

## **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**

**6 July 2026**

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

## **Draft Scrutiny Annual Report**

### **Summary**

1. This report presents the Committee with a draft of the Annual Scrutiny Report for the municipal year 2025/26.

### **Background**

2. Following the February 2024, Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge of the City of York Council, the subsequent report presented to the Council's Executive in May 2024 stated: "Scrutiny arrangements at CYC would benefit from review. As a function of governance, it can be hugely beneficial for quality of decision-making if it is fully supported and empowered to be a positive and integral part of policy development. It is clear that this is recognised by the administration as an area where a fresh look at how improvements can be made would also be a good use of time and effort."
3. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) was therefore commissioned to undertake a Scrutiny Impact Review of City of York Council. This review was conducted in November and December 2024.
4. The final CfGS recommendations were reported to the Corporate Services, Climate Change and Scrutiny Management Committee on 10 March 2025, with a proposed action plan to address each of the recommendations in full. All Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs were invited to attend the meeting and contribute to the debate.
5. The CfGS's Recommendation 11, as reported to the above meeting, stated: 'Reinstate the process of having an annual scrutiny report but update the format to focus on the impact and difference that scrutiny has made.' The action plan proposed that this work be taken forward by the Scrutiny Officer in liaison with Scrutiny Chairs to produce an annual report detailing work undertaken throughout the year, benefits and

value realised etc, and a look forward to the coming year. The aim of this would be to demonstrate the impact of Scrutiny and share learning.

6. Following agreement by the Committee, the recommendations, action plan and the comments of the Committee were then presented to Executive on 11 March 2025.
7. Following approval by Executive, the recommendations and action plan were then presented to Full Council on 27 March 2025. Council endorsed the proposed actions, including the establishment of a cross-party working group, consisting of all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Committees, to lead and oversee work to implement the recommendations.
8. This group was then established as the Scrutiny Review Working Group and held its first meeting on 16 April 2025, with Cllrs Fenton and Merrett respectively elected Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group. Following the introduction of a revised scrutiny committee structure in May 2025, new scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs who were not already members of the Working Group were co-opted to its membership.
9. At its meeting on 7 January 2026, the Scrutiny Review Working Group considered examples of best practice from comparable local authorities to inform the development of an annual report. Draft documents were then developed and considered at the Working Group's meetings on 4 March and 25 June 2026 and revised to take members' comments into account.
10. The Working Group recommended that the draft annual report be referred to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee to note and agree to submit to Council for approval. This would meet the requirements of the recommendation previously agreed by Council and represent the first Annual Scrutiny Report at City of York Council since 2019.

## **Consultation**

17. Consultation on the draft Annual Scrutiny Report has been undertaken by the cross-party Scrutiny Review Working Group and with Democratic Services.

## **Implications**

18. The implications are as follows:
  - **Financial** – none directly arising from this report.

- **Human Resources (HR)** – none directly arising from this report.
- **Equalities** – none directly arising from this report.
- **Legal** – none directly arising from this report. The Council has a statutory duty to operate a scrutiny function.
- **Crime and Disorder** – none directly arising from this report.
- **Information Technology (IT)** – none directly arising from this report.
- **Property** – none directly arising from this report.
- **Other** – none directly arising from this report.

## Risk Management

19. There are no known risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

## Recommendations

20. Members are asked to agree the draft Annual Scrutiny Report, subject to any comments received at the meeting, and agree to its submission to the July Council meeting for final approval.

Reason: To strengthen the scrutiny function and to fulfil the recommendation endorsed by Council in March 2025 in relation to the reintroduction of an Annual Scrutiny Report.

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Julie Gallagher  
Head of Democratic Services

**Report Approved**  **Date** 26 June 2026

**Wards Affected:** All

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, Scrutiny Impact Report: City of York Council,  
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s182228/Annex%20A%20York%20Scrutiny%20Impact%20Report.pdf>
- City of York Council Scrutiny Impact Review Action Plan,  
<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s182229/Annex%20B%20Scrutiny%20Impact%20Review%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

## **Annexes**

- Annex A: Draft Annual Scrutiny Report 2025-26

## **Abbreviations**

CfGS – Centre for Governance and Scrutiny

LGA – Local Government Association