

# 2022/23 Scrutiny Annual Report

This report updates Council on how the authority has carried out its overview and scrutiny functions during the 2022/23 municipal year.



# Foreword

It has been a privilege for all of us to Chair our respective Scrutiny Boards over the last twelve months. First and foremost, our collective thanks must go to Scrutiny Board members for their time, commitment and co-operation over the last twelve months. We would also like to extend our thanks to the officers, Executive Members and partners who have taken the time to share their expertise with our boards.

This Annual Report reflects the breadth of issues covered by the Council's five Scrutiny Boards during 2022/23. At the core of all items of business is the principle that the scrutiny process is designed to provide a means through which the voice and concerns of the public can be heard.

Alongside broad individual work programmes, the Scrutiny Boards have fulfilled a long-standing commitment to regularly examine performance management data and to present the Executive Board with a summary of findings in relation to the annual budget proposals. Looking to the next twelve months, we would urge Executive colleagues to continue to engage proactively with Scrutiny, including early participation in the budget setting process so that we can collectively explore ways in which to tackle the huge financial challenges facing our organisation.

As Scrutiny Chairs we are proud of the work carried out by our boards in 2022/23 and we wish the successor boards the very best for 2023/24.



**Cllr A Marshall-  
Katung**



**Cllr B Anderson**



**Cllr A Scopes**



**Cllr A Lamb**



**Cllr P Truswell**



Thank you to all Scrutiny Board members for your work over the last twelve months. During the last year, my colleagues and I on the Executive Board have once again seen first-hand the way in which scrutiny members have sought to focus their resources on programmes of work designed to drive improvements in our public services.

Following the adoption of the Best City Ambition, the Boards have prioritised improving outcomes across the three pillars set out in that vision and have brought partners together to examine issues that directly impact upon the lives of people living in Leeds.

Scrutiny has the potential to most effectively influence policy when boards examine emerging evidence, trends and proposals ahead of decision making. The process of testing policy proposals in the earliest stages of their development strengthens the final decision-making process and therefore improves outcomes. I have therefore welcomed work from all boards in this regard. All Boards have also contributed to a summary of constructive feedback on the Council's initial budget proposals.

Over the next twelve months, my colleagues and I on the Executive Board look forward to ongoing engagement with all the Scrutiny Boards and particularly welcome the commitment from Scrutiny to take forward recommendations from the recent LGA Corporate Peer Challenge early in the next municipal year.

**Councillor Debra Coupar, Executive Member for Resources**

# Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

This Annual Report provides a summary of work undertaken by Leeds City Council's Scrutiny function in 2022/23 and includes highlights from each of the Scrutiny Boards.

As set out in the Council's '[Vision for Scrutiny](#),' the service continues to support members in carrying out public scrutiny that is focused on driving improvement in public services in accordance with the nationally agreed four principles of effective scrutiny.

Leeds City Council remains committed to providing dedicated officer support to the scrutiny function. However, like all other Council services, there is ongoing pressure on the limited resources within the Scrutiny function. This is acknowledged in the Council's 'Vision for Scrutiny' and there has been continued effort to maximise resources and prioritise areas of work that will add value and support the Best City Ambition.



**39** Public  
Scrutiny  
Board  
Meetings

**3** Remote  
Consultative  
Meetings  
\*Public access via webcast



## **Pandemic Recovery**

During 2022/23 the Scrutiny Boards have highlighted various ways in which the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequalities in the city.

Interventions to support the city's ongoing recovery from the pandemic therefore continue to be a feature of the work of all boards.

## **LGA Corporate Peer Challenge**

Scrutiny has considered the conclusions and recommendations of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, which took place in November 2022.

Individual Scrutiny Boards have agreed to take forward a number of these recommendations as part of their 2023/24 work programmes.

## **Webcasting & Social Media**

Efforts continue to increase public engagement with Scrutiny. All formal and consultative meetings are webcast



**14** Site  
Visits or  
Working  
Groups

as this enables stakeholders the opportunity to view the meetings at a time and location that is convenient for them. Full details of the 2022/23 webcasting figures are provided elsewhere in this report. The service also continues to promote meetings via Twitter.

## **End of Year Summaries**

To complement the Annual Report, each of the Scrutiny Boards has also produced an end of year summary, which provides full detail of their 2022/23 work programmes along with a statement from the Scrutiny Board Chair. These can be found on the [Scrutiny at Leeds](#) webpage.



