



Doncaster Council

Agenda

To all Members of the

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Notice is given that a Meeting of the above Panel is to be held as follows:

Venue: Council Chamber Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

Date: Thursday, 15th September, 2022

Time: 4.30 pm

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Damian Allen
Chief Executive

Issued on: Wednesday, 7 September 2022

Governance Services Officer for this meeting

Christine Rothwell
Senior Governance Officer
Tel: 01302 735682

Items for consideration

1. Apologies for absence
2. To consider the extent, if any, to which the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting.
3. Declarations of Interest, if any.
4. Minutes of the meetings held on 17th March and 27th June 2022
(Pages 1 - 14)
5. Public Statements
(A period not exceeding 20 minutes for statements from up to 5 members of the public on matters within the Panel's remit, proposing action(s) which may be considered or contribute towards the future development of the Panel's work programme).

A. Items where the Public and Press may not be excluded

6. Elective Home Education / children missing education and alternative provision in Doncaster (Pages 15 - 26)
7. Post Covid impacts on Children including Children's mental health (Strategy update) 0-3 years (Pages 27 - 42)
8. Overview and Scrutiny work plan and the Council's Forward Plan of key decisions (Pages 43 - 56)

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Chair – Councillor Leanne Hempshall
Vice-Chair – Councillor Tim Needham

Councillors Bob Anderson, Laura Bluff, Steve Cox, Susan Durant, Charlie Hogarth, David Nevett and Rob Reid

Education Co-optees*: Antoinette Drinkhill and Bernadette Nesbitt

Invitees: Georgina Lightfoot UNISON

* Education Co-optees are invited to attend the meeting and vote on any education functions which are the responsibility of the Authority's Executive. They may also participate in but not vote on other issues relating to Children and Young People.

Agenda Item 4.

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 17TH MARCH, 2022

A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 17TH MARCH, 2022 at 4.30 PM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Leanne Hempshall

Councillors Tim Needham, Bob Anderson, Laura Bluff, Steve Cox, Charlie Hogarth and Rob Reid

Co-optees: Antoinette Drinkhill

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Leanne Hornby, Assistant Director Education, Skills, Culture and Heritage
Lee Golze, Assistant Director Partnerships, Early Interventions and Localities
Rebecca Mason, Head of Engagement and Partnerships

Youth Councillors:

Bethany Dixon – Vice Chair / Rep for UTC
Ian Greave – Chair / rep for Don Valley
Gracie Sneap – rep for Sir Thomas Wharton
Katie Thorpe – rep for the Laurel Academy

Aidan Nicol – Participation Officer (Partnerships and Engagement)

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Aimee Dickson and Susan Durant and Bernadette Nesbit (Co-optee)

		<u>ACTION</u>
16.	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	There were no items on the agenda.	
17.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	The following Councillors declared that they had a non registerable	

	<p>interest as a close family member, had knowledge of and/or used the SEND service being discussed.</p> <p>Councillor Hempshall Councillor L Bluff Councillor Reid Councillor S Cox Councillor T Needham</p>	
18.	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON THE 9TH DECEMBER 2021</u>	
	RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 th December, 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	
19.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	
	There were no public statements made at the meeting.	
20.	<u>YOUTH COUNCIL PRESENTATION: YOUTH COUNCIL UPDATE INCLUDING THE DOMESTIC ABUSE CAMPAIGN</u>	
	<p>The Panel received a presentation from the Youth Council relating to it's Election held on 19th December 2021, the "Make You Mark" priorities and actions undertaken on Domestic Abuse. From the presentation, Members noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 schools were represented on the Youth Council; • There had been 42 newly elected Youth Councillors; • "Make Your Mark" ballots, requesting the main areas of concern amongst young people, were then divided into Area Priorities; and • Domestic Abuse had been the top "Make Your Mark" issue in November 2020 – the Youth Council worked closely with South Yorkshire Police, Doncaster Children's Services Trust and the Domestic Abuse Team on the work undertaken, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Formalising a logo, and creating a #ReduceDomesticAbuse hashtag; ➤ Presented ideas to the Domestic Abuse Theme Group, and secured funding from the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU); ➤ Circulated a survey in schools on healthy / unhealthy relationships; 	

- Promoted the hashtag throughout Domestic Abuse Awareness month;
- The Youth Council collaborated with local mural artist Natasha Clarke to develop an abstract art piece raising awareness of coercive and controlling behaviour. This would be displayed in DGLAM in May 2022;
- Produced a short film with a local filmmaker titled 'Red Flags' planned and scripted to highlight the signs to look for in a coercive / controlling relationship. This will be released as an advert in Doncaster's two cinemas throughout April 2022.

The film was well received by the Domestic Abuse team, and has already had an impact. Young people can call Doncaster Children's Services Trust about a 'red flag' and they will be able to skip the safeguarding assessment form and instead receive direct advice and guidance; and

- Produced posters to be used across Doncaster bus stops designed to include some of the signs highlighted in the 'RED FLAGS' film.
The posters will include reference to toxic behaviours such as:
 - Gaslighting;
 - Lovebombing; and
 - Location tracking.

The Following areas were discussed in further detail:

Representation on the Youth Council across the whole borough – a Member stressed it was unfortunate that not all schools had a representative on the Youth Council but noted that work was being undertaken to try and ensure as many young people as possible were aware of the Youth Council to encourage their schools to take part. For example, posters were being display in bus stops to encourage involvement and to reach as many young people as possible.

Voting and ballots used – due to the Covid pandemic the Panel noted that traditional paper based voting mechanisms could not be used therefore voting through a Google forum was undertaken adapting to more online methods.

Partnership working – whilst working on the Domestic Abuse campaign, Youth Councillors acknowledged that the topic was very sensitive and to avoid accidentally offending people, they worked closely with the Domestic Abuse Team, South Yorkshire Police and the Doncaster Children's Trust who helped them correctly focus the work undertaken.

	<p>The Panel was absolutely delighted with and commended the work undertaken by the Youth Council.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Youth Council be congratulated on the fantastic work undertaken; 2. the Participation Officer share the #ReduceDomesticAbuse hashtag with the Panel so they were able to share on their own social media pages; and 3. note the information provided. 	
21.	<p><u>SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS STRATEGY - UPDATE</u></p>	
	<p>A Presentation was provided outlining the refreshed Special Education Needs Strategy, the six priorities that underpin the Strategy alongside the progress made over the last two years in its implementation.</p> <p>Further to the presentation the following issues were addressed:</p> <p><u>Early help</u> – in response to a question it was accepted that systems were required to respond more quickly and that Covid could not be ignored in playing a part of slowing some systems down. When the pandemic hit there was a need to address pressures and ensure children were safe particularly because they were not attending school.</p> <p>It was stressed that the cause of many issues being raised and not symptoms required addressing earlier, with early help support being provided through Hubs and well-being. It was noted that all staff working in this support field needed to be aware of how and where to seek assistance to provide support as quickly as possible, with commitment through the Early Help Strategy providing this.</p> <p><u>Children with Social Emotional and Mental health (SEMH)</u> – with regard to provision for children and young people with need in this area, it was explained that accessing wellbeing support in a nurturing environment was essential, through a hub but to also ensure support was available through mainstream education rather than in a special school.</p> <p><u>Early Help Strategy</u> – It was noted that this would be finalised within 6 to 8 weeks of the meeting and Members suggested that it be shared with the Panel with regular updates throughout the following year being provided. It was acknowledged that babies and infants thrive during a good pregnancy to 2 years old, including a good birth, secure environment and stimulation but for some families this could be challenging. It was stressed that 96% of Doncaster’s childminding</p>	

services were good and outstanding therefore the service needed to be accessed by parents. It was noted that when a child was born they were registered with a Family Hub but there were still a few difficulties to resolve in relation to this issue.

Literacy and Development during Covid pandemic – for some children born during this period, their development would not be as advanced as it should be, therefore the Local Authority was committing funding to address the issue for the next two to three years.

Children seeking asylum – The commitment from the Local Authority to take families from other countries was recognised providing good homes, schools and wrap around services. There was a specific asylum seeking allocation figure that the Local Authority was required to meet, however the number of families provided with care had reached over and above the required allocation.

Domestic abuse – if a report was received from South Yorkshire Police about a child or young person being subject to or had observed domestic abuse they were immediately placed in social care. The Local Authority know how many children and young people live in homes where there were reports of domestic abuse, the age range and support services that had been provided.

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) – in relation to what happens to the 40% of children that were not successful in obtaining an EHCP it was explained that statutory assessments and levels must be met before a Plan could be developed, with a graduated evidence gathering approach required. It was noted that parents always had the right of appeal if they were of the opinion that their child required a statutory assessment. Up to the 1st January 2022 there had been 42 requests for mediation, then appeals with 17 reaching statutory assessment.

Increase in EHCP numbers – an increase in parents requesting assessments had been made during the Covid pandemic. There were a number of children displaying more complex needs due to gaps in learning and not support from school settings.

With regard to there being enough resources to support this increased demand, temporary additional funding had been made available to increase resources with an additional senior officer and SEND Co-ordinator post.

EHCPs – it was explained that they should be reviewed every 12 months. If the school was not responding to the EHCP then parents could discuss the position with the SEND team at any point to ensure objectives were being met. It was stressed that a review must be forwarded by the school to the Local Authority. Occasionally proposed support presented by a school was not always appropriate for a Plan therefore additional work with the school would be provided, for

example, working with SENCOs and mentoring from other schools.

It was acknowledged there were real struggles for families to get an EHCP in place for their child and that improvements were required to ensure the right resources and help were in place as early as possible.

Additional funding awarded to children with EHCPs – it was outlined that additional funding packages provided to children were reviewed separately by a Panel with a provision map being provided a reviewed annually.

Teaching Assistants – it was accepted that the numbers of posts had reduced.

Resources - It was acknowledged that the DfG grant was nationally insufficient therefore everyone was carrying a deficit. Doncaster was actively involved with consultation to ensure funding would meet demands, for example was funding per capita correct and shaping future needs and support. Additionally it was understood why parents were agitated when they had a massive battle for additional funding if it was not available.

It was explained that every mainstream school received “element 3” top up funding where they have children that required SEND support, with specific banding for each individual child. For example if an EHCP required a Teaching Assistant to be employed then a provision map would be required to support the resources required. It was confirmed that the £6k was detailed with schools budget. Before additional funding was provided the need would have to be demonstrated.

General Development Assessment – it was explained that this was a paediatric assessment tool that leads onto further assessments. It had worked well in some areas but not others, with the challenge being wait times were too long. When the system was originally established, 3 in 10 were receiving a positive diagnosis. The assessment would have to be undertaken over a two term period with evidence and a Plan in place to progress forward.

