

**Safer and Stronger
Communities Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

1 July 2024



**Refresh of the Work
Programme 2024/25 for the
Safer and Stronger
Communities Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

Report of Helen Bradley, Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

None

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SSC OSC) with a work programme for 2024/2025.

Executive summary

- 2 SSC OSC review their work programme each year to reflect the objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan and Safe Durham Partnership Plan and in the context of the County Durham Vision 2035.
- 3 The proposed SSC OSC work programme has been framed around the shared County Durham Vision 2035 based on the three strategic ambitions of 'more and better jobs', 'long and independent lives' and 'connected communities'. The SSC OSC work programme also reflects the six strategic priorities of the Safe Durham Partnership Plan.
- 4 The proposed work programme also reflects the refreshed Council Plan adopted by the County Council at its meeting on 28 February 2024.

Recommendations

- 5 SSC OSC is recommended to:
 - a) Receive and comment on the proposed SSC OSC work programme for 2024/25
 - b) Agree the SSC OSC work programme for 2024/2025 and the flexibility it offers to respond to emerging issues.

Background

- 6 SSC OSC has a focus on community safety and service improvement and this will continue in 2024/25. The Committee will also contribute to policy development where it can add value and insight.
- 7 The current overview and scrutiny committees work programmes are informed by:
 - Council Plan
 - Cabinet's Notice of Key Decisions
 - County Durham Vision for 2035
 - Partnership plans and strategies
 - Performance and budgetary control data
 - Changes in government legislation
 - Local priorities
- 8 The County Durham Partnership agreed a Vision for County Durham 2035 which sets out our strategic direction and what we would like to achieve by this date. The Vision was developed with partner organisations and the public and is structured around three broad ambitions for the people of County Durham.
 - A place where there are more and better jobs
 - People live long, healthy and independent lives
 - Communities are well connected and supportive
- 9 Each ambition contains a number of objectives together with some council specific objectives. Following the refresh of the Council Plan in April 2024, it is now structured around five themes which reflect our contribution towards achieving the three ambitions within the Vision for County Durham as well as the council's own improvement agenda:
 - Our Economy
 - Our People
 - Our Communities
 - Our Environment
 - Our Council

Council Plan 2024 - 2028

- 10 The Council Plan is the primary corporate planning document for the county council. It details Durham County Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Vision for County Durham 2035 together with its own ambitious agenda. It provides a summary for members, partners and the public of our priorities for the county and the main programmes of work that we will undertake to help achieve these priorities. The Plan will now be refreshed each year to reflect the integration of corporate and financial planning.
- 11 Both the Vision for County Durham and the Council Plan are structured around the three ambitions for the county and our own improvement agenda. Within this context, the ambition of Connected Communities is linked to the remit of the SSC OSC and includes the following:

Connected Communities

- All children and young people will have a safe childhood and victims of crime will have easy access to the services and support they require;
- Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well used, clean, attractive and safe;
- Communities will be welcoming, accept one another and build new relationships to support one another.

Safer and Stronger Communities OSC Work Programme

- 12 In addition to providing a scrutiny role for activity of the council, SSC OSC is the designated Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of Part 3 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. The Committee is therefore responsible for scrutinising the work of the Safe Durham Partnership.
- 13 During 2023/2024, SSC OSC held six scheduled meetings and three informal sessions. Within this period the committee has provided consultation responses to the Safe Durham Partnership Board in respect of the Anti-social Behaviour Strategy Delivery Plan and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan. The committee also considered quarterly performance reports and presentations and reports in relation to the following areas:
- a) Overview activity
- i. County Durham Youth Justice Service
 - ii. Anti-social behaviour strategy, delivery plan and strategic group updates
 - iii. Safe Durham Partnership refresh of partnership priorities
 - iv. Nuisance vehicles/Off road bikes
 - v. Open water safety

- vi. Alcohol and drug services
- vii. Home fire safety
- viii. Horden Together project
- ix. Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group annual report
- x. Civil Contingency Planning and Storm Arwen Review
- xi. Serious Violence Strategy
- xii. Prevent Strategy: Countering terrorism radicalisation and violent extremism Public Protection Service: enforcement and intervention activity
- xiii. Probation Service and reduction of reoffending

b) Consultation

- i. Safe Durham Partnership ASB Strategy and Delivery Plan
- ii. County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan

c) Informal Briefing Sessions

- i. Anti-Social Behaviour – Theory of Change
- ii. Empty Properties and ASB

Areas for Consideration in the SSC OSC Work Programme

- 14 Paragraph 13 of this report identifies activity undertaken by the committee during 2023/24. The committee is asked to consider areas for further progress updates and review topics to be included in the work programme for 2024/2025 in light of the current Council Plan, Safe Durham Partnership Plan and the Vision for County Durham 2035.
- 15 Within this context, Members of the SSC OSC are asked to agree the proposed work programme for 2024/25 that is attached at appendix two. The work programme is very comprehensive drawing on topical areas across the remit of the committee and it should be noted that it is also flexible to accommodate emerging issues throughout the municipal year.

Main implications

Crime and Disorder

- 16 Information with this report aims to contribute to activity to reducing crime and disorder within the county.

Conclusion

- 17 The work programme report identifies areas of work that fall within the remit of SSC OSC.

Background papers

- [Council Plan 2024-28](#)
- [County Durham Vision 2035](#)
- [Safe Durham Partnership Plan 2021-2025](#)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None

Finance

None

Consultation

None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None

Climate Change

None

Human Rights

None

Crime and Disorder

Information with this report aims to contribute to activity to reducing crime and disorder within County Durham.

Staffing

None

Accommodation

None

Risk

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme is an important element of the Council's governance and risk management arrangements.

Procurement

None

Appendix 2: Draft SSCOSC Work Programme 2024/25

Attached as a separate document.