

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER, 2019

A MEETING of the COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the on MONDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER, 2019, at 10.00 am.

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Mark Houlbrook
Vice-Chair - Councillor Jane Cox

Councillors Nigel Cannings, Mick Cooper, Tosh McDonald, Ian Pearson, Tina Reid and Kevin Rodgers

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Hughes

At this point in the meeting the Chair announced that due to the flooding emergency and response agenda items 6, 7 and 8 be deferred to a future meeting.

5 To consider the extent, if any, to which the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting

None

6 Declarations of Interest, if any

There were no declarations of interest.

7 Minutes of the meetings held on 17th July and 19th August, 2019

The minutes of the meetings held on 17th July, and 19th August, 2019 were agreed as correct records.

8 Public Statements

There were no public statements.

9 Water Management Consortium and Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board

RESOLVED that the item be deferred to a future meeting.

10 Climate Change Local Commission and Development of the Environment Strategy

RESOLVED that the item be deferred to a future meeting.

11 Street Scene Rapid Improvement Plan

RESOLVED that the item be deferred to a future meeting.

12 Third Sector Provider Alliance to combat social isolation and loneliness in Doncaster

Further to the Panel meeting held on 17th July, when the Panel posed questions to Local Authority officers, DCLT (Doncaster Culture Leisure Trust) provided a presentation on the areas detailed below. Prior to the presentation, the DCLT Deputy Chief Executive apologised to Members for not being able to attend the previous Scrutiny Panel meeting.

The DCLT Deputy Chief Executive continued by highlighting that excellent work was already being undertaken across communities within the borough, including a multi-agency approach, and moving forward it was important to build capacity, good practice and a sustainable model for the future. His presentation gave detail on the following areas:

Delivery timeline – marketing was key to assist with delivery of the programme including promotion within local communities to encourage engagement;

Governance – DCLT as lead organisation held legal and governance responsibilities with reports being made to the Independent Board. A standardised methodology for data monitoring would be required ensuring accurate information was being recorded. A sub-group had been established to agree Terms of Reference for the Social Isolation Alliance.

Research and Evaluation – Public Health reported that it had undertaken some initial scoping with Sheffield and York Universities providing baseline information.

Operational Delivery Plan – this had not yet been agreed but it was important that Members of the Alliance shaped delivery to ensure meaningful actions were achieved in line with local strategies. A new title for Social Isolation would be addressed by the Alliance providing a more meaningful description.

Funding and Commissioning – It was noted that the Alliance would have a strategic approach when applying for additional funding but also the expertise to offer smaller groups when seeking match funding.

Financial Plan:

Income		
DMBC Grant	£200,000	
Match Funding	£330,000	
Target	£530,000	
Salaries	£183,650	35%
Overheads/Marketing/Governance	£66,000	12%
Commissioning/Programme/Delivery	£280,000	53%

Following the presentation Members addressed a number of areas as detailed below.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Panel for the invitation to the meeting and explained that the funding allocated did not amount to as much as the Local Authority would have liked and acknowledged that everyone was working in restrictive times. She

stressed that sustainability of the programme would be reliant on match funding, of which there was funding available that could be accessed, for example, money from National Government, Age concern or the Lottery. She stated that the strength of an Alliance ensured there could be a more successful Doncaster funding bid.

It was acknowledged that not one pathway would address social isolation for everyone but required different methods for individuals, groups and communities with some possible actions being rolled out across the Borough. To assist with the successful delivery of the programme, the Alliance would require the invaluable information and knowledge that Councillors held about their wards and communities, therefore were encouraged to meet with DCLT to pass on such information.

Members provided examples where social isolation was increasing, particularly for individuals, and it was stressed that the programme was not just about providing more activities for the community to attend because generally the people it would attract were already engaged in other community events. Therefore it was acknowledged there was a desperate need to find people who had not been engaged for many years and why, for example, lack of confidence, disability or health. It was also accepted that there were people in the community that were happy spending time with their own company and did not require any support or assistance at this time.