Health waiting lists – it was recognised that all waiting lists had been delayed due to Covid, including cancer treatments.

Online assessment tools – it was noted that the CCG had commissioned these tools, which were being used elsewhere in the country whilst achieving good quality assessments and time saving.

Diagnosis times – it was noted that diagnosis should be undertaken before a child was 5 years old but some could be inconclusive or too late therefore the need to be diagnosed as early as possible to align with the 0-5 pathway was imperative. It was noted that autism and ADHD diagnosis had different timelines.

CAMHS diagnosis times – With regard to children with ADHD the

CAMHS Policy stated that children must be 6 years old to commence investigation/treatment but there was nothing included with regard to autism however guidance stated aged 7 years.

Training for schools – in response to a question it was outlined that an assessments team provided support and training to schools. Additional support was provided to children and young people to SENCO networks through the educational psychology services and standards and effectiveness team.

General Developmental Assessment (GDA) appointments – in relation to reducing the waiting time for an appointment it was explained that there was currently a national shortage of consultant paediatrics. There were permanent recruitment drives and a real effort to increase permanent employment, but it was noted consultants tended to prefer working in university cities. It was stressed however that as part of the Doncaster Education and Skills Strategy the University City principal was being developed and driven.

Transition improvement between phases for July/September 2022 including pathways in employment – Specific set dates have to be met for the September transition preparation and moving from Primary to Secondary. With regard to moving to post 16 to 19 provision there was a long lead in time for naming education, find the appropriate setting and ensuring a package was completed as soon as possible for work on the care plan to be finalised.

In connection to pathways into employment good work and relationships were undertaken with all colleges and learning establishments ensuring a post 16 focus on employability, providing as many work experience opportunities as possible.

It was noted that the Local Authority had asked to be an employer working alongside a special school.

Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) – it was noted that there had been a good buy-in from MATs and special schools that sit on the SEND Board. Additionally both main stream and specialist Academy Trusts were members of the Doncaster Association of Secondary Heads which continued to meet regularly.

Work based learning for young people with SEND – a Member wished to thank organisations for taking young people with disabilities and wished to see more businesses taking part, highlighting that bureaucracy created a barrier. These sentiments were echoed by the Panel.

Reconciliation of future commissioning decisions and resource allocation – It was explained that immediate funding would be used to bolster the team but in the longer term, the SEND Strategy would address key priorities to be enacted through commissioning. There

	<p>needed to be a good understanding and to the best of everyone's knowledge of requirements for the next 6 years so resources and support could be made available. It was noted that some work may need to cease to ensure support for all families was available. It was suggested that a further update be provided to the Panel in the future.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the amount of work to be undertaken to address SEND, be acknowledged; b. the comments made by the panel be taken on board and inform the SEND Strategy; c. The SEND strategy be revisited by the Panel, once complete and progress be provided to the Panel; d. The Early Help Strategy be shared with the Panel and regular updated be provided; and e. An update on the SEND Board, be provided to a future meeting. 	
22.	<p><u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN AND KEY DECISIONS</u></p>	
	<p>The Chair reminded the Panel that it would hopefully be meeting with Headteachers on 26th April at 9am to discuss front door referrals.</p> <p>The Senior Governance Officer reminded the Panel that it was nearing the end of the current Civic Year and if any Member had an area they wished to discuss then to email both the Chair and the Senior Governance Officers.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>: That the discussion, be noted.</p>	

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 27TH JUNE, 2022

A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER, DONCASTER on MONDAY, 27TH JUNE, 2022 at 4.30 PM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Leanne Hempshall

Councillors Laura Bluff, Steve Cox, Susan Durant, Charlie Hogarth, David Nevett and Rob Reid

Co-optees – Antoinette Drinkhill (Church of England Education Representative)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

- Leanne Hornsby - Assistant Director, Education, Skills, Culture and Heritage
- Kim Holdridge – Service Manager (School Transport)
- John Raine – Project Officer – Locality Delivery and Early Help

		<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>	
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tim Needham and Bob Anderson.	
2.	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	There were no items where the press and public should be excluded.	
3.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations made at the meeting.	
4.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	
	There were no public statements made at the meeting.	
5.	<u>HOME TO SCHOOL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE POLICY 2022-2027</u>	
	The purpose of the report was to provide background and obtain	

approval for a revised Doncaster Council Home to School Travel Assistance Policy 2022–2027. It was explained that the provision of travel assistance was a contributing factor to the Education and Skills Strategy 2030 and Doncaster Delivering Together to enable all children and young people to achieve their full potential.

Impact on Families Where Bus Pass was Removed – Concern was raised that the removal of bus passes could prove to be a considerable burden to some families.

Members were informed that there was a duty on the authority to provide travel assistance for pupils who meet a distance criteria to their nearest school. It was commented that when parents move houses then children were no longer attending the nearest school.

It was verified that this was for future provision and assurances were provided that a child who had moved this year into year 10 and received a bus pass would still receive it in year 11.

It was acknowledged that there were exceptional circumstances, some of which being outside the parents control. In those instances, parents would be advised to contact the authority as part of an appeals process and if the situation was considered an exceptional circumstance, then a bus pass would be provided. It was noted that that there was no intention of taking away from those in need of urgent help and appeals would be considered on a case by case basis.

It was clarified that in the event that a suitable school was named on an Education Health Care Plan (ECHP) then the authority would need to consider individual circumstances and the ability of the child to travel (and what form of travel was best). It was explained that if the named school was considered suitable then some sort of travel assistance would be considered depending upon the circumstances.

Special Educational Needs Disability (SEND) Provision - A comment was made based on the identified saving of £113k over a 3 year period. It was felt that if SEND parents were to also incur a charge, this could then indicate that the majority of budget spent on school transport lies within the SEND area and therefore suggested that further SEND provision was required within certain communities.

The Assistant Director, Education, Skills, Culture and Heritage indicated that this would be looked at as part of the SEND transformation journey. The Panel was reminded that SEND would be considered as part of their workplan, in addition to the white and green papers that would help the Panel consider that wider SEND provision mapping and whether there was the right provision in the right places across the Borough.

Safeguarding - A Member raised concern about whether taxi and bus driving staff and escorts were Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked and whether this was kept up-to-date. It was also asked what safeguarding actions were put in place and what training, advice and

guidance was made available.

It was confirmed that any taxi/mini bus driver or escort that worked on routes that Doncaster Council directly contracted were all subject to an enhanced DBS check and that they would not be allowed to work on directly contracted transport without it.

It was clarified that those DBS checks needed to be under 3 years old at the start of route. It was recognised that certain routes continued for some time meaning that some DBS checks were 6-8 years old at the end of the route (although they would have been working on that route for the duration of the period).

Concerning contracts that the Council had with contractors, it was explained that there was a clause in place where new or existing cautions or convictions needed to be disclosed to assess ongoing suitability. It was continued that taxis drivers, through their license, was required to have enhanced DBS checks, which it was believed needed to be reviewed every 3 years. Members were told that the Council's own internal driver escorts all have DBS checks when they commence employment with the Council. Finally, it was explained that public transport and the public network was not subject to those regulations, as that service was not under the authority's control.

Regarding training, it was explained that with around 400 vehicles everyday and 200 escorts, turnover was high, and therefore safeguarding certificates were not required on routes, it was added that all taxi drivers have undertaken child exploitation training as part of obtaining their badge. Reference was also made to Awareness Sessions undertaken by all owner contractors to provide them with the tools to train their staff. These sessions included elements of safeguarding and advice on who to report to.

It was further commented by a Member with past experience of taxi driving, that communication between schools transport and taxis could often be fragmented with little in place to provide protection. Members were assured that all driver escorts would need to have a DBS check although having a previous conviction would not necessarily rule them out.

It was recognised that although not all vehicles had escorts, if one was needed in advance or as part of route, it would be put in.

Financial Considerations – Members heard that in terms of parental contributions in manageable instalments (which was no longer going forward), this would have been looked possibly as a monthly or termly option for parents. It was added that if this would be considered then full consultation would be undertaken with parents.

Regarding concessions for benefits, this would have looked at low-income reduction for those on low income.

Environmental Impact - A Member raised concern regarding the

potential environmental impact of more cars being on the road and hoped that this had been acknowledged. It was recognised that there was an opportunity to work with sustainability team and the future policy to see what this potential would look like.

Catchment Areas/Distance - Members were informed that where the nearest school was full and a school had been allocated by the authority, then the child would be provided with travel assistance provided that they met the distance criteria.

It was explained that travel assistance was not provided Post 16 for mainstream regardless of choice of school (this had been removed in the past). It was recognised that the 6th form provision might sometimes provide support the young person with transport assistance.

Concern was raised where children had been moved due to a managed move to another school, or for example, a breakdown in a relationship. It was explained that in the event of a managed move, where arranged between two schools, this would be for the schools to provide.

If the move was in relation to an exclusion through the authority, providing the child meets the distance allocation, they would then be eligible for travel assistance.

Finally, in other circumstances such as a relationship breakdown, the parent would have the option to appeal against the decision should they feel there was an exceptional circumstance over and above the policy.

Concern was raised that this could mean that attendance targets might not be met.

Assurances were provided that there was capacity in place to support appeals coming through.

In terms of who funds exclusions, Members were informed that there had been a reduction of 8. It was explained that the needs of the child would be considered on a case by case basis.

Consultation - Regarding the consultation process, Members were informed that questions had been developed around those areas that were primarily changing. It was explained that the consultation document had been developed on the proposals in consultation with communication team.

Concerns were raised regarding feedback on how understandable the questions were. It was explained that such comments had been made around the short form survey, which was a compacted version of the long form survey. It was explained that the long form survey was a longer document with more information and therefore provided more guidance. Members also heard that such views had been left anonymously and therefore officers were unable to go back to the

individuals who had made them.

In terms of how inclusive the consultation had been, it was clarified

- that there had been a due regard statement throughout the process;
- that there had been internal communications undertaken with all schools and asked that they pass that consultation information onto all parents;
- that those pupils that the authority currently transport with needs, (and their families) were written to twice during process initially pre and then with an opportunity to undertake it virtually during consultation.
- Contacted all out of area special schools that the authority currently transport to and provided them full copy of consultation document to review.

Good Practice - Members were informed that the authority had looked at what had been used in other authorities to see what they did include or did not include which had been taken account in the revised policy. As a result, the policy was now clearer on participation age versus the statutory school leaving age, which was not in the Council's existing policy.

