



**OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT**

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## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman: Councillor John Ibison**

“The Annual Report provides a recap of some of Overview and Scrutiny's major accomplishments from the last year.

Overview and Scrutiny is member-led and evidence based. It is crucial that the work being scrutinised concentrates on strategic corporate goals and creating a difference for Wyre residents. Once again, we have hosted a successful work programme workshop in February 2023. From these suggestions, based on a review of the Business Plan, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2023/24 has been submitted to the April meeting for approval.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to and helped support Scrutiny during the past year. Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to all of the knowledgeable witnesses who have supported scrutiny's work over this period. Their participation enriches Scrutiny's activities with expertise, inspiration and enthusiasm.

Many thanks,

Cllr Ibison (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).”

## SCRUTINY AT WYRE

The scrutiny function acts on behalf of the community to improve services and decision-making inside and outside the council. This is achieved through in-depth task group reviews, evidence sessions on a topic or questions to service providers, Cabinet members or partners. The function is supported by a dedicated Democratic Services team and senior and specialist officers across the council which has helped develop a strong scrutiny culture and adds value to the work of the council.

Wyre Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee has embedded the four principles of good scrutiny, articulated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, in all its work. These are:

- Provide constructive “critical friend” challenge
- Amplify the voice and concerns of the public
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- Drive improvement in public services

### Structure of Scrutiny:



### Committee membership 2022/23:

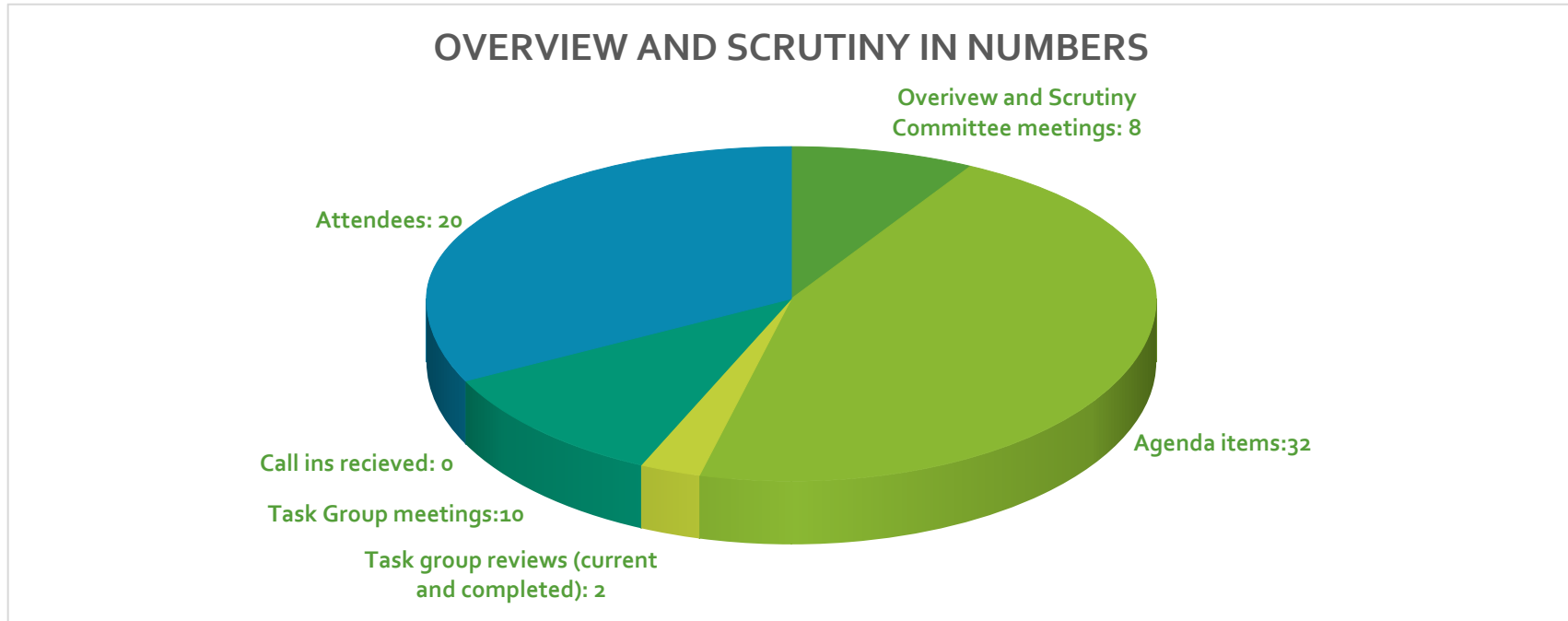
- 14 members of the council
- 11 Conservative councillors, 2 Labour councillors, and 1 Wyre Alliance councillor
- On 6 June 2022, Councillor Ibison was re-elected as the Chairman of the committee and Councillor Peter Le Marinel was elected as Vice Chairman

