

SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026

Bury
Council



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FOREWORD

As Chair of Bury Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is my pleasure to present the Annual Scrutiny Report for 2025/26. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny, Health Scrutiny and Children and Young People Scrutiny.

Scrutiny remains a cornerstone of effective local governance at Bury Council, enabling non-executive councillors to hold the Executive to account, examine the development of policy, monitor service performance, and contribute constructively to improving outcomes for residents.

During 2025/26, the Committee delivered a robust and wide-ranging work programme, balancing in-depth thematic reviews with regular performance monitoring and pre-decision scrutiny. A significant focus throughout the year was the ongoing financial challenge facing the Council. Members scrutinised the 2025/26 Revenue Budget, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (including updates covering 2026/27 to 2028/29), the Housing Revenue Account, the Treasury Management Strategy, the Capital Strategy, and quarterly finance reports. This work ensured strong democratic oversight of some of the most complex and high-risk issues facing the authority.

The Committee also maintained a strong emphasis on housing and regeneration. The Housing Sub-Group continued its oversight role, scrutinising the transition of housing services in-house, allocations policy, service performance, anti-social behaviour, complaints, and homelessness pressures. In addition, regular updates on major regeneration schemes enabled Members to scrutinise progress in real time and to hold the relevant Cabinet Member to account on matters of significant public interest.

As we look ahead, the Committee will seek to build on these solid foundations, responding to emerging priorities while maintaining high standards of accountability, transparency and improvement. I commend this

report to Council and look forward to another year of constructive challenge and positive influence on behalf of the people of Bury.

Bury Council's Scrutiny Committees have continued to play a vital role in reviewing the work of the Executive and scrutinising the services delivered by the Council and its partners. Activity throughout the year ranged from pre-scrutiny of emerging policy proposals to ongoing monitoring of performance, improvement activity and responses to external inspection, including Ofsted findings, major regeneration programmes and broader corporate responsibilities.

Over the past 12 months, the Council's three Scrutiny Committees undertook thematic and in-depth reviews which strengthened policy development, supported service improvement and provided meaningful, evidence-based challenge. For example, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a Housing Sub-Group to oversee the transition of Six Town Housing into an in-house Council service, while also providing sustained scrutiny of regeneration proposals through direct engagement with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth.

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee maintained a strong focus on service improvement within the directorate, introducing standing agenda items on SEND and the Improvement Plan. This approach ensured consistent oversight and assurance on progress to strengthen services for children, young people and families across Bury.

The Health Scrutiny Committee emphasised the importance of system-wide working and effective integration between local scrutiny arrangements and Greater Manchester structures. Engagement with GMCA Health Scrutiny and the Northern Care Alliance supported a broader understanding of system pressures and preparedness for Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection themes, including population health and equitable access to services. Alongside this, the Committee retained a clear focus on the Locality Plan and the performance of the Bury Integrated Care Partnership.

Positive progress was made during the year to strengthen collaborative working across the three Scrutiny Committees. A notable example was a joint

session between the Health Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to examine maternity services and the development of neurodiversity pathways. This joint approach enabled Members to consider cross-cutting issues from both health and children's services perspectives, supporting a more holistic understanding of service interdependencies and shared priorities.

In addition, Members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend Health Scrutiny meetings to contribute to discussions on the Locality Plan, reflecting the value of cross-committee engagement where issues span the whole family journey. Chairs of both the Health Scrutiny and Children and Young People Scrutiny Committees also contributed to the Overview and Scrutiny (Budget) Committee, ensuring alignment across all scrutiny bodies on financial pressures, risks and long-term planning. This approach has further strengthened the coherence and effectiveness of the Council's scrutiny arrangements.

Thanks are extended to all Elected Members, Education Representatives and Co-opted Members who have contributed to the work of the Council's Scrutiny Committees, Panels and Sub-Groups over the past year. Appreciation is also expressed to Directors, officers, internal and external partners, and community representatives whose openness, expertise and engagement have supported rigorous, informed and constructive scrutiny. Their continued commitment has been vital to the success of scrutiny in 2025/26, and the Committees look forward to the challenges and opportunities the year ahead will bring.