The Young Adviser in attendance stressed the importance of services being provided being accessible for all families especially in view of the cost of living crisis. It was explained that families that fall just below the low-income criteria would be directed through the appeals process, where they have been refused to provide those families with an opportunity to explain their individual circumstances and provide more information.

Resolved that the Panel;

1. Support the revised Home to School Travel Assistance Policy; and
2. Note the results of the consultation;
 - a. In light of the consultation, to note the proposed changes and clarification to the existing 'Home to School Transport' Policy.
 - b. Note the phased removal of bus passes issued on a "no extra cost" basis with effect from September 2023.
 - c. Note the phased removal of bus passes issued to pupils moving house during school years 10 and 11 with effect from publication of the policy.
 - d. Note the proposal to issue and publish the revised Home to School Travel Assistance Policy (Appendix 3).

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Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 15/09/2022

To the Chair and Members of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee Panel

Elective Home Education, Children Missing Education and Alternative Provision in Doncaster.

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Lani Mae Ball Cabinet Member, Children, Young People and Schools	All	No

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Since the start of the pandemic, the number of referrals elective home education have received has risen sharply in Doncaster and nationally. Our local policy of intervening earlier has meant that the numbers who are currently identified as home educated have increased but have done so less than in many other areas.
- 1.2 The Local authority is working more closely with schools and home educators in order to stem this rise in cases and to broaden the range of support and communication available to families. A change in the law for September 2022 means that all families must register with the council if they are to undertake home education. Home education referrals have grown significantly over the period of the last two years, in line with national trends. The Local authority has committed resources to intervening early in order to ensure that this is the best choice for children and young people. In many cases this intervention has led to young people returning to schools with support to reintegrate.
- 1.3 The number of referrals for Children Missing Education has also grown since the start of the pandemic. There are various reasons for this including increased family mobility, familial mental health problems, school attendance issues and a growth in the number of families who have left the country. Whilst the number of Children Missing Education referrals has increased by 190%, council teams have closed 692 cases this year, with a current list of 228 children at the time of writing.

- 1.4 Through the Behaviour Transformation Programme, there has been a much-needed transformation of the alternative provision landscape in Doncaster. This has been regarded as a good practice model by other authorities, by OFSTED and the Department for Education (DfE). There is a strong range of centrally commissioned provision, alongside the provision of bespoke packages to support children through our alternative provision framework. There is a strong multi-agency process for decision making in order to ensure that referrals to provision are appropriate and individually tailored to needs.
- 1.5 Providers are rigorously quality assured by the council's teams and are making a clear impact in terms of supporting children and young people to re-integrate into their educational settings. Safeguarding responsibilities are acquitted by schools and providers and monitored by the Local authority.
- 1.6 Throughout the pandemic the council worked to ensure that any young person who needed alternative provision was able to have this continuity of education and care. The numbers in alternative provision grew during 2021 but are gradually reducing in 2022.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. This is not an exempt report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. It is recommended that the Children and Young People's scrutiny committee notes:
 - The increase in demand in all three areas since the start of the pandemic.
 - The work being undertaken to ensure suitability of education for young people.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a notable impact on all citizens of Doncaster and has put added pressure on all aspects of people's lives from their health and livelihoods through to their relationships and childcare. This has impacted also on the growth in number of young people who are educated away from mainstream environments or those who are missing school. In this environment it has been, and continues to be, vitally important that partners effectively deliver services in a way that supports all its residents including its most vulnerable children and young people as effectively as possible. Continued momentum in these areas is vital in order to ensure that long-term recovery is maintained for children and families who have been unduly affected by the pandemic.

BACKGROUND

5. Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education:

5.01 Parents have the right to remove a child from schools' admission register and Electively Home Educate (EHE). This places the responsibility on parents to provide a suitable education appropriate to the child's age, ability, and aptitude. Section 436A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires all local authorities to make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children residing in their area who are not receiving a suitable education. Whilst parents are not obliged to share information with the local authority, the authority is advised to initiate proceedings to enable a return to school where they are not satisfied that a suitable education is in place.

5.02 In January 2020, following a review of the home education policy, a focus was placed on targeting parents to ensure the education provided to children was suitable and not just satisfactory and to intervene with families rapidly upon receipt of the notification. Parents are now asked to demonstrate the child's educational progress made over the previous period, new notifications are responded to immediately and the attendance service duty hotline has successfully supported parents to make a more informed decision before opting to home educate their children. Where parents have responded to the question around why they have elected to home educate, the major causes for parents' decisions are:

- Dissatisfaction with schools' response to bullying
- Special Educational Needs not being met
- Parent and school conflict

5.03 Despite the national increase in parents choosing to home educate, Doncaster has maintained a level of 1.73% of children of compulsory school age, currently at 691 children. This is higher than the pre-pandemic figure (638), but not as significantly as in many other authorities (the Association of the Directors of Children's Services reported a 20 % year on year rise in the overall national figures since the start of 2020). There was an increase in referrals during 2021-2022 from the previous academic year, of 12 notifications (4%) giving a total of 321, with 176 returning to a school within this time frame following officer interventions. The majority of notifications are received from secondary schools at 59.2%. More girls are home educated (55.6%) more than boys (44.2%) and with this being higher in the secondary phase (60.5%).

5.04 Of the current cohort 26 (3%) are identified an Education, Health and Care Plan which is in line with the majority of local areas, whilst 22% of Local authorities are currently reporting rates between 5 and 10%. One child is supported by social care (at Child in Need level).

5.05 A child missing education is any child who is not on a school admission register or has been absent for 4 weeks or more and the local authority has not established their whereabouts. These are often children who have moved

house or have recently moved into or out of the area. When a referral is received, it is allocated to a locality officer who will undertake enquiries in order to ascertain the whereabouts of the child and to work with agencies and schools to ensure a return to suitable education. OFSTED (April 2022) commented in its report on Doncaster that 'Children missing education are monitored effectively'.

- 5.06 The number of Children Missing Education has remained constant over the last year- remaining within the 200-230 range throughout this time. Currently there are 228 children, equating to 0.57% of the pupil population, with the population changing rapidly on a day-to-day basis. However, the number of referrals received from schools and other sources (898) has increased over the past year by 598 (190.6%). During the academic year 2021-2022, the APWS has closed 692 cases.
- 5.07 The growth in the volume of referrals can be attributed to various reasons created by the pandemic and, to a lesser extent, Brexit. There have been increases in longer-term absence from school, reduced capacity within schools, increases in anxiety and illness within families, alongside increased movement into and out of the area. This includes a significant number of families who have moved out of the country and returned to home country. More referrals are received for females at approximately 55% to 45% male. 25.6% of referrals are received from other local authorities.
- 5.08 The OFSTED report on Doncaster Childrens Services 'commented that home education data 'does not accurately ensure that children in receipt of statutory or early help support and those with education, health and care plans are identified.' This comment raised a discrepancy in timing and content of some information presented to inspectors. Managers now check these lists weekly in order to ensure that there is clear communication about the most recent cases that have been identified. There is also an internal process for directorate teams to check, corroborate and collaborate around home education cases. This is overseen by Assistant Directors, who have 'line of sight' of the work through a series of accountability meetings, which study data trends and individual cases. The council also monitors patterns of home education referrals and offers challenge to schools when this is necessary.
- 5.09 From September 2022, the national guidance will change in relation to home education. This will require a formal register of those children not in school to be kept by the council, which is shared with DfE. There will be a requirement that home educators register with the council and that the council has some services that offer advice and guidance to home educators. Doncaster currently maintains a list and employs officers who offer support and guidance to home educators. In anticipation of the new approach, we are currently working with local home education groups in order to identify what further support may be required in the future. From September 2022, Local Authority welfare officers will also be based in schools and will check and challenge any new notifications before they are sent to the local authority in order to intervene earlier and support children and families where there are issues in the relationship between schools and parents.

Children in Care

- 5.10 On average, in 2021/22, 15 secondary children did not have a school placement when they entered care for various reasons including care placement moves and being an unaccompanied asylum seeker or elective home educated. Virtual School officers prioritised these children closely monitored through supervision with the Lead Officer. The speed of admissions varied owing to statutory SEND processes, complexity of needs, specialist provision capacity and availability, the absence of an EHCP, turbulence in the social care teams and allocated social workers and the instability of care placements resulting in multiple moves. The Virtual School issued intention to direct in 1 case where a school refused to admit a child and the school admitted the child within 3 days of receiving the notification.
- 5.11 In 2021/22 1 primary child did not have a school placement when they entered care and were electively home educated. Placements were identified immediately due to him being EHE, but the offer was not taken up by Mum who had parental responsibility. He left care prior to starting the school placement.

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

- 5.12 The borough-wide Behaviour Review (2018) made a set of observations and recommendations around improving behaviour systems Doncaster. Following consultation with the wider system in November 2017, the Behaviour Transformation Programme was initiated following sign off at cabinet in April 2018. This plan involved taking a systems approach in relation to the support provided to schools, meeting specific needs of individuals, and creating the necessary provisions for young people who cannot remain in a mainstream setting.
- 5.13 As part of this plan, in 2018 we began the re-shaping of our alternative provision landscape to focus on bespoke re-integration, assessment and therapeutic support, with some centrally commissioned providers and the use of the Inclusion Panel to deliver specifically commissioned placements for young people on the basis of need. This replaced some of the previous provisions, which had not aligned to the vision around ensuring quality and consistency in line with national policy. This included:
- Creating and Assessment and Reintegration centre in order to service all provision for 'Day 6' of permanent exclusion and for any other students with unknown needs coming into the borough or where emergency assessment is required. This has been delivered by St Wilfrids Academy and has supported the precision and credibility of IYFAP decisions.
 - To create and grow the Alternative Provision framework through a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), which is a procedure available for contracts for works, services, and goods commonly available on the market as a procurement tool. Doncaster's Alternative Provision within the DPS began on the 10th September 2018 and we now have over 60 providers. The Local authority use this in order to procure bespoke placements for young people, either on the basis of developing a reintegration plan to access full education or for individual therapeutic input.

