

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2018

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2018 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Kevin Rodgers

Councillors Neil Gethin, Jane Kidd, Andrea Robinson and Paul Wray

Invitee: - Paul O'Brien

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

DMBC

- Allan Wiltshire - Head of Policy and Partnerships

Other Councillors

- Councillor Martin Greenhalgh
- Councillor Nigel Cannings
- Councillor Derek Smith

		<u>ACTION</u>
43	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Healy and Richard A Jones.	
44	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	None	
45	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest made.	
46	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u>	
	There were no public statements made.	

PROPOSALS ON AN UPDATED CORPORATE PLAN 2018-19.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee held a meeting on the 8th February, 2018 to consider the updated 2018/19 Corporate Plan.

It was explained that the current Corporate Plan runs out at the end of 2017/18 and that an updated 2018/19 Corporate Plan was required to provide clear direction for the work of the Council for the next year. The new Plan brings together in one document, agreed priorities that were already shaping how the Council work. In summary it covers:

- The Council's contribution over the next year to the Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) partnerships plan.
- How the Council will ensure it has the capacity to deliver DGT transformational priorities and quality services day in, day out.

It was explained that the Corporate Plan was framed around the 4 DGT priority themes (Working, Learning, Living and Caring) and the cross-cutting 'Connected Council' theme.

A presentation was provided at the meeting to outline proposals for an updated Corporate Plan. Members provided their support to the plan and provided the following comments.

Doncaster Learning – It was recognised that progress in wider results across the board had been made, but that an achievement gap with statistical neighbours still persisted. It was outlined that the wider review of education undertaken by the Authority had identified priorities and work to improve areas such as attendance levels were receiving greater focus.

Doncaster Working - Concerns were raised in relation to wage levels and it was questioned how the DGT partnership strived to increase wages for Doncaster residents. Comments were made in relation to the role of larger local employers in making a big impact on this area. It was acknowledged that the Council will be experiencing further cuts resulting in the slimming down of the workforce and this along with past reductions and wage freezes have all presented challenges in improving the situation for residents. Members heard that it was being considered as to how the partnership can stimulate a number of local economies which may support this area.

Members were also reminded about the Doncaster Inclusive Growth Strategy which provided an opportunity for new ideas to be put forward as well as an outline of what the local economy will look like in 10 years.

Maximisation of benefits and other supports were highlighted as a way by which residents experiencing lower incomes in work. In

combination with this approach, was a firm view that employers across the Borough needed to consider flexible working to allow individuals from groups with protected characteristics such as disabled people, tackle socio-economic disadvantage.

In terms of apprenticeships, it was heard how there were different levels of apprenticeships available and it was about setting the right aspirations to allow residents to achieve their full potential in the world of work.

Doncaster Living - Members heard how Doncaster had been reported as one of the most inactive Boroughs, with around one in three of Doncaster's adults falling into this category. Members were interested to hear that Doncaster had been chosen by Sport England as a pilot area to work with to build healthier, more active communities across England. It was also commented how society had made it much easier to be inactive through the reliance on such things as cars and that sports clubs such as golf clubs were experiencing dwindling numbers.

Doncaster Caring - It was viewed that the Borough's social infrastructure might benefit from the use of a locally based social enterprise. In particular, the use of the Council's Powers of General Competency (under the 2011 Localism Act) to create community based mutual organisations with the NHS and other public sector organisations which might provide vital bespoke solutions.

A Member raised the concern that this theme was so critical that progress in one area could adversely be affected by progress made in another. For example, they spoke of a local extra care housing facility that accommodated individuals as part of their end of life care, however, this had resulted in there being less availability for others to live there, remain independent for longer and be less socially isolated. It was recognised that more was being done to look at housing solutions in the Borough and identify what people need.

Members raised concern as to how it was difficult to break cyclical decline and referred to how Social Education Centres had been closed with little available elsewhere. It was viewed that this was something that could be provided by the market rather than the Council, but that the stimulation of this market remained a key challenge.

Connected Council - It was explained that this is what the organisation needed to be like whilst spending money as the best it can.

A Member raised concern about transport links to the Civic Building, which for some was a difficult reach and it therefore might be useful to improve connectivity to the Civic Building using a shuttle bus.

In terms of managing and improving the quality of data held and used, it was explained that this was about making the most out of the information held on different systems.

A member of the Panel stressed the importance of value for money and raised concerns about how much had been spent on consultants who often lived outside of the Borough and therefore spent money outside of the local economy. It was also commented that posts that had been made redundant and agency staff were now being employed to fill those voids. It was added that this could prove expensive to the Council at a time when significant cuts were being made as well as becoming at risk of not being able to provide quality frontline services.

It was felt that the plan was going in the right direction and that good partnership working was essential for it to work. It was also felt that the areas of focus was good although with many decisions to be made there would need to be a fine balance of what was taken forward.

In terms of the areas of focus outlined under each area, it was commented that a key role of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was to ensure progress was made against the priorities in the Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the report.