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## DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 20TH JULY, 2017

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 20TH JULY, 2017 at 10.00 AM

#### PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Kevin Rodgers

Councillors John Healy, Richard A Jones, Jane Kidd and David Nevett

Invitee: - Paul O'Brien

#### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Doncaster Council

Simon Wiles – Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Leanne Hornsby - Assistant Director, Commissioning and Business Development

Paul Thorpe - Quality and Service Improvement Manager

Patrick Birch - Programme Manager - Commissioning and Contracts

Peter Dale – Director of Regeneration of Environment

Louise Parker - Head of Service Strategy & Performance Unit Manager

Doncaster Children's Services Trust

Paul Moffatt - Chief Executive

Mark Douglas - Chief Operating Officer

Lee Yale-Helms - Interim Director of Finance

St. Leger Homes Doncaster

Paul Tanney - Chief Executive, St. Leger Homes Doncaster

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
	Apologies were received from Councillor Neil Gethin, Bev Chapman and John Mounsey	
2	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	

	None.	
3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest made.	
4	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u>	
	<p>The following public statement was made;</p> <p>“I am here today to give you a picture of life as a parent with a daughter who has a learning disability and to give you an idea of my daughter’s life under your direction.</p> <p>She is 24 years of age and has spent her learning years in special schools in DMBC.</p> <p>In 2010, we spent a great deal of fighting for her to go to a residential college in Grimsby to give her the skills to have an independent life.</p> <p>When she left linkage in 2013 DMBC did not have a plan to help her go into independent assistant living.</p> <p>Again after a battle with DMBC she got a placement in Thorne under the care of Mencap and Golden Lane Housing. This went ok until she was required to pay for her care out of her disability allowance with no warning that this had been put in place.</p> <p>DMBC charged her £130 per week for care and £240 per month for attending a day centre 3 days a week and she has had to contribute £110 per week to her house for food and bills. This left her a negative of £11 per week, which DMBC thought was ok for her to continue to live in that house. It got to the stage where she could no longer afford to live in supported living and she asked to come back to the family home to live.</p> <p>At present she would like to live in Hamilton Lodge which has independent flats and have professional staff on hand 24/7.</p> <p>DMBC will not let this happen because according to them, Hamilton lodge does not promote independence living because it’s a residential placement. This is not true as they are fantastic at promoting independence.</p> <p>Since 2013, she has had the total of 7 social workers, DMBC do not adhere to their own policy’s document in SEND, to quote ‘children and young people aged 0-25 and their families must be placed at the centre of all that we do. The way we listen, communicate, assess, plan, deliver and review the impact of the services and provision. Our vision is that parent’s young people get the support at the right time and feel</p>	

	<p>that they are listened to and exercise control’.</p> <p>They only believe that the placement is one that they support so that the person’s allowance goes straight to DMBC coffers”.</p> <p>Members commented that this statement had raised interesting points and suggested that further support was sought from Local Councillors to take up as case work. It was put forward that the details outlined in the statement would be forwarded to the Senior Officer and portfolio holder.</p> <p>It was felt that there may be further consideration of the relevant policy areas and Disability Living Allowance by the relevant Panel</p>	
5	<p><u>DONCASTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES TRUST LIMITED UPDATE REPORT.</u></p>	
	<p>A report and presentation was provided to the Committee which provided an update on the financial and operational strategy of the Doncaster Children’s Services Trust, following the presentation provided on the 15th February 2017. Updates provided as part of the discussion included: –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Financial Strategy</u> - Members were informed about a move towards a financial strategy and discussions taking place about what the future will look like. It was explained that part of the plan was to grow a model that will be able to generate new income streams. It was outlined that an Interim Director of Finance was in place to put together a future operating model which would also be sustainable. Members expressed their concern that there had been no permanent Finance Director in place for an organisation with such a large budget and number of staff. Members were assured that it was the Trust’s intentions to have a full-time Finance Director in place in the future. Members were informed how a significant amount of work was being undertaken to reduce demand, expenditure and costs whilst improving efficiency.</li> </ul> <p>Members were reminded that there was never a plan for the Trust to achieve more than a breakeven position. It was outlined that the Trust will need to negotiate a new contract or otherwise be assisted with issues such as capital to become more independent.</p> <p>In respect of the finance coming direct through the government, it was explained that this was not a current option but maybe a future one. It was explained that the Trust was not in a position to do that but it was recognised as an interesting concept.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Out of Area Placements</u> – In terms of cost pressures, it was recognised that out of area placements continued to be the single biggest challenge and reported that there were 34 out of area</li> </ul>	