- The re-purposing of the Big Picture Learning contract to supply further support for young people affected by the pandemic. Whilst these cohorts are at a lower level of need than many other provisions, they include young people who have recently come out of home education, are persistent absentees or have struggled to engage with schools. The 'Big Picture' provision is working to support children to reintegrate into school at Key Stage 3 and the 'Vega College' works with employers in order to engage young people with the workplace and to improve engagement with meaningful qualifications.
- 5.14 This new landscape of provision has enabled an agile response to the pressures of the pandemic, with the number of placements rising significantly initially but gradually reducing, despite an increase in the intensity of need. We were able to ensure that any young person who was experiencing difficulties when schools were closed were able to access a suitable education. We have also been able to provide appropriate placements to support a return to education following the closure of schools or to deliver intensive support where mental health needs have increased. Over the initial period of the pandemic the numbers in alternative provision, through the framework, grew initially but reduced from 82 in summer 2021 to 48 in Autumn 21 and then 25 in spring 2022. The overall number of placements made by panel has reduced from 162 in 2020-2021 to 135 in 2021-2022. This reflects successes in supporting schools to better meet needs within school environments, supported by some funding devolved to them through our written agreement with schools created in summer 2021.
- 5.15 All decisions regarding the placement of young people in provision are made by the inclusion panel, or where this an Education, Health and Care Plan, by the Special Educational Needs panel. The Inclusion Panel is a multi-agency panel, which sits fortnightly and assesses referrals from schools and other professionals to either advise schools on how they can improve their interventions or to commission provision from the high needs block. Where provision is agreed, the roll school maintains responsibility for overseeing attendance and safeguarding, working in partnership with the provider. Whilst we are awaiting data for the academic year 2021-2022, 98% of young people who were allocated provision during 2020-2021 were successfully reintegrated into their roll school following intervention from panel.
- 5.16 The Big Picture Learning project has also enabled those who have been isolated or struggled to engage to access mainstream provision. Since March 2021, over 80 young people have been able to return to mainstream placements as a consequence of the 12 week programmes delivered by this provision, including 22 learners who were previously home educated. Vega College opened in September 2021 and has worked with a full cohort of 24 young people, who have become disengaged from the school system. The provision focuses on workplace skills and employability, whilst also preparing young people for examinations. All of its initial cohort have now found suitable education or training for Year 12, including 4 young people who will begin apprenticeships in September 2022.
- 5.17 Where young people are permanently excluded, we use alternative provision to assess their needs and develop a plan for mainstream re-integration. Unlike many authorities, this means that nearly all young people will return to

mainstream schools with support. Our robust In Year Fair Access Panel oversees this process and 98% of young people allocated to schools have begun their new school within expected timescales. OFSTED (April 2022) also commented that 'When children return to education, they are provided with effective transition support to help them settle into school. The oversight of pupils on part-time timetables is strong.'

- 5.18 There is a clear quality assurance process for all providers commissioned by the council, which is based upon the most recent OFSTED independent schools framework. All of our quality assurance inspections, conducted annually, include a review of provision alongside a review of that the providers' safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed, the organisation's understanding of safeguarding and how this is embedded into everyday practice is robustly assessed. We would ensure there is a clear line of accountability for safeguarding within the organisation and request evidence to show that Designated Leads receive adequate training to meet local safeguarding requirements. We also ensure that the wider staff team receive safeguarding training at least annually; also, that safeguarding leads cascade regular updates to the whole staff team, to ensure that safeguarding children is at the core of their organisation's ethos. We review all documentation to evidence valid Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks, and we would inspect how safeguarding concerns/incidents are recorded and how level of need is identified, how appropriate referrals are made, and that actions and outcomes are clearly documented. We also request evidence of how the provider links with the students' roll schools and we would ensure the partnership working is effective. Where providers are registered schools, we conduct quality assurance visits, alongside the visits conducted by OFSTED.
- 5.19 The council will continue to work with local providers, schools, and other agencies to ensure that the local market for alternative provision reflects the changing needs of Doncaster children and young people.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED






6. This section is not applicable.




REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

7. This section is not applicable.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

8.

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 Tackling Climate Change				✓
<p>Comments This report does not directly concern this area.</p>				
 Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work	✓			
<p>This report demonstrates how children and young people are being given increasing chances to access education or training which will enhance their ability to access the workplace.</p>				
 Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs	✓			
<p>This report demonstrates how local alternative provision and increasing access to a suitable education can support young people into accessing the workplace. The alternative provision framework is building up a network of local providers, based in Doncaster, stimulating a growing area of the local economy.</p>				
 Building opportunities for healthier, happier, and longer lives for all	✓			
<p>By ensuring that young people have a suitable education, we are enabling them to access a broader experience of learning and thereby acquire the skills that will help them lead happier and more successful lives.</p>				
 Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities				✓

where everyone belongs				
This report does not directly concern this area				
 Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough	✓			
This report describes some of the work undertake under our ambition to be the 'most child friendly borough'. We have been listening to the voice of children and supporting children to attend a range of provision which will focus on their needs and aspirations.				
 Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future				✓
This report does not directly cover this area.				
 Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities	✓			
By developing the range of provision available locally, we have improved the local curriculum offer, with young people now accessing a range of placements which will support knowledge and skills in areas such as the arts, local history, and sport.				
Fair & Inclusive	✓			
This report describes a range of strategies which are aimed at ensuring stronger opportunities for disadvantaged children or those who are at risk of social exclusion in later life. We have enabled young people to gain stronger outcomes alongside those opportunities.				

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

[SRF 15.08.2022]

The Council has a range of statutory duties in relation to the education of children within its Borough. There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report, however further specific advice can be provided in relation to any issues arising from the Committee.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

[SB 17.08.2022]

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

The Elective Home Education team (EHE) holds a budget of £94,420 and is fully funded by the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The Attendance Team holds a budget of £610,080 funded by a combination of general fund, traded income from schools and parental fine income.

The budget for placements within Alternative Provision is £500,000 and is also fully funded by the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Any financial implications relating to specific areas will need to be included within further reports.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

[JC 12.08.2022]

There are no direct HR implications associated with this report.

12. TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

[PW 15.08.2022]

There are no specific technology implications in relation to this report. Changes to the EHE Notification Form have recently been requested by the service and are being progressed by Digital & ICT.

13. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

[CW 17.08.2022]

The links between health, wellbeing and educational attainment is well documented. The impacts of the COVID pandemic on the health and wellbeing of children and young people may not be fully realised for years to come, but evidence continues to emerge of the detrimental effects the pandemic has had on both the physical and mental health of children.

Pupils requiring specialist education provision have vulnerabilities that can often place them at a disadvantage with both educational and health outcomes. In particular those children with special educational needs and disabilities, and those who have been excluded from school. Improving standards of and accessibility to education will support the educational attainment of these children and is likely to impact positively on reducing long-term health inequalities in Doncaster.

The role of public health nursing services in supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people not in mainstream education should be noted. The new service model for public health nursing services 5-19, has clearly defined expectations in terms of service offer for children not in mainstream education and how they should link with the Local Authority and other agencies to ensure children, young people and their families are aware of services available to them.

14. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

[MO 03/08/2022]

The Council's duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when exercising its functions to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic, ensure fair access to learning and opportunities for all Doncaster's children and young people. This report sets out how the council's services will increase access to a suitable education for children and young people who may otherwise be unable to access adequate support and provision.

15. RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

15.1 The continued rise in demand for home education and children missing education referrals will place increasing tension on the attendance and welfare team. Whilst we have significantly increased capacity over the last two years by more effective use of existing resources, this remains a risk. We will aim to mitigate this by prioritizing cases and working in schools to prevent increasing cases coming to the council. We are also lobbying central government for increased resource to be committed to this area to deal with pressures on all local authorities.

15.2 There is a risk that as schools find increasing difficulties in engaging young people that there is a rise in inappropriate referrals for Children Missing Education. We are mitigating this through borough wide training, training for social workers, meetings with individual schools where there are concerns and the regular re-issuing of guidance.

The rise in demand for alternative provision has become a challenge since the start of the pandemic, with an increase in the severity of need being presented to panel. We are mitigating this through creating increasing capacity within centrally commissioned provision such as Big Picture Learning and Vega College in order to limit the impact upon high needs budgets. We are also working to consolidate and add resilience to the local mainstream offer through the actions of the Special Educational Needs strategy.

CONSULTATION

16. There has been significant consultation through conferences and engagement with key stakeholders such as home educators, schools, and settings.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

17. None

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

18.

- Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- Department for Education (DFE)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)

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Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 15/09/2022

To the Chair and Members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee

To understand the Post-Covid impacts on Children to include Children's Mental Health (Strategy Update) / 0-3 Year Olds.

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Lani Mae Ball Cabinet Member, Children, Young People and Schools	All	No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Chair and Members of the Committee with an overview of continuing impacts upon children and young people following the Covid pandemic. It will also provide an update on the response from key services, particularly in the areas of Family Hubs, the early years sector, including support from the Early Years Inclusion team, and with regard to children and young people's mental health.
- 1.2 The pandemic has continued to have an impact upon our children and young people. This has continued to be seen particularly in the areas of mental health and has disproportionately affected the development of younger children. We have particularly, seen an increase in issues related to the speech, language and communication development of children under four years of age.
- 1.3 A range of strategies have been developed and implemented in order to reduce the impact of the pandemic on families, babies and young children within the Family Hubs and with early years providers. These include the creation of the 'Talking Together - Speech, Language and Communication Needs Pathway' with all key stakeholders engaged and invested.
- 1.4 We have continued to see post-pandemic impacts upon our children and young people in relation to mental health. Whilst there have been improvements in some areas, notably the reduction in the number of young

people presenting as emergencies and in some trends around referrals to mental health agencies, there is a growth in those who are being identified by schools and those awaiting neurodevelopmental assessments.

- 1.5 The robust partnership response in this area is already demonstrating an impact, with a growth in service accessibility and coverage and an improving response from schools. The Children and Young People's Mental Health implementation strategy is on schedule to deliver a host of changes before the end of year. These include the introduction of the Kooth app, which allows young people to access services virtually, and has already had over 2000 log-ins, our continued work with schools and the introduction of the 'Healious' system which is helping to reduce waiting times for neuro developmental pathways. The strategy team are currently working with children and families to identify a new set of actions for January 2023.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. There are no exemptions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. It is recommended that the Children and Young People's scrutiny committee note:
- The continuing impacts upon children and young people following the coronavirus pandemic.
 - The continuing work of key services, which are already having an impact in key areas such as the early years, and mental health services for children and young people.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a notable impact on all citizens of Doncaster and has put added pressure on all aspects of people's lives from their health and livelihoods through to their relationships and childcare. In this environment it has been, and continues to be, vitally important that partners effectively deliver services in a way that supports all its residents including its most vulnerable children and young people as effectively as possible. Continued momentum in these areas is vital in order to ensure that long-term recovery is maintained for children and families who have been unduly affected by the pandemic.

BACKGROUND

5. 5.01 It is clear that the period of the Covid pandemic has created some significant impacts upon children, young people, families and the settings they engage with. These are particularly poignant in terms of mental health and child development. These impacts are detailed below.

Early Intervention- What are the concerns?