## Functions:

The committee will discharge the functions conferred by Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 or Regulations under Section 32 of the Local Government Act 2000.

In addition, the committee will, as per the Constitution:

- assist the Council and the Cabinet in the development of its budget and policies, with particular responsibility for Treasury Management;
- challenge the boundaries of existing policies and think creatively about possible new policies or solutions to problems;
- conduct research, community and other consultation and to consider possible options;
- make a positive contribution to the improvement of services;
- liaise with external organisations operating in the area, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working;
- review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Cabinet or individual portfolio holders and by Council officers where decisions have been delegated, both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- review and scrutinise the performance of the Cabinet in relation to the Council's policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or the Council arising from the scrutiny process;
- undertake the Council's statutory requirements to scrutinise the Crime and Disorder partnership, and;
- consider any Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) submitted to it by the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager. If appropriate, the Committee will make recommendations to the Cabinet, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Council's CCfA Scheme (Part 5.09).



**Committee meetings:**

- Meetings of the full committee meetings are open to the public to attend.
- Each meeting typically lasts 1 – 2 hours.
- The committee meets at eight times a year, usually on Monday evenings.

**Attendance (Maximum of seven meetings as of 20 March 2023):**

- Councillor Ian Amos - 6
- Councillor Sir Robert Atkins - 7
- Councillor Howard Ballard - 3
- Councillor Peter Cartridge - 7
- Councillor Emma Ellison - 6
- Councillor Rob Fail - 7

- Councillor John Ibison - 7
- Councillor Andrea Kay - 5
- Councillor Peter Le Marinel - 7
- Councillor Paul Longton - 7
- Councillor Kenneth Minto - 1
- Councillor David O'Neill - 2
- Councillor Matthew Vincent - 4
- Councillor Elizabeth Webster - 6

**Other Attendees:**

- Councillor David Henderson (former Leader of the Council)
- Garry Payne (Chief Executive) x 2
- Marianne Hesketh (Corporate Director Communities) x 2
- Diane Gradwell (Chief Executive Citizens Advice Services West Lancashire)
- Carl Green (Head of Engineering Services)
- Councillor Roger Berry (Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder)
- Hilary Fordham (Integrated Place Leader for Lancashire North)
- Dr Adam Janjua (Clinical Director Place)
- Councillor Michael Vincent (former Resources Portfolio Holder)
- Clare James (Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer)
- Councillor Michael Vincent (Leader of the Council)
- Martin Wyatt (Wyre Neighbourhood Inspector)
- Neil Greenwood (Head of Environmental Health and Community Safety)
- Emma Lyons (Communications and Visitor Economy Manager) x 2
- Mark Broadhurst (Head of Housing and Community Services)
- Councillor Bowen (Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder) x 2