Councillor Dene Vernon,
Chair for Overview and
Scrutiny Committee



Councillor Ciaran Boles,
Chair for Children and
Young People Scrutiny
Committee



Councillor Elizabeth FitzGerald
Chair for Health Scrutiny
Committee



BACKGROUND

This Annual Report provides an overview of the activity and impact of the Council's Scrutiny Committees over the past municipal year, including the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Health Scrutiny Committee and Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. It highlights key areas of challenge, oversight and achievement and is presented to Council to promote transparency and accountability, demonstrate how scrutiny has contributed to improved governance and decision-making, and provide assurance to Members, partners and the public that effective scrutiny arrangements are in place across all areas of the Council's responsibilities and partnerships.

Throughout the year, the scrutiny committees have delivered a wide-ranging and purposeful work programme, examining strategic priorities, service performance and major policy developments across core council services, health and wellbeing, and outcomes for children, young people and families. Members have engaged constructively with Cabinet Members, senior officers and external partners, including NHS colleagues, at an early stage in the decision-making process. This has ensured that proposals are subject to informed and proportionate challenge before decisions are taken. Through this role, scrutiny has acted as a critical friend, holding decision-makers to account, testing assumptions, and helping to shape policy development and service improvement in a way that supports better outcomes for residents.

By bringing this report to Council, Members are provided with a clear and consolidated summary of how scrutiny activity across all committees has supported the Council's wider objectives, strengthened partnership working, and reinforced a culture of respectful challenge, openness and continuous improvement. The report also offers an opportunity to reflect on learning from the year and to set out how scrutiny arrangements will continue to evolve and strengthen in the year ahead, ensuring the scrutiny function remains effective, responsive and aligned to the Council's strategic priorities.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN BURY

Overview and Scrutiny Committees are an important part of the way we make decisions. Although they have no Executive powers, the scrutiny process does allow Members to explore issues in depth and help to influence decisions through recommendations to the Cabinet or Full Council.

In Bury, the role of scrutiny bodies can be broken down into these two main functions: -

HOLDING THE CABINET TO ACCOUNT

This involves scrutinising decisions before they are implemented by way of 'Call-in' to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for debate. The effect of a 'Call-in' is to suspend the decision until the Scrutiny Committee has had the opportunity to consider the implications of the decision and, where appropriate, to offer comments back to the Cabinet.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This involves Scrutiny Committees undertaking reviews of functions within their individual remits leading to recommendations to the Cabinet, and to assist in the development of future policies and strategies.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

This Committee is set up to scrutinise Cabinet decisions and Council performance, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee operates within the following terms of reference:

- To review and scrutinise the decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions.
- To review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and all service areas.
- To set up, appoint and monitor Overview Project Groups (set up to carry out reviews of policies, services or the impact of decisions).
- To make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or appropriate

- Committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the Scrutiny process.
- To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions.
- Oversight of the provision, planning and management of the assets and audit arrangements.
- Oversight of the Council's corporate plans and strategies and the monitoring of the corporate plan and departmental plans.
- To scrutinise outside bodies and partners relevant to the Council.
- To receive all reports from external inspectors.

As well as:

- Budget and policy framework matters
- Statutory flood risk management scrutiny powers
- Statutory community safety and policing scrutiny powers
- Services within the business and regeneration directorate
- Services within the corporate core/Corporate performance

During the 2025/26 municipal year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on six occasions, providing members with regular opportunities to scrutinise key strategic and financial matters. Cabinet engagement formed an important part of this work, with attendance from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth, Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation, Councillor Sean Thorpe, and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion, Councillor Sandra Walmsley. Their participation enabled detailed discussion and constructive challenge on matters within their respective portfolios, supporting effective accountability and informed decision-making. Agendas, reports and approved minutes for all Overview and Scrutiny meetings can be accessed online via the following link:

[Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, agendas and minutes – Bury Council](#)