placements as at the end of March 2018 (with single placements costing in the region of £250,000 per annum). It was recognised that a great deal of work needed to be undertaken to look at the needs of those 34 children and plans to bring them back.

A Member raised concerns over out of area placements and asked whether the Trust could ever reach zero number of placements and whether there would ever be enough services to achieve this. It was responded that a zero target would be too difficult to reach as some children could not simply remain in Doncaster due to personal circumstances. Also other children with complex needs would sometimes have to be placed outside of Doncaster in order to receive the right kind of support. It was noted that there was an expectation to reduce the numbers associated with the low to mid-teen age category.

Members were later informed that the strategy on the remodelled home resource in Doncaster had taken longer than expected with Amersall Road still not being open and therefore Ofsted was taking longer. It was noted that some children with particular needs can't be met locally and that the rate of placement had reduced significantly. Concern was shared that overspend was still relatively high and that the strategy should help to manage expenditure in Year 4 children to come to Amersall Road and save around £750,000 to £1 million.

- Independent Fostering Agencies – It was explained that there were variances in respect of Independent Fostering Agencies that needed to be taken in to account and managed appropriately.
- Funding Streams – Members were informed that work around utilising potential funding streams from health and education channels was ongoing.
- Early Assessments – Concern was raised about the delay in providing early help support for children and their families, sometimes running into several months. Members were informed that this delay was there when this function had previously been under the DMBC and had been inherited by the Trust. It was explained that following the transfer, there had been waiting lists with some cases delayed for up to several months. It was continued that additional resources had been put in place with an aim to clear the back-log by mid-August 2017 and that staff transferred were now receiving the training they needed.

Members were informed that a lot of work needed to be undertaken with partners to ensure there was a robust early help offer. It was acknowledged that the Trust was responsible for targeted support and that demand was always likely to outstrip resources. It was noted that if the Early Help offer was right, then there was going to

be less of a demand on statutory services. The Trust had not seen a reduction, partly as it hadn't worked as well as it should have, however, work was ongoing to improve this.

- Transition/18+ - A Member enquired whether there had been any thought to using the third and independent living sector for those young people who are over 16. Members were informed that there was a range of provision for some in-house support and lodging to help young adults transition to become more independent. The Trust stated that it could offer the same quality of support at around two thirds of the cost which was currently around £850 - £900 per week. It was explained that the profile was slightly different but work historically had not progressed. Regarding the 18+ service, it was explained that best practice would suggest that these children should be picked up much earlier (around 15 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>) and changes were being made to implement this approach.

It was advised that the spike in age profile meant that there were currently young people with challenging behaviour. It was commented that quality of care has been so poor in the past that those children had additional problems which meant more investment and resources were required e.g. therapeutic care.

- Staffing Issues - In respect of recruitment, Members were informed that new consultation around staff terms and conditions would commence this summer. This would look at whether the original proposals accepted by Council staff should be considered or rejected (the result of which may impact on funding). It was recognised that neighbouring authorities such as Rotherham and Barnsley pay their staff more than Doncaster. The Trust reported that it was managing its recruitment offer differently in Doncaster.

Secondly, concern was raised around an increase on physical violence on staff within Doncaster schools and academies. Members were informed that work was being undertaken closely with schools and partners that deliver low level mental health and that schools received support.