- 5.02 There is significant pressure on the Early Years sector across Doncaster following the COVID-19 pandemic, to support the delay in young children's

speech, language and communication. This concern is mirrored at a national level in numerous reports including the Ofsted report: 'Education recovery in early years providers: Spring 2022'. Research, conducted by Darts and facilitated by the Early Years Inclusion Team in 2022, has identified a strong need for this support to be intensified. 47% of providers stated that children's vocabulary was below the expected level of development, 48% said that children's listening skills are not where they should be and 45% felt children's confidence in speaking was below the expected level for their age.

- 5.03 Since September 2021, 90% of referrals from early years providers for support through the Education Inclusion Allowance (EIA) state Speech and Language as the child's primary need and the data from the General Development Assessment (GDA) pathway also reflects this trend with an increase from 167 referrals in 2019 (Jan-Sept) to 242 (Jan-Sept) 2021.
- 5.04 In the 2021-22 academic year the Early Years Inclusion Team have seen a significant increase in the number of children who have been identified early as part of the graduated approach, as children with possible SEND. The Early Years Inclusion Team's Area Special Needs Co-ordinators have worked closely with settings to develop and enhance their provision to meet the needs of these cohorts and tailored training sessions to offer guidance and support to meet the early years sector's needs.
- 5.05 Settings have also reported that since the pandemic they have observed that increasing numbers of children are developing differently socially. They are showing less confidence with interacting, taking turns and are finding it more difficult to make relationships with other adults and children due to them having fewer opportunities to develop their social and emotional skills during the pandemic. The Early Years Inclusion Team have supported settings to develop bespoke strategies and interventions to support each child to develop their social skills and have advocated holistic assessments such as the Reflection Toolkit focussing on setting's understanding the unique strengths of each child and building on them.
- 5.06 The pandemic has also had an impact on children in the early year's mental health and settings report that children have increasing levels of emotional need and anxieties. They are demonstrating behaviours that practitioners find increasingly challenging to manage. The Early Years Inclusion Team has worked closely with settings to develop strategies that have a positive impact on children's mental health and look more in depth at the cause of children's behaviours. The Early Years Inclusion Team are reviewing the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities available to settings and considering ways to enhance this package to include self-regulation and co-regulation.
- 5.07 Since the pandemic there has also been an increase in the number of children who have been referred to the Portage Home Visiting (PHV) team. The PHV team work with families who have children with complex needs, to help them develop a quality of life and experience, for themselves and their young children, in which they can learn together, play together, participate and be included in their community in their own right.
- 5.08 Due to the increase a waiting list has been established (for the first time). This could result in children and families having to wait longer for this service to start. The Early Years Inclusion Team are reviewing the Portage

criteria and considering alternative services available for children to access whilst waiting for Portage.

Early Intervention- What are we doing?

- 5.09 At the start of the pandemic Family Hubs quickly developed a virtual offer for children and families. This included story times, sing a long sessions and ideas for parents to play and learn together. Baby massage and anti-natal Solihull (a parenting programme) helped parents to develop secure attachments with their baby and develop close loving relationships. Although parents welcomed this, for very young children the opportunity to interact with other children was limited.
- 5.10 For some babies born during the pandemic they had only seen the faces of their immediate family so found it difficult with larger groups of people. There was also very limited opportunities to interact with other children and develop early language skills. With this in mind once restrictions eased, Family Hubs developed and delivered a range of groups for young children and families. During observations by early year's development workers and parents reporting, it became obvious that children's social and emotional development had also been affected by the pandemic. Therefore, activities within groups are planned around the individual needs of the child and their interests to engage them in play and learning. Parents are also been given information about the home learning environment and how they can extend and support their child's learning at home.
- 5.11 Following the pandemic, some families who are vulnerable may not have the confidence to engage with a Family Hub. One to one support and Early Help is available for families who are reluctant to engage. An example of this when an early years development worker visits the family home for a number of weeks to model play, help to build confidence and explain the benefits of joining activities at the family hub. Family Hub staff have encouraged and supported eligible families who may be reluctant to take up their entitlement for two year old funding. Using data and local intelligence Family Hub staff are aware and can target eligible families. The take up of the two year old funding at the start of the summer term (July 2022) was 84%. Doncaster are in the top 10% of authorities in the country.
- 5.12 As one of 75 local authorities eligible for additional funding from the government to develop family hubs and the service offer from conception we are hopeful we can mitigate the impact of the pandemic for the majority of children across Doncaster thus enabling them to achieve their full potential. One of the funded strands is to support the development of early language and home learning environments. Overall, by the end of the 2024-25 financial year Doncaster will receive between £3,679,000 and £3,834,000, plus a possible additional £183,000 if we become a trailblazer authority. Disadvantaged children are less likely to experience a high quality home learning environment, a factor exacerbated during the pandemic. The additional resource will add additional capacity to support children who need it most.
- 5.13 Training around Trauma informed practice has been delivered to multi-disciplinary cohorts of practitioners and work is underway between Early Years Inclusion, Educational Psychology and the Looked After Children (LAC) team to role this out further.

- 5.14 In 2018/19 Doncaster was awarded £241,071 by the Department of Education from the Early Years Outcomes Fund to improve the local systems involved in delivering speech, language and communication assessments and interventions. This funding was awarded in 2019. This project is now known as 'Doncaster Talking Together'.
- 5.15 Since starting the project in April 2019, we have developed a regional skills strategy, provided local training opportunities for our children's workforce, and reviewed local services to ensure that assessments and interventions with young children are robust at identifying and tackling speech, language and communication needs. We have developed a new referral pathway and created a website of information for both professionals and parents.
WWW.SY-TALKINGTOGETHER.CO.UK
- 5.16 As part of the project we funded a speech and language therapist for 1 day a week across 18 months. DfE funded this post at a cost of £33,300. This post has been instrumental in the success of the Talking Together initiative to date.
- 5.17 The creation of the new pathway has been very positively received by practitioners and was timely in its introduction following the aftermath of the pandemic and the increasing 'word gap' across children in Doncaster. It is crucial that we continue to invest in the Pathway in order to continue the current momentum and ensure continued impact on both children's speech, language and communication skills and the confidence of our workforce to support in this area.
- 5.18 Since the communication and language intervention 'Growing Talk' commenced in September 2021 197 sessions have been delivered in the Family Hubs with 202 children benefitting from this intervention so far. As a universal/targeted group 'Growing Talk' is open for all children who would benefit to access. This is reflected in the overall demography, which demonstrates that children across all Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) areas are accessing and engaging with the programme.
- 5.19 Since the 'Home-Talk' Pilot commenced in October 2021 in the Edlington area, 11 children have accessed the programme. Though a small sample size at this moment in time impact of this intervention is already evident:
- One child was saying nine words at the beginning of the programme. This increased to 112 by the end of the programme
 - For another child, in session one, parents were asking many questions and directing the child's play. The child's play was aggressive and involved a lot of throwing/ banging toys. Parents responded by saying 'no' frequently. By session 2, the parents were joining in with the child's play and making simple comments on his play. Changes were also observed in the child's play, with him playing purposefully with the toys instead of throwing them.
 - For another child all five parent-orientated goals were achieved by the end of the 'Home-talk' sessions. In addition, the 'Home-talk' worker was able to attend a 'Growing Talk' session with the child and parent, which led to the child and parent continuing to attend the

'growing talk' sessions after 'Home-talk' had finished. Prior to this, parents had reported that they did not take the child to any groups with other children

5.20 Parent feedback is positive, an example of which, is quoted below:

“‘Home-talk’ has been amazing for us, it’s helped so much, not just <my child> but also us as parents. It has helped us learn how to encourage his speech through play rather than trying to put any sort of pressure on him to say certain words. Before, we were trying to get him to say words by sitting and trying to read to him etc. which he would never sit still for or enjoy. Now we know to just sit and play with him, to just be interested in whatever he is doing and encourage him to speak by repeating words that he is interested in and giving him choices. His development was unreal whilst we were having home talk. In 2 weeks he went from barely saying anything to knowing every single animal noise. Every week that <the ‘Home-talk’ worker> came out to us we learned more as parents, meaning <my child> learnt more through us. We had a big list of new words he could say every week, and he also plays much calmer and nicer now and is nowhere near as destructive and rough as he used to be. It has been a huge help to us and we didn’t even need to finish the 6 weeks because he’d improved that much. Thank you so much for all your help”

5.21 The Hungry Little Minds Campaign continues to grow from strength to strength in Doncaster with further funding secured for another year. As a result of this DfE funded campaign we now have a story trail feature that has been erected around the Lakeside Lake for families to access independently for free. The trail is also available in Urdu and Polish. Family Hubs are now promoting a 'Passport' to encourage families to access the trails, Family Hub activities and the libraries. Since October, there have been 10 events for families to attend, for free, with 557 attendees. 813 resource packs have been given to families and 80 volunteering hours have been dedicated to support the promotion of the campaign.

5.22 Funding was given to community groups to increase the offer for families to freely access in the community. DfE supplied this funding, totalling 137,462. All activity had been delayed because of COVID. Stainforth Family Hub are commencing a Literacy Canon to ignite a love of reading in their community, DARTS have successfully completed their 'Tuneful Chatter' programme and the National Literacy Trust will be holding events and commencing community activities to inspire volunteers and mentors to continue the legacy in the future.

5.23 Sustainability and legacy have been embedded in all key decisions made in the creation of 'Talking Together' with all key stakeholders engaged and invested. Losing the links with the Doncaster Speech and Language Therapy Service would be hugely detrimental on the success of the pathway and have a significant impact on the school readiness of our children aged 0-5 across the borough.

5.24 The Early Years team have accessed £137,000 of funding to continue to facilitate the pathway and to support children and families for the funding period 2022/23. This will be done through the recruitment of a dedicated team (1 Speech and Language Therapist and 3 practitioners) to deliver training and key interventions, during the post COVID-19 recovery phase. Work is also underway to align support for 0-5's with the local solutions

group and the creation of an intervention group for those children who are behind with their development as a result of the pandemic.

- 5.25 The Early Intervention Steering Group is monitoring progress and impacts against this area through the Early Help implementation plan, whilst also engaging with children, young people and other stakeholders regarding key priorities and areas of concern. The Early Intervention Steering Group is a broad, cross- partnership initiative, with a clear line of accountability to partnership boards. The strategy group will present progress against these priorities and demonstrate impact against this plan to the Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board and the SEND board as part of ongoing governance arrangements.

Children and Young People's Mental Health: What are the concerns?