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A dedicated Health Scrutiny Committee was set up to scrutinise partner organisations on issues relevant to the residents of the Borough. Full terms of reference are:

To review the policies and performance of the Council and external organisations in relation to the following areas:

- Adult social care (including adult safeguarding)
- Health and wellbeing board
- Housing
- Public health
- Adults and Communities budget and policy framework
- Statutory health scrutiny powers including the review and scrutiny of any matter relating to the planning provision and operation of health services for children and young people, including transitional health care services, affecting the area and to make reports and recommendations on these matters

During the 2025/26 municipal year, the Committee met on six occasions, with the Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Health and Public Service Reform, Councillor Tamoor Tariq invited. His attendance supported challenge and support across the LA areas and especially around the Adult Social Care, the CQC Assessment and Public Health. Alongside other contributions from NHS colleagues and other external partners, reflecting the Committee's commitment to effective partnership working, Healthwatch were invited to attend all meetings even when they weren't on the agenda so the committee had the opportunity to ask questions about the patient experience and so Healthwatch could understand the work of the committee. This collaborative approach provided Members with valuable insight into service pressures, performance and transformation activity, and supported informed challenge and assurance around the delivery of health and care services for Bury residents. Agendas, reports and approved minutes for all Health Scrutiny Committee meetings are published on the Council's website and can be accessed online via the following link:

[Health Scrutiny Committee meetings, agendas and minutes – Bury Council](#)

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A dedicated Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee was set up to scrutinise children and young people issues relevant to the residents of the Borough. Full terms of reference are:

To review the policies and performance of the Council and external organisations in relation to the following areas:

- Education and Schools
- Children and Young People Support and Safeguarding Services
- Children and Young People Specialist Services
- To scrutinise individual Cabinet decisions relating to the above areas.
- To monitor the Council's performance in the above areas.

To scrutinise statutory inspection reports and oversee the implementation of any recommendations arising from such reports:

- Transitional arrangements between children and adult services
- Statutory education scrutiny powers

During the 2025/26 municipal year, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee met on five occasions, with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Lucy Smith, regularly attending meetings to support the Committee's work programme. Councillor Smith's engagement enabled detailed and constructive scrutiny of matters within her portfolio and supported open dialogue on service performance, improvement activity and key challenges facing children, young people and families in Bury. This direct involvement strengthened accountability and ensured Members were able to provide informed challenge and assurance on priority issues, including education, SEND and wider improvement activity. Agendas, reports and approved minutes for all Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meetings are available on the Council's website and can be accessed via the following link:

[Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meetings, agendas and minutes – Bury Council](#)

OVERVIEW PROJECT GROUPS

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for setting up and monitoring reviews carried out by Overview Project Groups. These Groups are tasked with reviewing policy areas with a view to making recommendations that will ultimately result in service improvements.

During the municipal year the Overview and Scrutiny Committee carried on the Housing Subgroup but adapted this to span both housing and performance this was to support the crossover from Six town Housing being welcomed into the council's internal services. The group is responsible for doing in-depth scrutiny of Housing and performance services reports for the Council. The group was developed as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt they did not have sufficient time within the usual cohort of meetings to provide rigorous scrutiny of these topics.

KEY OUTCOMES

During 2025/2026 the Council's Scrutiny Committees and Overview Project Groups have looked at a wide range of topics and issues. Various methods have been used to examine and investigate issues which have resulted in positive outcomes in terms of policy development and holding decision makers to account.

Housing and performance Sub Committee

This was established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2024 but carried on into 2025 incorporating. Members of the group supported by Strategic Leads within the Department have met on four occasions and the areas of focus were as follows:

- Housing transition updates
- Housing allocations policy
- Housing services performance report (*This went to all the meetings as a standard*)

item demonstrating the overall 'health' of the housing service for each individual month and included updates on the Springs Estate)

- Quarterly performance booklet
- Anti-social behaviour
- Complaints
- Mock inspection report (By Altair)
- Homelessness

Members were provided with reports and presentations at the meetings and offered constructive scrutiny of performance and delivery within the Council's housing sector. At each meeting, Members asked several questions and could also relate to real-life casework enquiries from residents who accessed the housing service.