# Scrutiny Arrangements 2022/23

Scrutiny Board	Chair	Councillors	Co-Opted Members
 <p>Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles</p>	 <p>Cllr A Marshall-Katung</p>	 <p>11</p>	 <p>1</p>
 <p>Children and Families</p>	 <p>Cllr A Lamb</p>	 <p>14</p>	 <p>7</p>
 <p>Environment, Housing and Communities</p>	 <p>Cllr B Anderson</p>	 <p>13</p>	
 <p>Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth</p>	 <p>Cllr P Truswell</p>	 <p>13</p>	
 <p>Strategy and Resources</p>	 <p>Cllr A Scopes</p>	 <p>11</p>	

# Collaborative Working

## Scrutiny of the Budget

Scrutiny boards are consulted annually on the Council's initial budget proposals. The observations and recommendations from this year's consultation were reported to [Executive Board in February 2023](#).

All Boards considered the Proposed Budget 2023/24 during the January 2023 cycle of meetings. Prior to this, officers and Executive members attended working group sessions with each Scrutiny Board in December 2022.

All Scrutiny Boards welcomed this year's publication of 'Business As Usual' savings, which were considered alongside the budget proposals. The Scrutiny Boards jointly recommended that this approach to future budget consultation continues to ensure members are sighted on the whole impact of budget savings proposals.

## Performance Reporting

All Scrutiny Boards considered key performance information relevant to their respective remits in June 2022 and January 2023.

Following the adoption of the Best City Ambition, Scrutiny Chairs have been instrumental in updating the way in which performance data is reported to Scrutiny. In January 2023 new reporting formats were introduced that more directly link performance information to the three pillars of the Best City Ambition - although a number of additional indicators were retained by individual boards as matters of long-standing and continuing interest.