- 5.26 We have continued to see post-pandemic impacts upon our children and young people in relation to mental health. Whilst there have been improvements in some areas, notably the reduction in the number of young people presenting as emergencies and in some trends around referrals to mental health agencies, there is a growth in those who are being identified by schools and those awaiting neurodevelopmental assessments.
- 5.27 Children and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) services have seen increasing referrals for support since the start of the pandemic. Over the last year, there has been a national increase in referrals to both Mental Health Support Teams (With Me in Mind, Doncaster) and Children and adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS). In comparison, referrals to CAMHS prior to lock down were 4 times less than the current position. We have seen reductions in some key areas, but there continues to be a higher level of need than pre-pandemic. The monthly average for referrals into specialist Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) increased from four in 2020 to six in 2021 for urgent referrals and from nineteen in 2020 to twenty seven in 2021 for non-urgent referrals. In 2022 the average number of specialist referrals reduced to an average of one per month, the urgent referrals have reduced to two per month and non-urgent to just over nineteen per month. Waiting times, overall, are being met by the service for each pathway.
- 5.28 In relation to our school-based Mental Health Support Teams (MHST), the service went live in lockdown so we have no comparable data, although we know referrals into the service mirrored those in CAMHS. What has been noticed is the complexity of referrals made to both MHST/CAMHS compared to pre-COVID, this is due to environmental factors, including trauma, isolation and deprivation. During this time there have been major difficulties in retaining staff within both MHST/CAMHS and recruiting, again this reflects the national picture.
- 5.29 The school system has seen increasing numbers of young people who have been identified as having Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. The percentage of Doncaster school pupils with SEMH needs increased from 2.47% in 2020 to 2.61% in 2021 to 3.14% in 2022. Mainstream education settings currently have 159 pupils with an EHCP with SEMH as a primary need, having grown from 154 in 2021.

- 5.30 This growth has been reflected in the number of children awaiting a neurodevelopmental assessment. The monthly average for the number of children waiting for an ADHD assessment increased from 76 in 2020 to 116 in 2021. As at the end of June 2022, there were 100 children waiting for an ADHD assessment.
- 5.31 The Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Pro-active, Monitoring and Support Group (P, M & S) is a multiagency group who monitor trends and cases around young people who have presented at emergency department with mental health issues. The monthly average for the number of cases discussed by the SEMH proactive monitoring and support group increased from 15 in 2020 to 19 in 2021 and has then reduced to 14 in 2022. This reduction has been the consequence of reduced repeat referrals and the impact of earlier intervention approaches. Most of these referrals have been more around family dynamics and historical trauma, with reduced concerns surrounding school issues. There is a strikingly disproportionate gender imbalance in these referrals, with females making up 75% of the cohort. Whilst the majority of cases are in the 14-16 age range, there has been a rise in 17 year olds.
- 5.32 Our Children and young people have been surveyed and asked their views about how the current situation feels for them. These views have been continuously used to develop and renew our priorities. The current priorities for young people and children include developing anti-bullying responses in schools, ensuring that services intervening earlier, reducing in-school pressures and prioritising mental health in our schools and settings. These views are incorporated into our plan and will be reviewed throughout the autumn period.

Children and Young People's Mental Health- What are we doing?

- 5.33 The Children and Young People's Mental Health strategy focuses on four key areas, which were identified as priorities by children and young people. These are:
- Improve Access to Doncaster Services.
 - Address Systemic Inequalities
 - Raise Capacity and Capability within Mainstream Schools.
 - Reduce Waiting Times for Neurological Pathways.
- 5.34 Since the launch of the strategy, the priorities have been discussed with a wide number of partners and stakeholders, including the school mental health summits in May, which were attended by the majority of schools and all local agencies. We have also made the mental health strategy the focus of other key networks, such as the Inclusion and Special Needs networks and Designated Safeguarding leads. Children and young people have also fed in their views through a survey and these have been shared widely. An implementation plan, with appropriate governance has since been developed to support this, with senior leaders from the partnership attached to each of the four priorities to ensure clear accountability. We have also undertaken the following activity since the last update:
- We have used our school summits to publicise resources and training and have developed a network of mental health leads and mental health first aiders. Schools have also identified their priorities, which

are now embedded in the implementation plan. We have met with members of the local mental health community in order to identify how we strengthen access to support for children who are home educated. We are holding an event with all home educators in Doncaster in October in order to publicise how to access services and to gain a stronger understanding of the needs of this community.

- We have conducted mental health reviews in the first tranche of twenty schools. We are currently working with schools on developing consequent action plans. We will extend this intervention to the next wave of schools in September.
- The council have met with Maple Medical centre in order to create a feasibility study regarding the expansion of this provision. We are collaborating on this at the current time.
- All of the actions related to Special Educational Needs are proceeding through the new Special Needs Board and its associated working groups. There is a clear implementation plan in place. Through this work, we will be developing 46 in borough Social, emotional and Mental Health places on school sites during this academic year. There is also a plan to increase training for school staff at all levels and to create a new early intervention funding system in localities so that schools can access guidance and funds without the need to apply for an Education, Help and Care plan. A long-term sufficiency plan will set out how we will meet rising levels of need over the next seven years.
- A new borough-wide anti-bullying strategy is currently in draft form. A steering group has been set up with schools, which will meet in September to drive the new strategy and to create a campaign for the November anti-bullying week.
- In order to widen access to services, the Kooth app, which allows young people to access mental health services virtually, has been launched. Schools have supported in promoting this, and a second publicity campaign is expected for September, through social media and school assemblies across the secondary sector including those who have not already engaged. The Kooth service went live on 1st March 2022. Since it has commenced there have been:

Kooth	YTD
Number of registrations	738
Number of logins	2493
Number of hours counselling	381
Number of messages sent	1513
Number of forum hits	2495
Number of secondary schools engaged	12

- ‘On the Level’, an innovative approach to engaging young people around mental health through a live interactive show has been broadcasted to all secondary schools in the borough. The show helps

young people increase awareness of their own mental health, gives practical strategies and drives engagement to digital mental health services e.g. 'Kooth'. The engagement event provided a platform for young people to think differently about their Mental Health and allowed them to participate interactively.

- In regards to neurodevelopmental pathways, the 'Healios' service has been commissioned for digital assessments for ADHD from April 1st 2022 and ASD from 1st June 2022. The digital assessment service will dramatically cut the waits on referral to assessment of approximately 4 months from the longest face-to-face wait of approximately 2.5 years.
- Within the face-to-face clinical pathways, providers across Doncaster came together to look at how we could reduce the wait and improve the quality of referrals through the clinical pathways. Some early next steps include:
 - An offer from Education Psychology to look at how they could be funded to support clinical gaps
 - Changes made to the General Developmental Assessment (GDA) referral following feedback from attendance at the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) network
 - Letters send to General Practitioner (GPs) to remind them of the clinical process
 - 9000 leaflets distributed to teachers across Doncaster to aid in the referral process.
- The DfE (Department for Education) and National Literacy Trust (NLT) funding has been invested through the Early Years Inclusion Team to continue to develop the Doncaster Talking Together speech and language pathway. As we move through 2022, joint commissioning arrangements will begin to look at further scope and provisions that are needed, rebasing appropriately.
- Focus groups have taken place in a number of schools aimed at understanding how young people from disadvantaged groups can improve their access to mental health services.
- Both MHST/CAMHS have continued to develop during lockdown a digital offer for parents/children/young people with access to an e-clinic, this platform provides consultation and guidance immediately and can appropriately signpost. If a child/young person requires MHST/CAMHS with consent, the said person can be directly referred via the clinician, without the need to seek guidance from a General Practitioner (GP) or agency.
- With Me in Mind (The MHST provision) have worked with colleagues in Public Health to address the health inequalities for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT), home educated and Lesbian Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+) communities. It is widely acknowledged that these groups experience

poor access to mental health services whilst presenting with at time complex mental health problems. With Me in Mind recruited to an engagement participation officer who is working alongside the young advisors and is in the process of recruiting pupil ambassadors from education providers across Doncaster to further understand difficulties pupils face in their communities.

- CAMHS continue to offer a 'no wrong door' policy and self- referrals are widely accepted through their Single Point of Access, rather than seek a GP appointment. MHST/CAMHS have continued to provide/offer a blended approach to treatment/assessment throughout the last year, with the vast majority of patients choosing face to face.
- MHST have been successful in attracting Wave 8 funding for the continuation of the project and are in the process of recruiting four trainee Education Mental Health Practitioners who will begin their training at Sheffield University in Feb 2023, with mobilization commencing 6 months following this in yet to be identified education providers. This will roughly equate to the MHST covering about 55% of pupils within Doncaster. In addition to this the MHST have been successful in recruiting two practitioners who will begin their Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Systemic Training at Northumbria University in February 2023, this will provide additional therapies to the MHST model.

5.35 Our early help casework and parenting interventions are making a demonstrable difference to both adult and children's wellbeing. This work is crucial to building family resilience and strategies for improving wellbeing. Between April and June, 92.8% of Family Stars evidenced an improvement in parental confidence to support their families, with the biggest increase in confidence being around managing boundaries and parental wellbeing. Over the same period, the My Star tool has demonstrated that 75% of children and young people receiving this support have increased confidence in all areas. A similarly positive impact has been seen from the Solihull Parenting Programmes, where data has shown a significant decrease in parent- child conflict for those accessing this support, which will impact positively on young people and children's mental health.

5.36 The Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategy Group are monitoring progress and impacts against the implementation plan, whilst also engaging with children, young people and other stakeholders regarding key priorities for the 2023 strategy. The Young People's Mental Health strategy group is a broad, cross- partnership initiative, with a clear line of accountability to partnership boards. The strategy group will present progress against these priorities and demonstrate impact against this plan to Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2022. They will also present to Doncaster Safeguarding Children board and the SEND board as part of ongoing governance arrangements. Regular updates are also presented to key interests such as networks for Special Needs Co-ordinators, Designated Safeguarding leads and head teachers groups.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED






6. This section is not applicable.




REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

7. This section is not applicable.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

8.

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 Tackling Climate Change	✓			
Comments Not directly covered in this report.				
 Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work	✓			
The work described in this report will support children and young people to access education, developing language, academic, and work skills. This will, in turn, support the prospect of accessing a successful working life.				
 Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs	✓			
Strong family support will enable young people to play a growing role in the local economy. The expansion of our health teams will continue to support the creation of high quality jobs in Doncaster.				
 Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all	✓			
Increasingly focused delivery of services for families and young people will help families to lead increasingly happier and more successful lives, as we recover from the pandemic. Improving capability in schools and settings will enable young people to learn the skills required to lead healthier and more independent lives.				
 Creating safer, stronger,				✓

greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs				
This report does not directly cover this area.				
 Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough	✓			
The areas covered in this report are very much in line with our nurturing and child friendly ambitions. We will look to support young children with their health and communication needs, whilst also supporting children and young people and families to gain early support. Our strategies have been founded upon the lived experience of children and families and will continue to do so as we approach the next phase of delivery.				
 Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future	✓			
The Mental Health strategy includes the commissioning of online services, which will enable young people and families to access support quickly. These online platforms will enable more efficient and focussed service delivery.				
 Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities				✓
This report does not directly cover this area.				
Fair & Inclusive	✓			
Strong targeted support for children and families are keen to ensuring fairness and inclusivity. Our mental health and early help strategy aim to ensure intervention and support at the earliest possible times. We are working with our schools to develop inclusive, responsive and supportive environments. We will work to ensure that pro-active approaches allow pathways through services and provision that are tailored to the needs of specific children, young people and families.				