## Agenda items:

- Election of Chair for the municipal year 2022/23
- Election of Vice Chair for the municipal year 2022/23
- An update on Covid-19 response – learning to live with the virus
- Review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Tourism Recovery Task Group – interim update report
- Business Plan 2021/22, Quarterly Performance Statement (Quarter 4: January – March)
- State of Wyre Report 2021
- O&S Work Programme 2022/23 – update and planning x 8
- Annual update regarding the work of the Lancashire County Council Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
- The annual Quality Account for 2021/22 North West Ambulance Service – Information item
- Review of the implementations of the recommendations of the Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group – one year on
- Review the implementations of the recommendations of the Residents Parking Permit Scheme Task Group
- Update report on the Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone
- Business Plan 2022/23, Quarterly Performance Statement (Quarter 1: April – June)
- Annual update from the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Health and Care Board
- Fees and Charges – draft
- Business Plan 2022/23, Quarterly Performance Statement (Quarter 2: July – September)
- Promoting Health, Self-Care and Social Prescribing in Wyre Task Group scoping document for review
- Tackling Youth Anti-Social Behaviour in Wyre Task Group – draft report
- Business Plan 2023/24 – detailed review
- Internal Staff Covid-19 Task Force – structured debrief report
- Wyre Community Safety Partnership – annual scrutiny review
- Review of the implementations of the recommendations of the Tourism Recovery in Wyre Task Group – one year on
- Business Plan 2022/23, Quarterly Performance Statement (Quarter 3: October – December)
- Planned Maintenance and Investment Projects Schedule - 2023/24
- O&S Work Programme 2023/24 – planning



### **Task Group reviews current and completed:**

- Tackling Youth Anti-social Behaviour in Wyre Task Group (completed)
- Promotion of Self-care and Social Prescribing in Wyre Task Group (current)

**The committee reviewed the progress of the implementation of recommendations, which had been accepted by Cabinet, of the following reviews:**

- Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group
- Parking Permit Scheme Task Group
- Tourism Recovery in Wyre Task Group

### **Training completed:**

The members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been invited/booked to the following sessions in 2022/23:

- North West Employers Strategic Scrutiny Network meetings
- LGIU Understanding Strategic Thinking
- In house Mid Term Financial Plan training
- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) financial scrutiny webinar
- In house O&S Work Programme Workshop

## KEY ACTIVITIES 2022/23

The committee's work has focused on the delivery of the annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. The committee's Work Programme has remained sufficiently flexible to accommodate other issues as and when they have arisen.

Some of scrutiny's key activities over the last municipal year include:

### **Annual Work Programme Workshop**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee attended a Work Programme Workshop on 24 February 2023 to determine possible reviews for the next municipal year (2023/24).

At this workshop, the committee decided on topics taking account of issues of local concern, Wyre Council Business Plan priorities, the suggestions and advice of officers and an agreed prioritisation criteria.

The members came to a consensus on the following review topics:

- Leisure Activity Provision (#3 on the priority list, to be discussed summer 2023 following the Wyre Moving More Strategy and Leisure Facilities Strategy)
- Business Model and Commercialisation of council assets (#2 on the priority list, to be discussed early autumn 2023)
- Climate Change Progress (#1 on the priority list but awaiting the council's Climate Change Strategy, to be discussed winter 2023)
- Housing (#4 on the priority list, with Mark Broadhurst to bring a briefing note on energy consumption of existing housing stock to a future meeting)

It was also agreed to have a dedicated meeting in the new municipal year on the draft 2023-2027 Business Plan.

Whilst this workshop helps identify priorities and provide structure for the months ahead, there is flexibility in the work programme and time set aside to regularly revisit the relevance of topics as the local context changes.

The committee found this to be a successful exercise, which they wish to continue. However, numbers of O&S Committee members attending were low and a better turnout is to be encouraged next time.

### **Youth Anti-Social Behaviour in Wyre Task Group**

For many years, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has identified Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) as a topic for future review. The Community Safety Annual Report for 2020 explained that since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, reports of ASB had significantly

increased in Wyre; however, towards the end of 2021 ASB incidents in Wyre seemed to be returning to pre-pandemic levels. The committee found that a potential risk of reviewing ASB was that the remit may become too broad and the size of the project would limit the quality of the work. For their review to have an impact, members realised that it needed to be focused and meaningful. For that reason, following assistance from officers, they decided to commission a task group to focus on youth ASB only.

As confirmed at the Work Programme Workshop, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to commission a task group on youth anti-social behaviour. The review was carried out over seven meetings held on 30 March, 21 April, 25 May, 12 July, 2 August, 3 October and 20 October 2022.

The purpose of the review was to protect residents and to strive for lower levels of youth ASB in the community, it is therefore essential that the council consider the use of all available tools and powers.