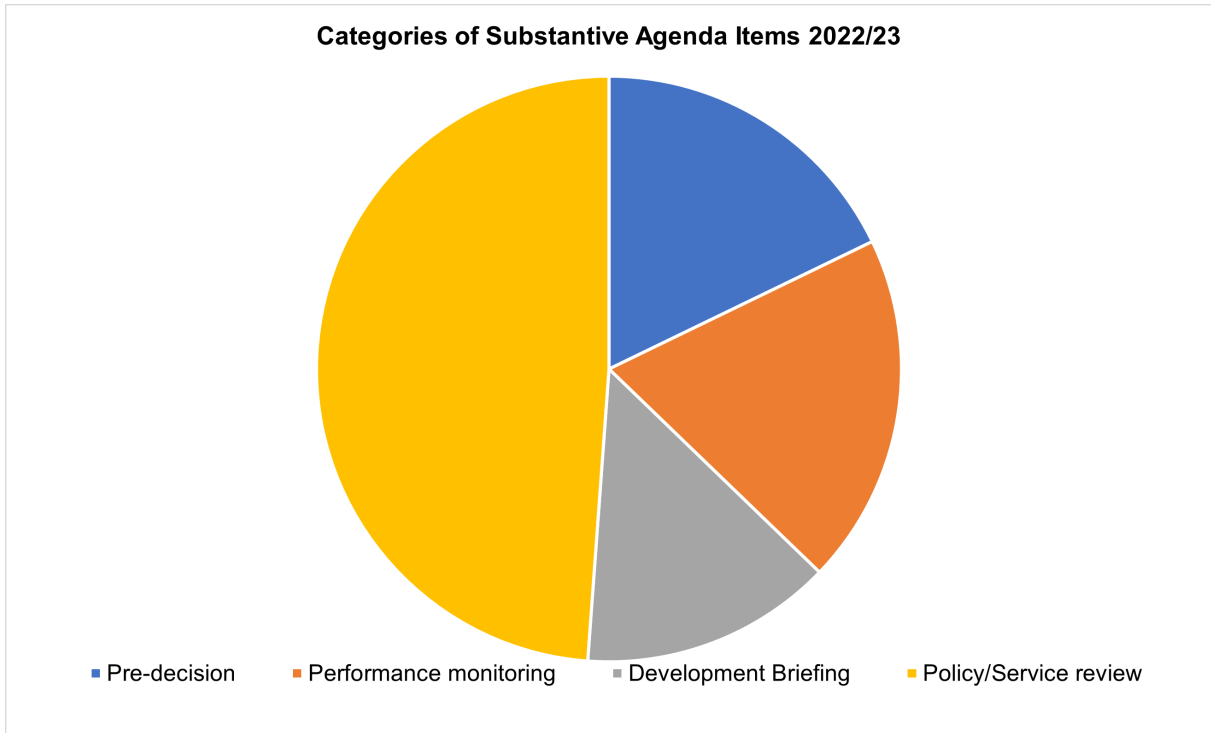
## Regional Health Scrutiny

The West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) has continued to enhance the collaboration between local authority health scrutiny functions across West Yorkshire.

Councillor Abigail Marshall-Katung (Leeds City Council) was elected as Chair for 2022/23. Support for the management and administration of the JHOSC continues to be provided by Calderdale Council.

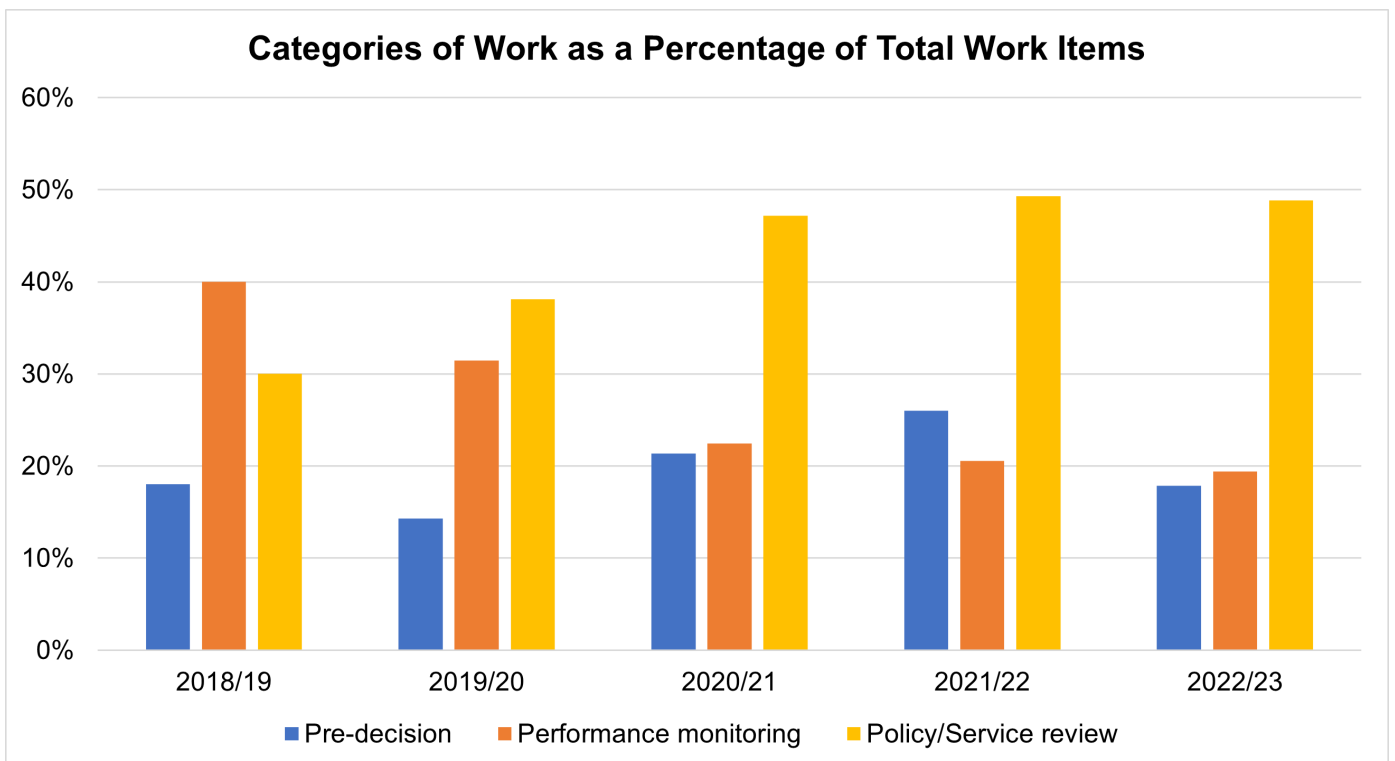
The JHOSC met on three occasions and full details of the matters considered are available from the lead Council's website (Calderdale MBC).

