

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2019 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Jane Kidd

Councillors Neil Gethin, Mark Houlbrook and Andrea Robinson

Invitee: - Paul O'Brien – workforce representative

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones (for agenda item 1 to 4)

Councillor Nuala Fennelly (for agenda item 1 to 5)

Councillor David Nevett

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources

Peter Dale, Director of Regeneration and Environment

Phil Holmes, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing

Rupert Suckling, Director of Public Health

James Thomas, Director of Performance & Improvement, Doncaster Children's Service Trust

Julie Mephram, Director of Children's Social Care, Doncaster Children's Services Trust

Julie Crook, Director of Corporate Services, St Leger Homes Doncaster

Leanne Hornsby, Assistant Director, Commissioning and Business Development

Julie Grant, Assistant Director of Customers, Digital & ICT

Louise Parker, Head of Service Strategy and Performance Unit Manager

Dawn Jones, Customer Experience Manager, Doncaster Children's Services Trust

Clare Rosser, Finance Manager, Doncaster Children's Services Trust

Michaela Rowlands, Principal Street Scene Manager

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Healy and Richard A Jones and Bernadette Nesbitt

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations reported at the meeting.	
2	<u>MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 27TH JUNE, 2019</u>	
	<u>RESOLVED</u> that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th June, 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	All to note
3	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u>	
	There were no public statements.	
4	<u>ST LEGER HOMES OF DONCASTER LTD (SLHD) PERFORMANCE & DELIVERY UPDATE: 2019/20 QUARTER ONE (Q1)</u>	
	<p>The Chair welcomed the Deputy Mayor Glyn Jones, James Thomas and Julie Mephram to the meeting. Members of the Committee were provided an opportunity to ask questions on the report and the following issues were raised.</p> <p>Members sought clarity on the effectiveness of SLHD's partnership arrangements including its relationship with the Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST).</p> <p>The Committee was informed that SLHD took a wide partnership approach to support individuals in retaining their tenancy and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping. As a member of Team Doncaster SLHD worked closely with the Council, the Police, Health services, the prison and probation service and numerous support services.</p> <p>In respect of young people SLHD works with the DCST to resolve specific housing solutions for 16 to 18 year old care leavers, including identifying suitable properties, ensuring young people understand their duties as tenants, assisting with obtaining white goods and undertaking follow up visits to monitor progress. SLHD also work to help identify eligibility for personal grants, access to food banks and where appropriate issue food vouchers. Whilst the primary focus was on housing, SLHD also offered work experience and apprenticeships to young people who were in or had experience of the care system.</p> <p>It was agreed that further information would be provided to the Committee regarding any work undertaken by SLHD with the Social Isolation and Loneliness Alliance.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that whilst overall partnership working</p>	Julie Crook

was effective, there were areas of challenge including receiving timely feedback following mental health referrals. Due to confidentiality issues SLHD were not present during these session but having the necessary information readily available to understand the impact on the individual as a tenant was important in helping the individual maintain their tenancy.

It was reported that the Universal Credit (UC) system and particularly those individual's awaiting payment had led to a spike in the demand for foodbanks. It was considered that the demand caused by delays had reduced as advance payments could now be issued. Members requested information in respect of the number of people in the Borough accessing foodbanks. It was acknowledged that this was outside the scope of the report and whilst SLHD would be aware of tenants it referred to food banks, it would not have a complete picture. It was agreed investigations would be undertaken to identify if this information was available for circulation to Members outside of the meeting.

The Committee asked if there was a link between an increase in UC claimants and the number of tenants in rent arrears and enquired how SLHD was effectively supporting tenants to improve personal financial management. Members were informed that assistance was given to tenants completing the online claim including where applicants lacked the necessary ICT skills. Members recognised that direct payments assisted with the regular collection but tenants on low incomes had to prioritise how they spend their benefits.

It was confirmed that SLHD worked closely with tenants to assist them in effectively managing their finances. Reference was also made to support available for tenants in private sector accommodation. It was reported that tenants were informed of their responsibilities and the Councils obligation as landlord in meeting decency standards.

In response to a question about the safety of staff visiting tenants it was reported that SLHD work closely with the Police to ensure staff are aware when going in to properties or areas where there may be potential threats of violence or personal injury.