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

[SRF 15.08.2022]

There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report, further specific advice can be provided in relation to any issues arising from the Committee.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

[AB 25.08.2022]

There are no specific financial implications arising as a direct result of this report. Any financial implications relating to specific areas of the strategies, the continuing demand upon services within Doncaster, and the indicative allocation for the Family Hub and Start for Life Programme, will need to be included within further reports.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

[JC 12.08.2022]

There are no direct HR implications associated with this report.

12. TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

[PW 15.08.2022]

There are several references to the use of new technology in this report, including the Talking Together website, Kooth app and Healios digital assessment service for ADHD. Any requirements for technology to support the delivery of services should be considered by the Technology Governance Board (TGB), where applicable.

13. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

[CW 17.08.2022]

- 13.1 The impacts of the COVID pandemic on children development and mental health is summarised in the report.
- 13.2 The effects of lockdown and much reduced service provision has potentially led to delayed development of some children, this is mirrored in the 'Ages and Stages' 2 year review data collected by Health Visiting services which highlights the 'communication' domain as being below average for Doncaster children compared with regional and national data.
- 13.3 The report outlines an array of services available to children and young people suffering from poor mental health. These services are vital to ensuring children and young people receive appropriate help, however a shift in emphasis to promoting good emotional wellbeing and protective factors support good mental health would be more effective in stemming the tide of children experiencing these difficulties.

14. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

[MO 03.08.2022]

The Council's duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when exercising its functions to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic, ensure fair access to learning and opportunities for all Doncaster's children and young people. This report sets out how we will ensure that access to services at all levels is being improved despite the challenges of the pandemic.

15. RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- The primary risk is that continued demand will adversely affect the stability of many family environments and thereby create economic and social instability. We are mitigating this through the delivery of our Mental Health and Early Help strategies, both of which are devoted to ensuring that

support can be identified at the earliest possible moment. Through our Local Solutions approach, we will be able to identify and respond to problems in families at an early point and focus resources on resolving such difficulties. Our Mental Health strategy work will deepen its focus on the lived experience of children and young people as it reviews priorities and identifies key work for 2023.

- Whilst we are seeing some reductions in the severity of need in many areas, there is also a risk that demand increase. We are mitigating this by focussing our services in schools and the community at an earlier point in order to stop the escalation of need. We are building up the capability of school staff to respond better to trauma and are focussing mental health team support in schools where patterns of need are greatest. We have built a register of first aid leaders within the school system in order to ensure stronger networking and sharing of practice. We continue to recruit to mental health teams. Our new online platforms will offer increasing opportunities to access support without time lags.
- There is a possibility that the increase in referrals through the clinical pathway outweighs the extended digital offer for those on the neurological pathways. We will mitigate this by working closely with schools to map out provision, ensuring links between Early Help and Pathway infrastructures.
- It is also possible that schools will not comply/ engage with the recommendations. We are mitigating this by involving schools closely with our priorities through system engagements and individual meetings, alongside the existing offers of support and training. We will continue to engage with the school system through planned summits and network events alongside targeted conversations with schools.
- It is possible that recruitment will be difficult to our new mental health positions. We will mitigate this by working across Team Doncaster to flex capacity, looking at a one system approach.

16. CONSULTATION

There has been significant consultation through our engagements with parents, children and young people, schools and settings cross the last two terms of this academic year. These have included:

- Young Advisers surveys and face-to-face consultation events with young people and children.
- School networks, 'summits' and conferences. We have also conducted meetings in a large range of schools in order to understand school pressures and needs.
- Early Help strategy consultation events.
- Meetings with parents groups including those families who have children with Special educational needs or who are home educating.
- Parent / carer and young people representatives attend all of the mental health strategy groups and workshops.

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategy and Implementation plan.
<https://doncaster.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s34944/Children%20and%20Young%20Peoples%20Mental%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Strategy.pdf>

18. GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Department for Education (DFE)
- Education Inclusion allowance (EIA)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Mental Health Support Teams (MHST)
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- General Development Assessment (GDA)
- General Practitioner (GP)
- Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)
- Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT)
- Lesbian Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+)
- Portage Home Visiting (PHV)
- National Literacy Trust (NLT)
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

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Please note dates of meetings/rooms/support may change

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PLAN 2022/23

	OSMC	H&ASC O&S	CYP O&S	R&H O&S	C&E O&S
April			Tues, 26th April 2022, 9am MS Teams (CR)		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Social Care Front Door Referrals (Meeting with Headteachers) 		
May	Thurs 12th May 2022, 10am MS Teams (CR)	Tues, 10th May 2022, 2pm MS Teams (Joint with CYP O&S) (CM)	Tues, 10th May 2022, 2pm MS Teams (Joint with H&ASC O&S) (CM)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioning (meeting with service providers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Mental Health Strategy Speech Therapist Health Visiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Mental Health Strategy Speech Therapist Health Visiting 		
	Mon 30th May 2022, 2pm MS Teams Briefing Session (CR)		Monday 23rd May at 1pm MS Teams (CM)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty Position Statement 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCST and Inspection update 		
	Mon 30th May 2022, 3pm MS Teams (CR/CM)	Mon 6th June 2022, 2pm MS Teams (CR/CM)	Tues, 14th June 2022, 10am MS Teams (CR/CM)	Wed, 15th June 2022, 10am MS Teams (CR/CM)	Thur, 16th June 2022, 4pm MS Teams (CR/CM)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Planning Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Planning Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Planning Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Planning Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Planning Meeting
June	Thurs, 9th June 2022, 2pm Council Chamber (CM)		Mon, 27th June 2022, 4.30pm Council Chamber (CM)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Justice Plan (c) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home to School Travel Assistance Policy 2022-2027(c) 		
	Thur 23rd June 2022, 10am Council Chamber (CM/SM)				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qtrly Finance & Performance Report – Qtr 4 21/22 (c) 				

FP – Forward Plan Decision

CR, CM or AS – Officer Responsible

Please note dates of meetings/rooms/support may change

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DMBC ○ SLHD ● Scrutiny Work Plan 				
July	<p>Thur 7th July 2022, 9 am Council Chamber (CR), Members Briefing</p>				<p>Fri 15th July 2022, 10am MS Teams</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DDT Investment Plan (c) 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Biodiversity Net Gain - Biodiversity Offsetting (c)
	<p>Thur 7th July 2022, 10am Council Chamber (CR)</p>	<p>Mon 18th July 2022 at 1pm Council Chamber (CR)</p>	<p>Thur 21st July 2022, 4:30pm MS Teams Briefing Session (CM)</p>		<p>Thur 28th July 2022, 2pm (CM/CR) Briefing Session in Council Chamber</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DCST Performance Quarter 4 (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adult Mental Health overview (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education White Paper (c) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Assets/Community Assets Transfer (c)
	<p>Thur 7th July 2022, 11am Council Chamber (CR) Members Briefing</p>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commissioning – Aspire/SY Police/ Conclusion (c) 				
Aug	<p>Thur 18th August 2022 10am MS Teams (CR)</p>				<p>Mon 8th August 2022 4:30pm MS Teams (CR)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Culture Strategy (c) ● Fairness and Wellbeing Commission 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members Briefing – Update on SSDP Priorities and Crime Statistics (c)
Sept	<p>Thur 8th Sept 2022, 10am Council Chamber (CM/RW)</p>	<p>Thur 29th Sept 2022, 10am Council Chamber (CM)</p>	<p>Thur 15th Sept 2022, 4:30pm Council Chamber (CR)</p>		<p>Fri 16th Sept 2022, 10am MS Teams (CM)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Qtrly Finance & Performance Report – Qtr 1 22/23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DMBC ● SLHD ● DCST ● Compliments and Complaints (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) and plans to address health inequalities ● Primary Care Update/ Adult Social Care/Access to primary care (CQC) - Presentation ● Carers Strategy Update Action Plan (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elective Home Education / Children Missing Education and Alternative Provision ● Post Covid - Impact on Children to include Children’s Mental Health (Strategy Update)/0-3 Year Olds (c) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community Assets/Community Asset Transfer

Please note dates of meetings/rooms/support may change

Oct				Tuesday 4th Oct 2022 at 4pm MS teams	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How Section 106 Agreements work and how is it secured through the planning process; How is it used / impacts for regeneration purposes and how is it monitored; Community Infrastructure Levy. (c) 	
	Thur 13th Oct 2022, 10am Council Chamber			Thur 20th Oct 2022, 10am MS Teams	Thur 27th Oct 2022, 1pm tbc Council Chamber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Allocations Review 2022/2023 Update Economic Strategy Overview 2030 (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flooding Update Environment/Climate Change lessons learnt from the summer heat wave; Mid-Year Meeting as CDC to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic abuse update Violence AWG Strategy Community Safety Strategy update (c)
Nov	Thur 3rd Nov 2022, 10am Council Chamber	Thur 24th Nov 2022, 10am Council Chamber	Monday 7th November at 1 to 2pm Briefing Session MS Teams	Wednesday 23rd Nov 2022, 11am Council Chamber	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localities (Autumn 2022 – formal meeting) (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update from D&BHT Winter Planning ICS/ICB Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND Strategy (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Allocations Policy Review 2022/23 (c) Improving Council housing stock; and Housing stock condition – private sector (c) 	
			Date TBC Informal Briefing session		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Care Front Door referrals – school experience update 		