# Scrutiny Activity 2022/23



# 129 substantive agenda items in 2022/23

During 2022/23 the way in which substantive agenda items are categorised was reviewed and updated. Full comparative data cannot therefore be provided. However, for those categories of work that have remained consistent a comparison is provided as to the percentage of total work items those categories have constituted over the last five years.



# Webcasting 2022/23

During the Covid-19 pandemic Leeds City Council introduced webcasting in order to enable the public to access committee meetings during a period in which meetings could only take place remotely.

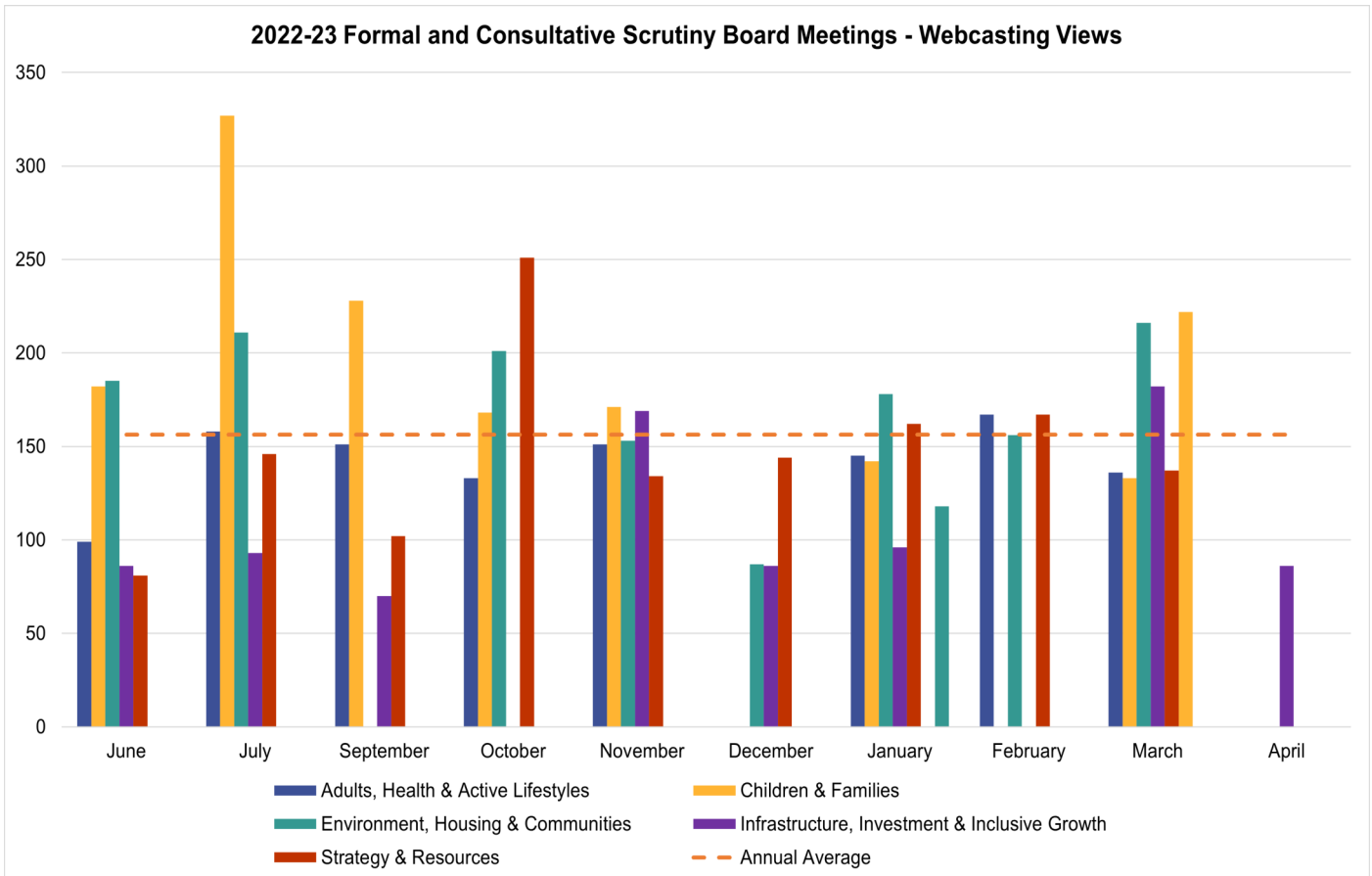
A legacy of these changes in technology and working practices is the continuation of webcasting to enhance public access to formal meetings.