- Residential Homes – Clarity was sought as to why Tickhill Square home had reported an utilisation rate of 120%. It was explained that this home had been operating at full capacity and at short notice needed to take in an additional young person for a short period of time. It was explained that the accommodation was modified accordingly to enable this to happen for a short period of time.

It was requested that an updated report from the Trust alongside the Council's own action plan to be brought back to a future OSMC meeting

RESOLVED that the Committee notes the financial and operational

Senior  
Governance  
Officer

	strategy update of the Doncaster Children’s Services Trust.	
6	<u>FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT REPORT: 2016/17 QUARTER 4</u>	
	<p>The Committee considered the quarterly finance and performance report, with the following areas addressed by Directors or their representatives when responding to Members questions.</p> <p><b>Finance and Corporate Services</b></p> <p>The following issues were raised: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Overspends</u> - The Committee noted two significant overspends which included Regeneration and Environment at £2.8m and funding of the Children’s Trust at £1.5m.</li> <li>• <u>Sickness</u> - Regarding areas for improvement, concern was raised around sickness reported for the whole authority at 9.90 days against a target of 7.90 days (compared to the 2015-16 outturn figure of 9.11 days). It was explained that sickness had previously reduced after many years of improvements and reached close to the national average figure. It was reported that key areas of high sickness had been experienced within Regeneration and Housing as well as Adults and Communities. Members were informed that steps had been taken to revamp the approach and control taken at management team ensuring that staff were appropriately interviewed and attended Occupational Health. It was stated that the aim was near the national average.</li> <li>• <u>Direct Payments</u> – It was clarified that there were 162 new additional people who had taken this up and that the payment was being paid to employ staff. Members commented that it was good to see an increase. It was recognised that there was more work to be undertaken but that fewer people were expected to be seen in home care. It was also acknowledged that direct payments provided much more choice although a cultural issue still remained. It was reported that the market to buy from using direct payments needed further improvements and also that the community offer was being developed. Members were informed that the Council was nearing to becoming a “commissioning Council”.</li> <li>• <u>Internal Audit Recommendations</u> - concern was raised that all of the internal audit recommendations were red apart from Regeneration and Housing. It was reported that these represented small numbers and that there were some external factors that had affected them.</li> <li>• <u>Corporate Plan Updates Completed</u> – It was observed that this target under Learning and Opportunities Children and Young People was red with 29 out of 33 updates being completed. Members were</li> </ul>	

informed that the Council had not yet had the opportunity to meet with the Trust to challenge them on performance.

- Employment – It was noted that figures for those claiming benefits had come down significantly. It was expected that the figure will become similar to other parts in about 18 months.
- Business Rates – it was reported that there has been a fair amount of growth from budget rates although being from a low base. It was added that there was Hatfield Green Energy planned which would make a big difference to business rates.
- Assets Review - Members were informed that there were 46 buildings that would meet the core of the review and more work needed to be undertaken to dispose of them. It was explained that this was now in its implementation phase and would run for another 2 years when during this time asset disposal will be undertaken, then how can they use assets to take on board some activity.

### **Adults and Communities and Public Health**

The following issues were raised: -

- Admissions – It was reported that admissions for residential care were lower this year following significant changes that had been made within this area. Members discussed the benefits of re-enablement through services such as STEPS. It was explained that the Council was now working hard to ensure that the right solution is in place which is sustainable and maximising independence.
- Carers - In supporting carers, it was recognised that more could be done. Members were informed that a Joint Carers Strategy had been agreed and could be considered by the relevant scrutiny panel and to look at how effective it was.
- Direct Payments – Following the earlier discussion, Members were told that direct payments were not quite where it needed to be. Members were informed how the Council had raised the number of people using direct payments from 500 to over 700 already and that there was an action plan to reach 800 and over.

### **Children & Young People**

The following issues were raised: -

- Repeat Referrals To Social Care - It was reported that there were a number of referrals appropriate for social care being rejected from early intervention and repeat referrals which shouldn't be happening. This was believed to be due to an insufficient understanding of

thresholds across the children's partnership, where cases which had been 'stepped down' to Early Help'. It was stated that the system needed to be improved and more joined up.