The Committee asked whether the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) detailed in the report accurately describe the effectiveness of the services provided by SLHD. It was reported that the KPIs were benchmarked across other housing delivery organisations and identified critical business indicators including alignment with decent homes standards. KPIs were developed with the Board and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and were regularly reviewed through the quarterly performance monitoring process. Indicators were reviewed annually to ensure they remained appropriate. The Committee was informed that following the annual review, the target for the average number of days to re-let standard properties was reduced from 23 days in 2018/19 to

Debbie
Hogg

	<p>20 calendar days for 2019/20. This was made to complement other void measures but also to ensure targets remained challenging and aspirational. The issues around the underperformance of this target were currently being addressed.</p> <p>In response to a question about the relevance of annual KPIs the Committee was informed these were where there was little change from each quarter or because of an annual satisfaction survey for example.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Councillor Jones and Julie Crook for their attendance.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the Committee note the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution SLHD makes to supporting strategic priorities.</p>	
5	<p><u>DONCASTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES TRUST (DCST) FINANCE & PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 2019/20</u></p>	
	<p>The Chair welcomed Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, James Thomas, Julie Mephram and Clare Rosser to the meeting.</p> <p>Members asked how Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) worked to ensure children are at the centre of its service. It was reported that the views of young people are integrated into the service at a number of levels. Young Advisers who have had experience of the care system who understand the organisation and the experience of care are engaged and their views sought prior to any changes to policy and practice. The voice of young people is built into business planning and DCST is currently looking at co-opting a young person on to the Trust Board. The Children in Care Council is consulted prior to any changes to practices to ensure evidence of a child's lived experience is taken into account.</p> <p>The Committee enquired how effectively local safeguarding arrangements were meeting the needs of young people in Doncaster. It was reported that these were demonstrated through a robust quality assurance system, appropriate performance indicators, effective workforce development from a committed workforce and by strong advocates on safeguarding within senior leadership. The Trust has developed a strong role amongst partners but is also working to ensure safeguarding partners further develop their role to support overall improvements.</p> <p>The Committee sought assurance that the well-being of children was not impacted detrimentally due to a focus on targets and processes. It was reported that DCST chose a range of qualitative and quantitative</p>	

measures to assess their performance. The current suite of indicators and targets were benchmarked and included stretch targets to ensure there was an aspiration to improve further. It was further reported that this was the first full quarter report following the change in management structure of the Trust to an ALMO. Performance and contract monitoring arrangements would further develop over time.

The Committee asked about the effectiveness of the Parent and Family Support Service (PFSS) and was informed that once engaged with clients, the service developed positive relationships. There was a focus on achieving a consistent approach, building a positive relationship and assessing each family on its own particular needs. Where parents had previously been involved with a statutory service or previously had a negative experience, time was taken to build a positive relationship. Parents were advised of the risks and potential consequences of not engaging early with the service.

Members also discussed the DCST's relationship with schools and whether they provided a consistent approach in supporting young people. It was reported that a consistent approach was identified through the early help strategy and a recognised protocol for identifying early thresholds.

Members enquired about the support available to unaccompanied children arriving in the Borough as asylum seekers. It was reported that the offer provided takes account of cultural and religious issues and helps to identify any specific needs or requirements including any health issues. The Committee was also advised that DCST was part of the Council's EU departure Group and had plans in place to identify any specific risks that may arise from this, including areas where there may be community tensions or where families may not understand the impact of the change on their residency.

In response to a question regarding partnership working, it was the Trust that had a key role in embedding toolkits and encouraging better risk analysis and assessments with partners. Members were informed there was a consistent approach to agreeing thresholds but there was a mixed picture in terms of how school's supported children through the process. Initiatives were in place to work closely with school's by raising concerns and identifying support measures. It was reported that the Domestic Abuse Team currently worked with schools and teachers to enhance their skills and improve awareness of this issue.

Members enquired how out of authority placements were being effectively managed. It was reported that whilst the safety of children was paramount this was a key budget risk. There was a monthly meeting to review children in care and to identify those that could come back to the Borough. Moving forward the Council would be developing a future placement strategy including identification of smaller two bedded children's homes to develop a more family based model and