This allows stakeholders the opportunity to observe meetings via YouTube at a time and location that is convenient to them.

There were a total of 6,364 views of the Scrutiny Board webcasts over 2022/23, which is an average 155 views per meeting.

This compared to 4,306 views in 2021/22 and an average of 103 views per meeting.

The chart below provides the monthly analysis of webcasting views for the 2022/23 municipal year.



## To Note

\*July 2022: The Adults, Health & Active Lifestyles Scrutiny Board met on a consultative basis.

\*September 2022: The Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board meeting was cancelled due to the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

\*October 2022: Includes a Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board meeting to consider a Call In.

\*January 2023: Includes an Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board consultative meeting in addition to a formal Board meeting.

\* March 2023: Includes an additional Children & Families Scrutiny Board meeting to discuss safeguarding.





# Adults, Health & Active Lifestyles Scrutiny Board 2022/23 Highlights

The 2022/23 summary for this Scrutiny Board can be found here:

[Scrutiny at Leeds](#)



Cllr Caroline Anderson



Cllr Sharon Burke



Cllr Luke Farley



Cllr James Gibson



Cllr Norma Harrington



Cllr Conrad Hart-Brooke



Cllr Mohammed Iqbal



Cllr Wyn Kidger



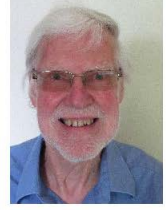
Cllr Abigail Marshall-Katung



Cllr Eileen Taylor



Cllr Eleanor Thomson



Dr John Beal  
(co-opted member)

# 1

The Health and Care Act 2022 led to **Integrated Care Boards** (ICBs) taking on the commissioning responsibilities of Clinical Commissioning Groups from 1st July 2022, as well as leading the integration of health and care services across their area. The Board therefore continued to monitor progress and engaged directly with the appointed Chair of the Leeds Committee of the West Yorkshire ICB and the ICB Accountable Officer (Leeds Place) to consider the key priority areas of the ICB in Leeds in terms of helping to make the biggest impact on improving health outcomes and people's experiences, as well as reducing inequalities. The Board explored how such priorities are being reflected in strategies, such as the Healthy Leeds Plan and West Yorkshire Partnership Strategy, and gave direct input into the refresh of the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

# 2

The Board gave particular attention to the current challenges relating to the **health and care workforce** and how partners are working together to understand and prioritise strategic actions required to strengthen the health and care workforce across Leeds. Such work is primarily planned and coordinated through the Leeds Health and Care Academy. The Board therefore explored this in more detail with the Academy Director.

# 3

Improving oral health and access to **NHS dentistry** remained a priority for the Board this year, with views sought from relevant commissioners, providers, practitioners and patients around the need and opportunities for tackling existing barriers. Such work will also continue into the new municipal year, particularly in view of the commissioning responsibilities for dentistry transferring to the West Yorkshire ICB in April 2023.

# 4

The Board considered a proposal by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust to develop a new service model aimed at achieving a more **suitable and sustainable bereavement service** in terms of releasing deceased adult patients to funeral directors out of hours. In welcoming the Trust's plans to engage widely on the development of this new model, the Board also shared concerns surrounding the potential implications of a forthcoming new Statutory Medical Examiner System, which it formally relayed to the government.





