a site visit to fully understand how the new grant funded programme supported homeless and vulnerable people.

Leicester Care, Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2027 - Members praised the development of the strategy and were interested in exploring alternatives to take forward the work e.g. advocating young people as leaders in the community and supporting schools to promote healthy lives.

Task Group Review Report - 'The Experiences of Black People Working in Health Services in Leicester and Leicestershire' – local leaders thanked scrutiny for an extensive report that was considered very important for making future progress. At the centre of this work were recommendations around improving workforce monitoring systems, considering alternative delivery mechanisms for mandatory training and for organisations to consider how development opportunities are better facilitated.

School Nursing Provision – members contributed views and suggestions in terms improvements to future provision and suggested that the best way to promote school nursing and the services provided was through greater face-to-face provision at schools.

NHS Winter Urgent and Emergency Care Provision - Scrutiny acknowledged that Leicester currently had one of the highest 999 core rates in the country, along with one of the smallest conversion rates. Members praised NHS health sector staff and welcomed new initiatives. However, scrutiny raised concerns about the lack of community engagement and suggested there was more that could be done to improve people's perceptions about health services.

Possible Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

- **Health Inequalities update – Impact on the cost-of-living crisis** – to closely examine health inequality implications arising from the cost-of-living crisis.
- **Leicester Care, Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 to 2027** – the commission to continue to monitor progress annually.
- **Task Group review report into 'The experiences of Black People working in Health Services in Leicester and Leicestershire'** – response report required from health partners on progress on actions / recommendations.
- **Mental Health Strategy** – to examine the services and support available alongside the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission.

Housing Scrutiny Commission

The Housing Scrutiny Commission examines a wide range of issues relating to Housing and Homelessness. This covers council services as well as issues affecting private sector housing and housing associations. The commission actively engages with tenants and residents when conducting its business and it is common for reports to reflect the views of tenant participation groups.

Key housing scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Housing Crisis in Leicester - The Commission reported its task group findings following an investigation into the impact that the national housing crisis has had in the city. The work of the commission and witnesses helped to inform the basis of a decision taken by the council in November 2022 to declare a housing emergency in the city. The right to buy policy, coupled with the lack of an adequate social housing new-build programme, were highlighted as two of several key factors behind the crisis.

Continued Pandemic Recovery – The members of the commission continued to be concerned that the lockdown and its aftermath, including inflation, poverty and a continuing shortage of affordable social housing would present huge problems for tenants. The council continued to demonstrate to scrutiny a range of effective measures to helping tenants manage debt.

Damp and Mould – Members became aware of the issues of health of tenants being affected by damp and mould. Specialist work was being undertaken to tackle the issues, which included some fresh investment and an enhanced referral process.

Anti-social Behaviour Team - The structure for how the department worked with other departments across the council to provide a team which was able to deal with cases of anti-social behaviour was devised and developed following a commission working party which reported last year.

Council Tenant Involvement - Tenant representatives continued to be involved in consultations on many matters presented to scrutiny including the proposals for annual rent-setting. When considering policy in other areas such as housing repairs and empty homes in the city, the commission considered the views of and implications on tenants and leaseholders.

Possible scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

Damp and Mould – further work is likely to be carried out in relation to the impact of damp and mould in homes and the solutions in response to the problems.

District Heating – to understand how the new district heating metering programme is being carried out and the implications on tenants and residents.

Housing Allocation Policy – to examine in greater detail the policies and processes behind allocating council homes to tenants.

Previous Task Group Work – a continued focus on the response to recommendations arising from the Housing Crisis and Anti-Social Behaviour Team review work.

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

In addition to Leicester City Council's Health Scrutiny Commission, health services are also scrutinised on a regional basis with elected members from Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council.

The major Joint Health scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Integrated Care System – The Committee sought assurance that following legislative changes outlined in the Health & Care Act 2022, elected members and relevant health organisations be represented on the Integrated Care Board that was established on 1 July 2022 for the delivery of NHS care.

University Hospitals Leicester – The Committee examined numerous matters regarding Leicester's hospitals, including their financial accounts, service performance (with a particular focus towards maternity services), complaints process, CQC well-led inspection, and proposals for site reconfiguration. Members sought assurance that the proposed reconfiguration programme was still progressing and that a critical pathway be scrutinised in the future.

Transforming Care Plans for Learning Disabilities Services – The Committee considered updates in relation to improving performance in services for those with learning disabilities or autism and agreed to champion the importance of supporting all people across the region. The committee made a number of recommendations including enhancing links with GP practices.

Access to Primary Care – The Committee heard about the implications for residents across the region in accessing primary care. Members raised issues about telephone contracts, private practice and travel to hubs.

Pandemic Recovery & Vaccination Programme – The Committee considered various updates in relation to the vaccination programme for the region. It was agreed that it was important for focused work to be undertaken locally to fill the communication gap to promote vaccine uptake and ensure vaccines were available where needed.

Continued Partnership Working – The Committee continued to engage with other health providers serving the region including the new operating model and specialist practitioners at East Midlands Ambulance Service, the re-procurement of the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service and those within Dentistry.

Possible scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

- **UHL Developments** - To seek further clarity and understanding of the processes at UHL in terms of reconfiguration, structures, financial position and reviewing complaints.
- **ICS 5-year Forward View** - To monitor the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Integrated Care System and consider the 5-year forward view plan.
- **Inspection Outcomes** - to further examine required improvements in relation to the LPT CQC inspection.
- **Access to GP Practices** - To develop a greater understanding of access to GP surgeries and dental services.

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission

The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission is responsible for examining many of the everyday services that people access within their own communities, including the provision of libraries, community centres, environmental and enforcement services. This commission also holds responsibility for looking at voluntary and community sector support and issues relating to community safety and community cohesion.

The major scrutiny developments during 2022/23 included:

Selective Licensing Scheme - The Commission was involved in the development of a new selective licensing scheme for private sector rented housing covering parts of the city, which aims to improve standards and safety of homes, thereby also improving the health and wellbeing of tenants.

Textile Factories –Scrutiny continued its interest in examining the extent of pollution from particular factory outlets in the city. Members learnt about the action that had been taken by the city council and made a series of recommendations in terms of future monitoring activity.

Community Safety Partnership - The Commission gained insight into the work of the Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Team (CrASBU), both in terms of the work within the range of communities across the city, but also the way in which its work had become embedded in the work of the council's housing management. Setting up a unit with the help of the housing and neighbourhood services scrutiny commissions had been one of the recommendations from a previous task group drawn from the commissions which looked at how the issue sat not just within housing estates run by the council but across the various communities in the city. The commission also examined the new partnership strategy for tackling knife crime in Leicester.

Domestic abuse – Safe Accommodation Strategy - The commission received a report on the setting up of a safe housing strategy for victims of domestic abuse. The work was as a result of the passing of the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act, though it was noted that the council already had more far-reaching and supportive programmes in place. Members praised the work done in helping to protect domestic abuse victims.

Possible scrutiny plans for 2023/24 include:

- **Voluntary and Community Sector Engagement Strategy** – to examine the new strategy for the city and to understand it's objectives.
- **Ward Community Engagement** – to undertake scrutiny in relation to future ways of conducting ward member engagement across Leicester.
- **Leicester's Tree Strategy** – to review progress and future work relating to the city's tree strategy.
- **Regulatory Services** – to continue to examine and monitor a series of key enforcement services operated by the City Council and its partners.

Contacting Scrutiny

For more information please contact the Scrutiny Team via **scrutiny@leicester.gov.uk**.

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<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/decisions-meetings-and-minutes/overview-and-scrutiny/>