	<p>reintegrate young people with complex needs. The Chaired thanked the officers for their attendance.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee receive the report and the contribution that the Trust makes to support the Council’s strategic priorities.</p>	
6	<p><u>2019-20 QUARTER 1 FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT REPORT & ‘DELIVERING FOR DONCASTER’ BOOKLET</u></p>	
	<p>Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources presented the headline information from the report informing the Committee that 72% of performance indicators were Green or Amber and there was a projected £1.1m underspend. This reflected a positive position for the Council. The style of the report had also been changed to provide a more succinct summary.</p> <p>Connected Council</p> <p>Members asked how effectively the Council was working with the Department for Works and Pensions to support claimants as Council tax support could not be processed until Universal credit applications had been processed. It was confirmed regular meetings were taking place with the DWP to identify opportunities for improving the flow of information with the Council to ensure Council tax support applications could be processed as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Living</p> <p>Members enquired about the actions being taken to reduce instances of fly tipping. It was reported this had improved over the last quarter and was being addressed as a whole system issue focussing on prevention, education and enforcement. It was also reported that there had been an inconsistency in how the Household Waste Recycling Centres were accepting some items of waste. This had been addressed by managers going on site and speaking to staff to ensure a more consistent approach across the Borough.</p> <p>Members noted that whilst the target for grass cutting had been met there was a concern that this had not been sufficient over the summer months due to the weather conditions. It was reported that plans were in place to consider a more flexible approach in future that was more responsive to the needs of the communities.</p> <p>Caring</p> <p>Members enquired about the actions being taken to improve assessment times. It was reported there had been more demand on</p>	

	<p>Local authority gives very specific advice and guidance about absence for specific reasons however; the Headteacher or the Chief Executive of the Trust can make the decision based on the individual circumstances.</p> <p>Members asked for an update on Big Picture Learning. It was reported that the Council had engaged the support of XP School in managing the provision. BPL currently operated with a small cohort of students that would be incrementally increased on a year-by-year basis. It was agreed that a written update on the current status of BPL would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting.</p> <p>As there were no further questions the Chair thanked officers for their attendance and responding to Members' questions.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the Chair and Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee note the quarter 1 performance and financial information; including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the changes to the Strategic Risks that are detailed in paragraphs 45- 46 and the Appendix C – Strategic Risks; and (2) note the allocations of block budgets in the Capital Programme, detailed in the Appendix A – Finance Profile in accordance with the updated Financial Procedure Rules. 	<p>Leanne Hornsby</p>
<p>7</p>	<p><u>COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19</u></p>	
	<p>The Chair welcomed Julie Grant and Dawn Jones to the meeting and invited Members to ask questions on the report.</p> <p>Members asked for examples of how complaints had been used to inform changes to services. It was reported that the report provided some examples but future reports would be more focussed to provide clearer examples of lessons learnt.</p> <p>Members discussed the consistency of responding to complaints within 10 days. It was reported that DCST could take up to 20 days to respond depending on the complexity of the information and the complaint. Members acknowledged that some complaints may be complex and it was important to ensure complainants were kept up to date if the response would be provided beyond the recommended timescales.</p> <p>Members sought clarification on access to the complaints system. Members raised the issues that service users should have the opportunity to register complaints using an easy system. It was reported that there were numerous ways in which complaints could be</p>	

	<p>raised and complainants were responded to in the manner appropriate to them, this could include email or letter.</p> <p>In response to a query raised by a Member it was reported that the number of complaints received by the Council and DCST online had now levelled out and were now reducing.</p> <p>As there were no further questions the Chair thanked officers for their attendance and responding to Members' questions.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:</p> <p>(1) the Committee receive the complaints and compliment reports for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 and the comments detailed in the minutes be noted; and</p> <p>(2) the Committee note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work is to be completed by the Council with SLHD around complaints relating to services provided to them by the Council. • Further work is to be completed with DCLT around the definition of a complaint and procedure for this report and what measures are being taken to improve using their feedback. • Increased lessons learned and resulting service improvements information will be collected and included in future reports. • All four organisations will use the same Annual report format in future years ensuring the same representation for all and aim to have the next final reports ready by the end of May 2020 so this report can be presented earlier. 	
8	<p><u>OSMC WORKPLAN - SEPTEMBER 2019 UPDATE</u></p>	
	<p>Members received an update on the Overview and Scrutiny September work Programme and Panel Chairs provided a verbal update on progress and issues contained in the work programme.</p> <p>The Committee considered a request from a member of the public to undertake a review of the Council's arrangements for establishing 20mph zones. Members welcomed the suggestion and noted the current issues around capacity and resources may mean that this would have to be undertaken later in the year.</p> <p>The Governance & Member Services Manager updated the Committee</p>	

on work that had taken place in respect of undertaking a review of Area based Governance including the allocation of a small ward budget to engage and assist local communities in delivering solutions and meeting local priorities. Reference was made to the draft terms of reference that had been circulated ahead of the meeting and these were presented for Members approval to enable the review to progress.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) Members note the updated work programme and the verbal update provided by the Overview and Scrutiny chairs;
- (2) The work programme be updated to include a review of 20mph zones subject to capacity and resources available to undertake the review.
- (3) Members note the correspondence attached to the report; and.
- (4) Members agree the Terms of reference for the review Empowered, engaged communities, with devolved locality budgets.