# Children & Families Scrutiny Board

## 2022/23 Highlights

The 2022/23 summary for this Scrutiny Board can be found here:

[Scrutiny at Leeds](#)



Cllr Hannah Bithell



Cllr Jordan Bowden



Cllr Emmie Bromley



Cllr Ann Forsaith



Cllr Julie Heselwood



Cllr Chris Howley



Cllr Zara Hussain



Cllr Alan Lamb



Cllr Lisa Martin



Cllr Denise Ragan



Cllr Karen Renshaw



Cllr Linda Richards



Cllr Jane Senior



Cllr Ryan Stephenson



Mr E Britten (co-opted member)



Mr A Graham (co-opted member)



Ms J Ward (co-opted member)



Mr N Tones (co-opted member)



Ms H Bellamy (co-opted member)



Ms L Whitaker (co-opted member)



Mrs K Blacker (co-opted member)

# 1

This year, the Board gave particular attention to the refresh of the **Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)** which will cover the period 2023 to 2028. This Plan is part of the strategic framework helping to deliver the mission at the heart of our Best City Ambition to tackle poverty and inequality and to improve the quality of life for the children and young people who call Leeds home. Early engagement with Scrutiny enabled Members to inform the development of the CYPP and consider proposed changes that later formed the basis of a wider formal public consultation exercise. Once approved in July 2023, the Board will maintain regular oversight through its performance monitoring role.

# 2

The Board maintained a focus on the ongoing development and implementation of the new Leeds strategy **'Everyone's included: the Leeds SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2027'**. As well as remaining responsive to the national agenda around SEND system reform, the shared views and experiences of local children and young people and their families had also informed the content of this new strategy. The Board particularly welcomed the name of the strategy, as this had been suggested by young people who wanted to share the important message that 'everyone's included' in making Leeds a child-friendly and inclusive place.

# 3

In recognition of the current challenges and pressures facing the **Children and Families workforce** in Leeds, the Board gave particular attention to the broader strategy work being undertaken by the Children and Families directorate around the recruitment and retention of the workforce and committed to continue monitoring such work in the new year.

# 4

The Board held a dedicated meeting on **safeguarding** and welcomed back the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Executive. The Board focused on the progress made by the LSCP following its earlier review of the notification arrangements linked to serious child safeguarding incidents, as well as exploring the cross cutting themes and learning identified through the LSCP review processes more generally.



# Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board

## 2022/23 Highlights



Cllr Barry Anderson  
(Chair)



Cllr Javaid Akhtar



Cllr Kayleigh Brooks



Cllr Ed Carlisle



Cllr Robert Finnigan



Cllr Pauleen Grahame



Cllr Asghar Khan



Cllr Sandy Lay



Cllr Annie Maloney



Cllr Trish Smith



Cllr Eleanor Thomson



Cllr John Tudor



Cllr Paul Wadsworth

The 2022/23 summary for this Scrutiny Board can be found here: [Scrutiny at Leeds](#)

# 1

At the start of the municipal year partners joined the Scrutiny Board to consider an update from the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime on the delivery of the **West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan 2021-24**. The Board explored the work of the Safer, Stronger Communities team, including receiving an overview from Leeds District Police on the successes and challenges associated with supporting **community safety** in the city. The Scrutiny Board also produced a statement in relation to [Reducing Gambling Harm](#), which will be considered by the Executive Board in June 2023.

# 2

The Scrutiny Board has a long standing commitment to prioritise scrutiny of **housing activity**. Members considered tenancy management, performance in relation to repairs and maintenance, how to 'turn around' void properties and HRA investment. The Board welcomed the excellent work being carried out to reduce homelessness in Leeds and considered the challenges and opportunities of locality working. In the context of these discussions and the [LGA Corporate Peer Challenge](#), the successor Board will consider the future of **locality working** in more detail in 2023/24.

# 3

Members examined progress in delivering the actions set out in the **Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy** a year after its publication. Issues of priority for the Board included biodiversity, access for all, quality standards, resources available for investment in play areas and work with communities and volunteers. A wide ranging debate took place in relation to the draft **Climate Emergency Annual Update** with members seeking clarity with regard to issues including energy security, funding opportunities, retrofitting older buildings, education and the Council's Food Strategy.

# 4

The main focus of the Scrutiny Board throughout this year has been support provided to vulnerable residents in Leeds. Given the current economic climate members were keen to explore how local partners can effectively target support and services to **reduce poverty and improve financial inclusion**. Members also considered the local welfare support scheme and how the council can support the future resilience of the third sector.



# Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board 2022/23 Highlights

The 2022/23 summary for this Scrutiny Board can be found here: [Scrutiny at Leeds](#)



Cllr Paul Alderson



Cllr Neil Buckley



Cllr Mike Foster



Cllr John Garvani



Cllr Sharon Hamilton



Cllr Arif Hussain



Cllr Wynn Kidger



Cllr Sandy Lay



Cllr Jessica Lennox



Cllr Mohammed Shahzad



Cllr Nicole Sharpe



Cllr Paul Truswell



Cllr Izaak Wilson

# 1

The way in which the planning system enables the Council to support the **delivery of sustainable communities** - and particularly the delivery of the “right homes, of the right tenure, in the right places” - has been a long-term priority for this Board. Members welcomed the opportunity to engage with the proposed scope of the Leeds Local Plan 2040, the Affordable Housing Growth Partnership Action Plan and a proposed update to the statutory Development Plan for Leeds.

# 2

The Scrutiny Board supports the aspiration within the [Best City Ambition](#) for the delivery of a low-carbon and affordable transport network to help people get around the city safely and easily. The Scrutiny Board has therefore examined a range of **transport challenges**. Bus service provision has been a priority for Members who explored issues associated with patronage, fares, bus reform, costs for providers, the provision of electric buses, and community access to economic opportunities with partners.

# 3

Given current cost-of-living pressures, the Scrutiny Board was keen to retain its focus on inclusive growth. This has included considering plans to refresh the **Inclusive Growth Strategy**, exploring potential economic challenges and opportunities within a developing green economy, and examining progress with the introduction of the Social Progress Index as a measure of inclusive growth. The Scrutiny Board reiterated its support for the work and impact of **100% Digital Leeds**.

# 4

In examining issues of infrastructure, the Scrutiny Board welcomed the Leeds **Flood Risk Management Strategy** and the progress to date in the delivery of flood alleviation schemes across the city. Consideration was given to the potential infrastructure requirements should a decision be taken to convert gas networks to **hydrogen**. **Infrastructure** was also one element of wide ranging scrutiny of progress towards delivering **Vision Zero** across the city and region, in order to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads.





# Strategy & Resources

## Scrutiny Board

### 2022/23 Highlights

The 2022/23 summary for this Scrutiny Board can be found here:

[Scrutiny at Leeds](#)



Cllr Gohar Almash



Cllr Sharon Burke



Cllr Peter Carlill



Cllr Dianne Chapman



Cllr Robert Finnigan



Cllr Sam Firth



Cllr Billy Flynn



Cllr Mahalia France-Mir



Cllr Caroline Gruen



Cllr Kevin Ritchie



Cllr Andrew Scopes

**1** Given the **challenging financial environment** faced by local authorities the Board has been active in its analysis of how funding has changed in recent years, ongoing financial health, areas where savings might be delivered such as procurement and contract management and scrutiny of the 2023/24 budget. A primary focus of the Board is to add value and this approach has led to changes in planned funding allocations for 2023/24. The Board were concerned about planned savings for the Contact Centre and as a result of scrutiny challenge in that area additional funding was made available to ensure continuity of service as it continues its service improvement journey.

**2** **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** has been a key policy focus of the Council in recent years ensuring that all staff are able to bring their whole selves to work and can work as productively as possible. The Board has therefore been keen to hear first hand from Council staff networks to understand what has gone well, ongoing challenges, and their ambitions and plans moving forward. Through this work the Board has played an important role in identifying that the term 'BAME' is no longer considered appropriate by the communities it claimed to represent. This has led to a change in approach by the Council and a recommendation that

**3** The Board has also commissioned work on other aspects of Human Resources. Considering the challenges associated with **recruitment and retention**, ensuring that staff well-being remains a focus of the Council, gaining a stronger understanding of absence rates following the Covid-19 pandemic and understanding staff burnout in light of recommendation in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge have all been priorities. With staff leaving the authority in higher numbers due to budgetary challenges in recent years, burnout and well being have been important considerations across the 2022/23 municipal year.

**4** The 2022/23 municipal year has seen **Leeds 2023** move from development and planning to going live with 'Awakening' in January 2023. As a result the Board has retained a strong interest in the development of the year long programme with a focus on ensuring that all areas of the city are reached by the events, that community hosts are connected in the right areas, elected members are consulted and involved and that events are as accessible as possible to as many residents as possible. The successor board in 2023/24 is likely to retain an interest as the exciting year unfolds and in ensuring evaluation and legacy remain a focus.



**More information about Leeds City Council's Scrutiny Service, along with the activity and membership of individual Scrutiny Boards, can be found on the Council's committee webpages.**

**You can also follow @ScrutinyLeeds on twitter.**