The aims for the review were as follows (as per the Scoping Document):

1. To understand the causes and scale of youth ASB in Wyre and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the increase of incidents.
2. To explore the impact of ASB on:
  - The community
  - Council owned assets
  - The Police
  - Businesses, and
  - Community groups
3. To review the council's current ASB policies and procedures.
4. To assess the effectiveness of the mechanisms for how the authority responds to and deals with ASB, including the community trigger.
5. To examine the effectiveness of multi-agency partnership working such as the Community Safety Partnership, in so far as it affects youth ASB.
6. To make succinct recommendations to Cabinet on what more the council can do to help reduce youth ASB in Wyre

After substantial research and hearing evidence from multiple expert witnesses, the group agreed eight recommendations that went to Cabinet for review on Wednesday 11 January 2023. The following recommendations (numbered as per the report) were accepted:

3.1 That the council continue to develop closer working relationships with organisations such as schools across Wyre to communicate the council's role with youth anti-social behaviour (ASB) and continue to try to expand it.

3.2 That the council make enquires with external organisations to consider running and financing a revival of a project where the high schools across Wyre, including pupil referral units, create drama productions on key community safety topics such as youth ASB as the council alone did not have the resources.

3.4 That the council continue to work with partners to obtain external funding to continue such diversionary activities for young people as the boxing project in Fleetwood and consider expanding such projects for a more universal appeal. (Subject to a change in the wording and to include the following "finance being obtained externally".)

3.5 That the council continue to promote how residents can report incidents of ASB. Councillor Berry added that it is important that ASB was reported to the police using the 101 call line or the online reporting system and that, in addition and not instead, residents could report ASB to the council.

3.6 That the council replicate the work of Garstang Town Council in providing councillors with a guide on reporting ASB to relevant authorities and how to share this information with local residents and that a future pre-council briefing slot be scheduled on this topic following the election in May 2023.

3.8 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the implementation of the recommendations agreed by Cabinet after 12 months.

In response to Recommendation 3.3 relating to the proposed formation of a Wyre Council Youth Forum, Councillor Berry said that Cabinet could not accept this as it raised issues much wider than dealing with Youth ASB. Those issues would include the forum's responsibilities and remit, rules of procedure and its governance in addition to questions of the financing and administration of such a forum, which prevented taking it forward within the context of the task group's report.

With regard to Recommendation 3.7, Councillor Berry advised that Cabinet could not accept it as the council was currently awaiting advice from external partners about the possible upgrading of the CCTV system including re-deployable cameras. Cabinet would then need to take a decision on whether to approve the upgrade and, if agreed, decide on its form and extent and the means of finance. He said that Ring Doorbell cameras for identified victims of youth ASB would require external funding and that he understood that the police had applied to the Lancashire Partnership Against Crime for that funding.

The final report of this task group and the full minutes for the Cabinet meeting can be found on the Wyre Council website here:

<https://wyre.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=1736&Ver=4>

## Tourism Recovery in Wyre Task Group (implementation of recommendations update)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have continued to monitor the implementation of accepted recommendations arising from the task group's findings. The implementation of the recommendations was reviewed at the 6 June 2022 and 27 February 2023 committee meetings.

Recommendations progress update:

Recommendations	Progress update
<p>Recommendation 1 – That the council concentrates on the promotion of Wyre as a tourist destination.</p>	<p>The new communications plan includes a new Visitor Economy Campaign.</p> <p>Appointment of a part-time marketing officer for tourism. This officer is responsible for all aspects of tourism promotion for Wyre. The communications and visitor economy team is now responsible for the social media accounts for Discover Wyre and regularly share posts about what's on in the area and what attractions we have. They have also launched a We are Wyre campaign to create an identity which outlines what Wyre is all about – beautiful coastlines, amazing countryside, family friendly, accessible and more. They have started to produce video reels to increase engagement on the council's Instagram profile.</p> <p>They have utilised the video and photography that we commissioned across our digital media and will use this in a range of print planned for next year.</p> <p>They have launched the new AR trail for Cleveleys and the festive trail for Fleetwood and will promote any further trails that are introduced.</p> <p>They are also working on a new visitor guide for Wyre and a printed range of itineraries for key attractions and things to do in Wyre around a number of themes e.g. family friendly activities, accessible Wyre, places to walk etc. The great outdoors campaign, including the printed brochure and online events is also being promoted to encourage visitors to enjoy Wyre.</p> <p>They also continue to promote Wyre's visitor attractions including markets and theatres to increase visitor numbers.</p>

