

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 9TH JUNE, 2022

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 9TH JUNE, 2022 at 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Jane Kidd

Councillors Jake Kearsley, Gemma Cobby and Sarah Smith

Co-optees – Antoinette Drinkhill

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

- Andy Hood - Assistant Director for Practice Improvement (DCST)
- Helen Jones – Operational Manager (Youth Offending Service)
- Lee Golze – Assistant Director for Partnerships, Early Interventions & Localities

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Leanne Hempshall, Gary Stapleton and Bernadette Nesbit.	
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>YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2022/23</u>	
	The purpose of this report was to present the statutory Youth Justice Plan for 2022/23, covering the work of the Youth Offending Service	

(YOS) in Doncaster. Following a discussion the following areas were highlighted;

Feedback and Engagement with Young People – Members heard about the positive feedback provided by Young People around the Youth Justice Plan. In particular, Members were interested to hear about the success of home visits, which had continued following the pandemic and provided an opportunity for better engagement with both the young person and family in more comfortable surroundings and making them feel more supported through the process.

There was a brief outline of all the other services the young people involved in this process were also able to access as part of a means-led offer.

Challenges – It was recognised that there was still certain challenges such as Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Organised Crime, however, there were effective mechanisms in place. It was noted that the impact of the cost of living was still an unknown entity.

Reference was made to Early Help services in place to support families, it was felt essential that these were made available at an early stage in order to make a difference. It was considered that as a partnership, children and young people needed to be supported as early as possible to prevent them from offending.

Partnership Working - Members welcomed the robustness and effectiveness of partnership arrangements in place to support young people and deter them from entering the youth justice system. Reference was made to Doncaster young people being able to benefit from what was offered as part of a Council led offer although it was recognised that more could always be done.

Clarification was provided that South Yorkshire Police did not have the capacity to accept referrals from organisations. In comparison to other areas, it was recognised that Doncaster benefited from some highly effective resources.

Transfer of Doncaster Children's Services Trust to the Council – Members were pleased to hear about the potential benefits and opportunities from the Trust transferring over to the Council and through aligning with a larger organisation. It was noted that the biggest risk would be losing the opportunity to bid for funding as a smaller organisation (the Trust) compared to the Council, however, it was recognised that there would still be other funding streams. It was also stated that by bringing the Trust back would remove contractual barriers.

Members heard that staff were looking forward to returning to the Council and that from a Senior Leadership point of view the Trust and

the Council were working well together moving forward.

Supporting Young People into Education, Employment and Training Members were provided with assurances that there were strategies in place, to ensure that those leaving the youth justice system had opportunities to access employment, education and training. Members heard about what was in place, which included;

- Dedicated Pathways to Progression, which had been provided as part of the Sheffield City Regional ESF bid.
- That every child going through the Youth Justice System has the opportunity to access a Level 6 Careers Adviser.
- Access to a Careers Adviser up to 19 years of age.
- An education coordinator who advocates children who are excluded from school at the Inclusion Panel
- Dyslexia screening.
- An Alternative Learning Provision for Children, utilising an experiential learning model enabling children to be reintegrated back to school in 12 weeks.

It was commented that a NEET inspection during 2021 had provided positive results about the offer in Doncaster as whole. it was noted that there was nothing in place to track those children who go to university,

The Committee welcomed the dedicated resources in place and valuable offer available in Doncaster, which had been duly recognised.

Young People with Protected Characteristics - The Committee sought assurances that the Youth Offending Services (YOS) worked effectively with all young people including those with protected characteristics or from groups that may be perceived as hard to reach. The Committee welcomed the bespoke offer and was pleased to hear that efforts were being made to engage with those who were more difficult to engage with. Reference was made to how relationships were built with family and the value that this gave to the process.

Speech and Language Therapy in Schools - The Committee was provided with an update of progress of Speech and Language Therapists provision within schools. Reference was made to the challenges in resourcing this service (which was not under the control of the Trust) and that work was underway to strengthen the Early Help offer to support this.

EPIC - Members were pleased to hear about the positive impact of the work undertaken by EPIC, in particular the success of the EPIC young person's hub established in Frenchgate Centre during 2021. Members heard that in addition to being provided with an appropriate and comfortable setting, where young people can go without fear of conflict, it also provided opportunities to access other essential services. A Member requested that list of providers, similar to EPIC be circulated.

Reference was also made to funding constraints and the need to harness charities and smaller groups going forward.

Restorative Justice – Members were informed about the restorative justice system and learnt that although it would be offered to everyone, it did not always take place. It was commented that when done correctly, it could be very powerful. Reference was also made other forms including letters of apology.

Looked After Children - There was a brief discussion around the challenges of Looked After Children coming through the system. It was noted that they were more likely to be reported for a crime due to the number of professionals they come into contact with and structures they live within.

RESOLVED: That the draft Youth Justice Plan 2021/22, be approved