Feedback from the Housing Sub-Group was particularly valuable. The Sub-Group's efforts have led to several improvements, and it has been decided that the Sub-Group will continue its work to ensure ongoing enhancements in housing services.

In addition to the above, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee invited chief superintendence Kirsty Oliver to inform the Committee on Crime and Disorder within the Borough including plans for tackling continued issues within local area.

The Chairs of both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health Scrutiny Committee played an active role in the housing inspection and mock CQC inspections. Their involvement provided valuable oversight and ensured a robust and transparent evaluation process.

DECISIONS CALLED IN 2025/26

Under the Council's Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee, and Health Scrutiny Committee can call in decisions made by the Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members, and key decisions made by officers. This ensures decisions are carefully reviewed and accountable.

In 2025/26, no decisions were called in by any of the Scrutiny Committees. This shows that the scrutiny process has been effective. By thoroughly reviewing proposed decisions, the committees have ensured that all actions taken by the Cabinet and officers meet the Council's goals and legal requirements.

The committees have conducted detailed reviews, consultations, and discussions, addressing any concerns before final decisions are made. This initiative-taking approach has eliminated the need for formal call-ins, highlighting the committees' dedication to transparency, accountability, and good governance within the Council.

SCRUTINY TRAINING

The Scrutiny Committees participated in multiple training sessions over the course of the municipal year. Members attended Scrutiny-specific training delivered by the Local Government Association (LGA), which covered key areas such as roles and responsibilities, best practice, legislative updates, and practical case studies. The programme also included interactive elements and opportunities for members to share learning and develop skills.

Further training opportunities will be arranged for the next municipal year to continue building members' knowledge and supporting effective scrutiny.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a wide range of updates from Cabinet Members throughout the year, enabling Members to maintain strong oversight of key Council priorities, major regeneration programmes, financial performance, and wider corporate activity.

Development Updates

The Committee received regular, detailed updates on development and regeneration projects across the borough. These reports provided assurance that schemes are progressing effectively and reflect the significant efforts of officers in driving forward transformational change.

Members emphasised the importance of robust pre-scrutiny, with all major plans and frameworks reviewed by the Committee prior to Cabinet consideration. This ensures transparency, strengthens accountability, and helps guarantee that proposals are well-coordinated and supported by appropriate governance.

Updates were received on:

- Local Plan
- Northern Gateway
- Development Frameworks
- Walshaw
- Simister and Bowlee
- Elton Reservoir
- Regeneration Updates
- Radcliffe Hub
- Prestwich Village

- Bury Mill Gate
- Bury Market and 'Flexi Hall'
- Housing Development

Communities Updates

The Committee received a constructive update from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) concerning community safety across the borough. This session offered an opportunity to scrutinise both the Cabinet Member and GMP, providing assurance around local policing activity, crime reduction initiatives, technological developments, and partnership working. These updates helped reinforce accountability and ensured a clear line of oversight of community safety priorities.

Topics scrutinised included:

- Community Safety Update
- Crime and Disorder

Finance Updates

The Committee continued to play a key role in reviewing the Council's financial planning, performance, and long-term sustainability. Members scrutinised a range of financial reports, offering challenge and gaining assurance on budget management and the Council's overall financial position.

Reports considered included:

- Budget Update Report
- Year End Outturn Financial Position
- Quarter 2 Finance Report
- Annual HRA Budget 2026/27 & Rent Setting
- 2026/27 Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2027/28–2028/29)
- Council Tax Base and Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit Report
- 2026–27 Treasury Management Strategy

- 2026–27 to 2028–29 Capital Strategy
- Dedicated Schools Grant
- 2026/27 Budget EQIA
- Chief Finance Officer Statement

Corporate Updates

The Committee also considered updates on key corporate issues to support oversight of organisational performance, risk management, and strategic planning. These included:

- Health and Safety Annual Report
- Corporate Plan

Agendas, reports and approved minutes for all Overview and Scrutiny meetings can be accessed online via the following link:

[Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, agendas and minutes – Bury Council](#)

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Health Scrutiny Committee received regular updates from Cabinet Members and officers on a wide range of key service areas and system priorities, including:

- Health and Care Update
- NHS Structural Changes
- Elective Care
- Health Inequalities Strategy
- Workforce Updates
- Urgent Care and Winter Preparedness
- Adult Social Care Provider Workforce Support
- Bury ICP Locality Performance
- Updates from Bury Healthwatch

- Adult Social Care
- Food and Health Strategy
- Hospice Services
- Palliative and End of Life Care
- Women's Health
- Local Government Association Activity
- Your Medicines Matter
- Locality Plan
- Pharmacy First
- Neurodiversity Pathways
- Maternity Services

The Committee also received regular feedback from system-wide meetings, including the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Northern Care Alliance (NCA) Joint Health Scrutiny meeting, and the GMCA Health Scrutiny Committee. These updates provided assurance on activity beyond the borough and highlighted Bury's strong comparative performance.

To support effective scrutiny, pre-meetings were held with officers to explore complex issues in greater depth. Officers were thanked for their continued efforts in improving the clarity, accessibility, and usefulness of reports provided to Members.

A joint meeting was held with the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider maternity services and the development of neurodiversity pathways. This well-received session enabled Members to explore cross-cutting issues, providing valuable insight and assurance.

Agendas, reports and approved minutes for all Health Scrutiny Committee meetings are published on the Council's website and can be accessed online via the following link:

[**Health Scrutiny Committee meetings, agendas and minutes – Bury Council**](#)

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee received updates on a broad range of service areas and improvement priorities, including:

- Early Help and Social Care Improvement Journey
- Bury Local Area SEND Inspection Report
- Bury Priority Impact Plan
- EHCP Monitoring and Provision
- Improvement Plan Updates
- SEND Improvement Plan
- School Results
- Changing School Landscape
- Unvalidated Attainment Outcomes
- Complex Safeguarding and Missing Response
- Early Years and Provision
- Family Hubs and Better Start
- Education and Inclusion Strategy
- School Transport Update

It has been a productive and successful year for the Committee. Members engaged with an extensive programme of updates and reports, which strengthened oversight of key services and ongoing improvement activity across the directorate. The Committee extends its thanks to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and to all officers who provided detailed reports, open discussion, and ongoing support. Their contribution has been invaluable in enabling effective and informed scrutiny throughout the year.

Agendas, reports and approved minutes for all Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meetings are available on the Council's website and can be accessed via the following link:

WORK OF GREATER MANCHESTER SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

For the third consecutive year, Bury has been represented on the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee by Councillor Imran Rizvi, with Councillor Russell Bernstein serving alongside him until August 2025. During this period, the Committee continued to provide rigorous oversight of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, challenging decision-making and contributing to policy development across a wide range of strategic agendas.

Across the year, Members examined several major programmes shaping Greater Manchester's long-term ambitions. Early meetings focused on the refreshed Greater Manchester Strategy, the Integrated Settlement Outcomes Framework, and the development of the Bee Network, including patronage trends, active travel, safety concerns, particularly for women and girls, and the future of the Local Transport Plan. As the year progressed, scrutiny expanded to include the Interim Recycling and Waste Plan, the Greater Manchester Strategy Delivery Plan, and the draft Transport Strategy 2050. Members also reviewed the Good Growth Fund proposals, seeking clarity on governance, equitable investment, and the integration of social value and climate commitments.

Bury's representatives have taken part in regular briefings and informal sessions covering the breadth of GMCA activity, enabling them to engage effectively in scrutiny and bring local insight to regional discussions.