<p>Recommendation 2 – That the Discover Wyre website be brought in-house.</p>	<p>The old website was taken down and the new website was launched in summer 2022.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 – That improvements be made to the Discover Wyre website and for it to concentrate on promoting the individual towns within the borough, ensuring all areas are covered equally.</p>	<p>Following a new content plan, the new website includes a focus on the town centres, which will feature on the homepage.</p> <p>A new What's on area has been created to showcase events across the borough plus our own Great Outdoors calendar, Garstang Walking Festival and Wyre's theatre shows.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 – That a digital marketing strategy for the council's various digital platforms be created, in order to benefit the wider tourism strategy. In addition, report the defined objectives of his strategy back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>A campaign plan has been developed for the visitor economy campaign.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6 – That there is a continued collaborative working relationship between the Tourism, Events and Communication teams.</p>	<p>The new Communications and Visitor Economy Team has been in place since December 2021 and is working really well. Together the team has put on a number of events for local people and visitors including the Queen's Jubilee, free theatres shows across Wyre, 'Creatival' and events at Fleetwood Market.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10 – To explore options that will enhance the Civic Centre, including the Members Lounge, to make it more attractive venue for weddings and other events.</p>	<p>There is a small budget set aside to undertake decoration of the Members Lounge. Owing to limited staffing capacity it will be actioned during 2023/24.</p>

## Citizens Advise Lancashire West Task Group (implementation of recommendations update)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have continued to monitor the implementation of accepted recommendations arising from the task group's findings. The implementation of the recommendations was reviewed at their meeting held on Monday 5 September 2022.

Recommendations progress update:

Recommendations	Progress update
Recommendation 1 - The Cabinet wholeheartedly support the continuation of Wyre Council working with Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW).	Following the task group's report, Cabinet agreed to enter into a three-year service level agreement with Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW) for the provision of welfare advice services in the borough until 31 May 2024 at a cost of £30,000 per annum.
Recommendation 2 - That the council explore the feasibility of a trial into the Digital Service Hub proposed by CALW. The group recommends that this be included in any negotiations with CALW to advise on the best location for such a service.	Cabinet agreed to participate in a trial of digital service kiosks at a number of locations in Wyre at a cost of £8,000, however, there had been a delay in the implementation of the trial. The work was halted due to the sudden death of the Services Manager, Guy Simpson, who was leading the project and other staff illness. The pandemic had also put added pressure on CALW in-house IT team to manage the online service; however, the trial was still something they wished to develop in the future.

## Integrated Care Board (ICB) update

Hilary Fordham, the Integrated Place Leader for Lancashire North, and Dr Adam Janjua, Clinical Director Place from the NHS Integrated Care Board attended the meeting held on Monday 17 October 2022 to submit answers to questions posed by members of the committee and provided members with a verbal update on the Integrated Care Board structure.

Hilary Fordham asked the committee if they would suggest that a senior Wyre Council officer be part of the discussion and thinking regarding what the Lancashire Place-Based Partnership should look like, how it should operate and what the support in each of the 3 'sub-places' should be. The committee welcomed this proposal and recommended for this question be passed to the relevant officers for discussion. Following this meeting it was confirmed that the Head of Housing and Community Services attend the meeting.

## **Promoting Self-Care and Social Prescribing Task Group**

Following the discussions at the ICB update meeting held on Monday 17 October 2022, the Chairman of the committee proposed that a short, small task group review be set up to look at health and wellbeing in Wyre specifically to review further opportunities for social prescribing. Related council services to be looked at could include disabled facilities grants, care and repair other wellbeing schemes. It was highlighted that these services help alleviate the pressure from residents presenting at health care settings for non-clinical matters. In relation to health and wellbeing, there must be an understanding of what the council's statutory requirements are and the services the council offer. Wyre Council's Business Plan 2019-2023 included a commitment to collaborate with residents and local stakeholders to support and maximise opportunities for improving health and wellbeing across our communities.