What assistance would be provided to small groups – In response to questions and concern expressed by Members, particularly given that the £200,000 funding was for a 3 year period, it was explained that there were a mix of organisations within the Alliance that could offer initial support. Consideration was being given to the appointment of a Programmes Manager for the sole purpose of co-ordinating and delivering the Social Alliance agenda and providing assistance to small groups, however, there were arguments for and against the use of resources for this purpose.

Members stressed that there would be many community groups that were already established and taking the lead on this issue but also dealing with very different demographics and environments. It was therefore requested that DCLT ensure they contacted and held discussions with all interested community groups to ensure best practice was shared across the Borough.

Areas where it was thought community groups would require assistance included:-

- Completing funding bids because the quality of an application form could be the key to a successful bid;
- Project monitoring by small groups - a Member outlined that expecting smaller groups to report back and provide monitoring information could create difficulties and in response, it was highlighted that it could lead to a small management fee being sought by DCLT for such assistance.
- Funding continuation through self-support and not being reliant on DCLT;
- Collective funding bids for national and local funding through the Alliance, ensuring groups were not competing against each other for the same grant; and
- Assistance with DBS checks, risk assessments or health and safety checks.

Use of Data – As stated above, baseline information had been provided by Sheffield and Yorkshire universities. Therefore Members requested that this be used and built upon, to pinpoint specific areas within communities that had an increased number of

older people who could be suffering from social isolation. It was suggested that rather than developing new projects, bolster what was already in place.

Programme Development – It was suggested that a balanced approach with a possible budget provided over a 2 or 3 year period, rather than a lump sum, to ensure groups build momentum to continue provision.

A Member expressed concern relating to funding continuation following the 3 year period and how the strategy would ensure organisations would be fit for purpose in future. It was acknowledged that all services had been affected by austerity but it was important to learn how local communities and organisations work together and being creative, to build strong mechanisms ensuring programme continuation.

Collaboration – Members again stressed the importance of local communities working together, whether it be through established or new groups, to avoid conflict between some who could be offering support in a similar way. It was reported that the main key to success would be strategic collaboration between all involved, with an efficient signposting mechanism to groups that were currently under the radar.

It was also stressed that the joint use of buildings was an area that required good co-ordination between local groups. It was highlighted that, as part of the Get Doncaster Moving initiative, it was important to use such facilities including established public and private leisure facilities to improve not just social isolation but also health. Members made reference to ensuring that large groups should not use the funds to promote their own services.

Opportunities - It was emphasised that there were creative opportunities, for example:

- attracting businesses through corporate social mobility monies;
- good practice models being promoted and shared across the borough;
- development of a communications plan;
- to continue working with the Sheffield Centre for Loneliness and holding simple conversations with enablers, eg. Postal service, fire service through the safe and well service and pharmacy deliveries;
- the use of community hubs and leisure facilities; and
- Enablers Alliance – development of a group that could include people who had recently retired, for example, from the emergency services, publicans, mining, transport providers, banks, unions and local government;

Delivery – In response to questions raised, it was noted that the Social Isolation Agreement had only been signed within the two week period prior to this meeting. Following meetings with the DCLT Board and the wider Alliance, in December the draft delivery strategy would be formulated. To assist with the development of delivery pathways, DCLT would look to work with a number of organisations included postal service, Clinical Commissioning Groups, GP's, Health and Well-being Board, Veterans groups, Trade Unions, Young Carers groups, Social Housing organisations (including St Leger Homes) and Councillors.

Commissioning – In response to a question, it was explained that it would be expected some form of commissioning could be used but a structure and measure would be required if this way forward was utilised. The Cabinet Member reminded the Panel

that this programme was about giving voluntary and community groups the opportunity to support isolated people.

To conclude, Members were therefore asked to contact DCLT with any good practice models already running in communities. The information and discussion provided at this meeting had been taken on board however, it was stressed that everyone needed to support the programme and promote at every opportunity.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Members contact DCLT with information and ideas that could assist the Alliance; and
- b) An update be provided to the Panel following a 6 month period, to include the amount of match funding that has been secured.

13 Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan and the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Senior Governance Officer provided an update on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan and Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan and Forward Plan, be noted.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____