Councillor Elizabeth FitzGerald was appointed Chair of the GM Joint Health Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year, having already served on the Committee for two years and as Vice-Chair during 2024/25. Her leadership has been instrumental as the Committee's remit has significantly expanded, with meetings now taking place twice as often to manage the increased volume of work. Under her leadership, the Committee has continued to play a key role in determining when formal consultation is required for substantial service changes, providing feedback to

the Integrated Care Board (ICB) on engagement and consultation approaches, proposing implementation options, and monitoring how agreed plans are delivered.

Alongside these statutory functions, the Committee has strengthened its oversight of issues that matter most to residents, including elective care waiting times, access to primary care, and the introduction of digital pathways.

NEXT STEPS

Moving into the 2026/27 municipal year, a number of new and enhanced processes will be introduced to strengthen scrutiny arrangements, improve member preparation, and support a smooth transition into the new committee year.

Firstly, a structured annual training programme will be introduced for all scrutiny members. This will include mandatory core training for each scrutiny committee, covering roles and responsibilities, effective challenge, and governance frameworks, as well as committee-specific development sessions tailored to the remit of Overview and Scrutiny, Health Scrutiny, and Children and Young People Scrutiny. This approach will ensure members are consistently equipped with the knowledge and skills required to discharge their scrutiny responsibilities effectively.

Secondly, formal forward-planning meetings will be established for each scrutiny committee involving the Chair, lead officers and the relevant Cabinet Members. These meetings will take place at the start of the municipal year and periodically thereafter, with the specific purpose of agreeing work programme priorities, avoiding duplication across committees, and promoting coordinated and collaborative scrutiny activity where issues cut across remits.

Thirdly, all scrutiny agendas and report packs will be shared with Scrutiny Chairs across the three committees, ensuring Chairs are sighted on forthcoming items being considered elsewhere and enabling better alignment, advance preparation and collective awareness of emerging issues.

In addition, committee-specific training sessions will be opened up to members from all scrutiny committees, where appropriate. This will support networking, shared learning and a consistent approach to scrutiny, particularly in areas such as finance, performance management and partnership working where issues overlap.

Further work will be undertaken to align the Cabinet Forward Plan with the Council's Corporate Plan, ensuring scrutiny activity is planned alongside key strategic decisions and performance priorities, and that committees are engaged at the most appropriate stage of policy development.

During the previous municipal year, the Audit Committee provided oversight of the Council's improvement plan. It has now been agreed that improvement activity will be embedded within the Corporate Plan, which will be subject to scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, ensuring continued democratic oversight and clarity of accountability.

Finally, scrutiny work programmes will be developed at the start of the municipal year for each committee, clearly setting out scheduled items, review activity and anticipated Cabinet decisions. This will support a structured, forward-looking and efficient approach to scrutiny work throughout the year. The agreed forward plans are appended to this report for transparency and reference.

CONCLUSION

This year saw strengthened and increasingly effective collaboration between the Health Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. Recognising that many issues affecting children, young people, and families cut across both health and education/social care systems, the Committees worked together to ensure a more coordinated and holistic approach to scrutiny.

Joint sessions were convened to consider key cross-cutting areas, including maternity services, early years provision, and the development of new neurodiversity pathways. These topics were selected due to their significant impact on both childhood outcomes and wider population health. Bringing both Committees together ensured that Members could explore these issues from different professional and service perspectives, enabling richer discussions and more informed questioning.

This collaborative approach also helped identify shared priorities, highlight gaps or inconsistencies between services, and ensure that children's needs were reflected in broader health and care developments. Officers commented positively on the value of having joint Member feedback at an early stage, which supported clearer planning and alignment across departments and partner organisations.

Members noted that the joint scrutiny arrangements strengthened whole-system oversight, improved understanding of how services interact, and resulted in more comprehensive recommendations. The collaborative model has been recognised as good practice and will continue to be used for future areas of shared interest, particularly where early intervention, prevention, and family-centred services are concerned.

Appendix 1 - Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme 2025/26

Appendix 2 - Health Scrutiny - Work Programme 2025/26

Appendix 3 – Overview and Scrutiny – Work Programme 2025/26

Appendix 5 - Overview and Scrutiny – Housing Subgroup Work Programme 2025/26