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Monday 21 November 2022, members commissioned the Promoting Self-Care and Social Prescribing Task Group.

This review is currently on-going and once the group have concluded, their recommendations will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for endorsement and the Cabinet for consideration.

## **Review of fees and charges 2023/24**

At their Monday 21 November 2022 meeting, members were briefed on the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 and some changes to the current year's fees and charges. There were six areas the committee had particular comments. These were:

- Health and Wellbeing Classes
- Development Control
- Public Conveniences
- Markets
- Room Hire (Civic Centre)
- Leisure Development – Playing Fields

The comments from the committee were fed back to the Management Board when discussing the proposed fees and charges.

## **Business Plan update**

At their Monday 16 January 2023 meeting, The Corporate Director Communities, Marianne Hesketh, submitted a report on the Business Plan updated for 2023. The committee reviewed the refreshed Business Plan and made comments and asked questions regarding:



- The value for money of the leisure centres in Wyre
- The renewable heating of leisure centres and swimming pools
- Measures for the reduction in education, skills and training, employment, income and health deprivation in Lower Layer Super Output Areas in Wyre
- An updated housing needs survey
- Measure for tree coverage across Wyre

After further discussions, the committee made the following proposals for the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to consider regarding the updated Business Plan:

- That the following action “maximise commercial opportunities and deliver efficiencies” under the heading growth and prosperity be split and displayed as two separate bullet points.
- That the action regarding promoting the responsible use of Wyre’s great outdoors under the environment and climate heading should also be reflected under the growth and prosperity heading.

## EXTERNAL SCRUTINY COMMITMENTS

- **Councillors Emma Ellison and Ballard - Chair and Vice Chair of the North West Strategic Scrutiny Network.**

The Strategic Scrutiny Network is part of North West Employers core membership offer and is designed to support councillors in the development of their scrutiny function and role, share good practice and highlight local and national drivers.

- **Councillor Matthew Vincent – Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Scrutiny Committee**

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is a strategic collaboration between business, universities and local councils, which directs economic growth and drives job creation.

- **Councillor Robinson – Lancashire County Council Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee (Co-opt member)**

The Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee scrutinises matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in the area, and to review and scrutinise county council Adult Services and Public Health. Statutory responsibility for scrutiny of NHS proposals for a substantial development or variation relating to both adults and children's health in Lancashire. The Committee shall include twelve non-voting Co-opted district council Members. Councillor Robinson attends an annual meeting of Wyre's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and presents a report about the business undertaken by the committee over the past twelve months.

- **Councillors Berry and Le Marinel – The Police and Crime Panel (PCP)**

The Police and Crime Panel (PCP) have the power to scrutinise Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) activities, including the ability to review the Police and Crime Plan and annual report, request PCC papers and call PCCs and Chief Constable to public hearings. The PCP can also veto decisions on the local precept and the appointment of a new Chief Constable.

## CURRENT AND FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme is reviewed at every meeting of the committee. All members are invited to make suggestions about potential review topics for inclusion in the Programme. Scrutiny is member-led and without suggestions from councillors about task group topics the Programme will not achieve its purpose.

The future Work Programme will be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee early in the new Municipal Year although it will continue to have the flexibility to react to issues as they arise.

## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes suggestions from councillors and the public regarding issues that could be investigated. The Committee aims to consult with the public, councillors and officers each year and their suggestions are considered for the Annual Work Programme.

There are a number of ways you can get involved in the work of scrutiny at the council:

- Suggesting an issue or topic for scrutiny to look at by writing, emailing or phoning the Democratic Services team.
- Attending a meeting open to the public. Please note that reports may be considered in private if they contain confidential information.
- Consultation and participation – you could be asked for your views on an issue or be invited to provide specialist knowledge you might have by being an expert witness in a scrutiny review.
- Contacting your local councillor on how to get involved.

You can also view Overview and Scrutiny papers on Wyre's public website, which include meeting dates, agendas, minutes, reports and committee membership via <https://wyre.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=143> or contacting Democratic Services on [democratic.services@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@wyre.gov.uk).