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Dec	Thur 1st Dec 2022, 10am Council Chamber		Thur 8th Dec 2022, 4:30pm Council Chamber	Wednesday 7th December 2022 at 10am (MS teams TBC)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qtrly Finance & Performance Report – Qtr 2 22/23 DMBC SLHD DCST 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Education Results – December 2022 Looked After Children (LAC)/NEET – needs further discussion (c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment 	
Jan	Thur 26th January 2023, 10am Council Chamber				Mon 23rd Jan 2022 4:00pm Council Chamber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Corporate Plan Borough Strategy (DDT) TBC May be slightly later 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental & Sustainability Strategy Action Plan 22/23 Update
Feb	Thur 9th Feb 2023, 10am Council Chamber	Thur 2nd February 2023, 10am Council Chamber		Wednesday 28th February 2023. 10am (MS Teams TBC)	Thur 16th Feb 2023, 10am Council Chamber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Corporate Plan Borough Strategy (DDT) TBC maybe slightly later 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links with Social Care and Housing. Local Account ASC perspective (for 2024) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Schemes update: Emerging projects (TBC) Airport update and regeneration – Scott Cardwell (TBC) Levelling Up Fund update – Christian Foster / Mitch Salter / Jonny Bucknall / Michelle Beeney Town Deal update (TBC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime and Disorder Committee - Safer Doncaster Partnership Priorities.
	Thur 23rd Feb 2023, 10am Council Chamber				
	TBC				
March	Thur 30th March 2023, 10am Council Chamber	Thur 23rd March 2023, 10am Council Chamber	Thur 16th March 2023, 4:30pm Council Chamber	Thur 9th March 2023, 1.00pm Council Chamber	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qtrly Finance & Performance Report – Qtr 3 22/23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DMBC SLHD DCST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health Protection Update (including long covid). CQC Access to Primary Care (including GP Services) 	SEND; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND Strategy Update/The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Green Paper Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Plan – update including delivery of key housing projects and connectivity 	
	•	•		Thurs 9th March 2023 2.30pm Council Chamber Members briefing	
	•	•		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How St Leger Homes ensure VFM and work standards on improvement programmes; TBC 	
Apr			April 2023 (TBC)		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Council Priorities (and for information Children and Young Peoples Plan). Youth Offer 		
May					

POSSIBLE ISSUES FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OR TO BE SCHEDULED

Poverty Position Statement – 2022/23 – updates TBA	Joint Regional Health (JHOSC) – as required Chair only to attend	SEND – meeting with families and SENCO group - ASAP	Possible planning reform legislation – not available at this time (as of August 2022). Timing TBC	As C&DC - Members Briefings (MS Teams meetings in between formal meetings) to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> off-road motorbikes links to gang culture
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Please note dates of meetings/rooms/support may change

	Borough Strategy (DDT(may be considered with Budget and Corporate Plan TBC)	Speech and Language – Update – briefing TBC	Early Help Strategy/Annual Report/My Life Doncaster – Members Briefing and Annual Report for circulation		Environmental – items to be considered individually; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental & Sustainability Strategy Action Plan 22/23 Update ○ Recycling and Collection of Fly-tipping – what has been successful in other areas ○ Flooding/winter planning (including invite to Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water and information from residents on response) – Autumn / November 2022
		Healthwatch Review (Access to Services) Members Briefing TBC	Transfer of Doncaster Children’s Services Trust to the Council – Updates		
		Ambulance Times - TBC	Youth Council – Member’s briefing TBC		
		Integration White Paper – 2023/2024 – due to being on hold nationally.			

Please note dates of meetings/rooms/support may change

BRIEFING NOTES/FOR CIRCULATION

		Get Doncaster Moving (circulated June 2022)	Not in Education or Employment (NEET) update (briefing paper circulated 14 th July 2022).		
		Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report (circulated July 2022)	Doncaster Children's Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report		
		RDaSH Annual Quality Report (circulated by email/returned June 2022)	Early Help/Children and Young People Plan Annual Report - prior to consideration by the Panel		
		Adult Safeguarding Report 2022 (date TBC) circulated			

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DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1ST OCTOBER TO 31ST JANUARY, 2023

The Forward Plan sets out details of all Key Decisions expected to be taken during the next four months by either the Cabinet collectively, The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Holders or Officers and is updated and republished each month.

A Key Decision is an executive decision which is likely:-

- (a) to result in the Local Authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Local Authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the Local Authority;
- (c) any decision related to the approval or variation of the Policy and budget Framework that is reserved to the Full Council.

The level of expenditure/savings which this Authority has adopted as being financially significant are (a) in the case of the revenue budget, gross full-year effect of £250,000 or more b) in the case of capital budget, £1,000,000 or more in respect of a single project or otherwise across one financial year.or the decision has a significant impact on 2 or more wards.

Please note in addition to the documents identified in the plan, other documents relevant to a decision may be submitted to the Decision Maker. Details of any additional documents submitted can be obtained from the Contact Officer listed against each decision identified in this plan.

In respect of exempt items, if you would like to make written representations as to why a report should be considered in public, please send these to the contact officer responsible for that particular decision. Unless otherwise stated, representations should be made at least 14 days before the expected date of the decision.

KEY

Those items in **BOLD** are **NEW**

Those items in **ITALICS** have been **RESCHEDULED** following issue of the last plan

Prepared on: 31st August, 2022 and superseding all previous Forward Plans with effect from the period identified above.

Damian Allen
Chief Executive

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Cabinet Member For:

Mayor - Ros Jones
Deputy Mayor - Councillor Glyn Jones

Councillor Lani-Mae Ball
Councillor Nigel Ball
Councillor Joe Blackham
Councillor Rachael Blake
Councillor Phil Cole
Councillor Mark Houlbrook
Councillor Jane Nightingale
Councillor Andrea Robinson

- Budget and Policy
- Housing and Business
- Education, Skills and Young People
- Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning
- Highways, Infrastructure and Enforcement
- Children's Social Care, Communities and Equalities
- Finance and Trading Services
- Sustainability and Waste
- Corporate Resources.
- Adult Social Care

Some Decisions listed in the Forward Plan are to be taken by Full Council

Members of the Full Council are:-

Councillors Nick Allen, Bob Anderson, Duncan Anderson, Lani-Mae Ball, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Joe Blackham, Rachael Blake, Nigel Cannings, Glenn Bluff, Laura Bluff, Bev Chapman, James Church, Gemma Cobby, Phil Cole, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Linda Curran, Amiee Dickson, Susan Durant, Yetunde Elebuibon, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, Martin Greenhalgh, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Debbie Hutchinson, Barry Johnson, Glyn Jones, R. Allan Jones, Ros Jones, Jake Kearsley Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Sue Knowles, Sophie Liu, Tracey Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlins, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Jane Nightingale, Thomas Noon, Ian Pearson, Andy Pickering, Cynthia Ransome, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Dave Shaw, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith, Gary Stapleton, and Austen White

WHEN DECISION IS EXPECTED TO BE TAKEN	KEY DECISION TO BE TAKEN	RELEVANT CABINET MEMBER	DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY	CONTACT OFFICER(S)	DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY DECISION MAKER	REASON FOR EXEMPTION – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SCHEDULE 12A
5 Oct 2022	Updated Medium-term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2025/26.	Mayor Ros Jones	Cabinet	Matthew, Smith, Head of Financial Management Tel: 01302-737663 matthew.smith@doncaster.gov.uk, Faye Tyas, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director of Finance faye.tyas@doncaster.gov.uk		Open
19 Oct 2022	<i>To accept funding from Department for Transport to deliver an Active Travel Social Prescribing pilot in Doncaster.</i>	<i>Councillor Nigel Ball, Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning, Councillor Joe Blackham, Portfolio Holder for Highways, Infrastructure and Enforcement</i>	<i>Cabinet</i>	<i>Caroline Temperton, Public Health Improvement Co-ordinator caroline.temperton@doncaster.gov.uk, Kerry Perruzza, Senior Transport Planner Kerry.Perruzza@doncaster.gov.uk, Jodie Bridger, LDP Programme Manager, Leisure Services, Public Health Tel: 01302 736631 Jodie.Bridger@doncaster.gov.uk</i>		<i>Open</i>

2 Nov 2022	Approval to receive £750,000 grant funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner - Safer Streets Fund Round 4	Councillor Rachael Blake, Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care, Communities and Equalities	Cabinet	Bill Hotchkiss, Head of Service - Community Safety bill.hotchkiss@doncaster.gov.uk		Open
2 Nov 2022	To approve the commencement of a Compulsory Purchase Order for the acquisition of properties necessary to deliver the Doncaster Town Deal project.	Councillor Glyn Jones, Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Business.	Cabinet	Neil Firth, Head of Service, Major Projects and Investment neil.firth@doncaster.gov.uk, Simon Rhodes, Project Manager simon.rhodes@doncaster.gov.uk	Doncaster Town Deal – Station Gateway Projects Doncaster and Stainforth Town Deals	Part exempt 3
2 Nov 2022	Customer Experience Strategy 2022-26	Councillor Jane Nightingale, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources	Cabinet	Julie Grant, Assistant Director of Customer Service and ICT julie.grant@doncaster.gov.uk		Open
16 Nov 2022	To approve the local area Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy	Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Young People	Cabinet	Martyn Owen martyn.owen@doncaster.gov.uk		Open

29 Nov 2022	Extension of current contract length for Inpatient Detoxification on behalf of the Doncaster led Yorkshire and the Humber Consortium of 11 local authorities from 1/01/23	Councillor Nigel Ball, Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning	Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure and Culture	Helen Conroy, Public Health Specialist Tel: 01302 734571 Helen.Conroy@doncaster.gov.uk		Open
30 Nov 2022	DCST Quarter 2 Finance and Performance	Councillor Rachael Blake, Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care, Communities and Equalities, Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Young People	Cabinet	Rebecca Wilshire Rebecca.Wilshire@dcstrust.co.uk, Rob Moore, Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary rob.moore@dcstrust.co.uk		Open
30 Nov 2022	Quarter 2 2022-23 Finance and Performance Report	Mayor Ros Jones, Councillor Phil Cole, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Trading Services	Cabinet	Matthew, Smith, Head of Financial Management Tel: 01302-737663 matthew.smith@doncaster.gov.uk		Open

30 Nov 2022	St Leger Homes Performance Report 2022/23 Quarter 2	Councillor Glyn Jones, Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Business.	Cabinet	Julie Crook Tel: 01302 862705		Open
30 Nov 2022	Doncaster Council's Housing Allocations Policy Review	Councillor Glyn Jones, Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Business.	Cabinet	Andrea Jarratt, Access and Allocations Service Manager Andrea.Jarratt@stlegerhomes.co.uk		Open
14 Dec 2022	To approve the new Doncaster Economic Strategy 2030	Councillor Glyn Jones, Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Business.	Cabinet	Allan Wiltshire, Head of Policy and Partnerships allan.wiltshire@doncaster.gov.uk		Open
18 Jan 2023	Approval of the Council Tax Base for 2023/24	Mayor Ros Jones	Cabinet	Alan Stoves, Head of Revenues and Benefits Tel: 01302 735585 Alan.stoves@doncaster.gov.uk		Open