- Percentage of Single Assessments completed within 45 days - Members were informed that this most assessments (around 70%) were at, or around, 50 days, with 20% one to three days overdue, where the 45 day target was not achieved. Pressures are exerted from the increasing number of assessments in the system. That said performance remained above benchmark comparators. The Trust has stated, when challenged, that it sets high standards for assessments and timeliness can suffer where case holders are required to revisit cases to improve quality. There is a management tracking system in place to ensure local monitoring and the new integrated 'Front Door' for contacts and referrals should improve the flow and management of assessments
- In respect of the Doncaster Children's Services Trust, Members in response to a question as to contract challenge were informed that there was an extensive and robust set of arrangements which Ofsted acknowledged went beyond contractual requirements and which comprised, monthly performance monitoring, quarterly joint finance and performance meetings, quarterly senior leadership monitoring meetings, Senior partnership Executive level Performance Accountability Board meetings, all of which had an agreed action plans with added reporting and oversight by the Children's Scrutiny panel
- Early Help Offer - It was reported that delivery of the Early Help offer was much better than previously recorded. Members were informed that it was essential to establish at an early stage that partners involved were clear where they needed to interact and contribute within the system.

In that sense, there was some development required in terms of widespread partnership understanding and engagement and so the Council would not necessarily accept the narrative previously expounded. It was felt that a newly established 'single Front Door' which integrated Early Help and Social Care management of contacts and screening should improve matters so that there were better management of cases and pathways to Early Help and Social Care, therefore care would be provided at the right level of intervention at the right time.

- Governance – It was outlined that there was a newly established high level Early Help strategy group which reported to the Children and Young people's Partnership Executive Group, which will as its focus, drive improvements in the delivery and engagement of the wider partnership. It was acknowledged that as a local authority we commission the contract with the Trust through the Secretary of



State, therefore, the Council is the responsible body to drive improvement both within the terms of the contract and more generally, across the children's partnership. The Council was also the lead statutory body for the wider children's partnership, which included shared partnership responsibility for delivery of and engagement with the overall Early Help offer, including schools, health visitors and school nursing and the changing role of children centres.

- Reference was made to the new Children and Young People Plan 2017 – 2020 which outlined the clear priorities of the Children and Young People's strategic partnership. It was explained that from September 2017, the partnership will have a more fit for purpose governance structure. And that senior partners with strategies and groups that were responsible for delivering relevant elements of the plan, will jointly work to deliver against those priorities and will in turn be held to account against those priorities and objectives within the plan.

### **Regeneration and Housing**

- Sickness – Members expressed their concern about the high level of sickness within the Regeneration and Housing Directorate. Assurances were provided that work was being undertaken to understand why this was happening. Members were informed that the majority of sickness was musculoskeletal with stress following closely behind. It was explained that some of the issues were around an ageing workforce operating in a manual environment where injuries were sustained. It was added that working practices were being taken into consideration to see how staff could be supported when ensuring that a physiotherapist was seen within days when an injury occurs (rather than weeks). Regarding stress, it was explained that work had been trialled for Managers to recognise signs at an earlier stage. Assurances were provided that steps were being undertaken to ensure that Managers were managing sickness appropriately. Concern was raised that there was less discretion used to manage sickness resulting in pressure being placed on staff.
- Employment - Members heard that due to a steady increase in Doncaster's employment rate since April 2013, Doncaster was currently experiencing an employment rate very close to its eleven year high. It was explained however, that since closing the gap significantly in 2015/16, the gap between the Doncaster and Yorkshire and Humber rate had increased since the last quarter.
- Development Opportunities – It was reported that there were more development opportunities at the Inland Port as part of DN7. Members were informed that there was a lot to be achieved through Sheffield City Region. Members were informed how work being

	<p>undertaken through the Sheffield City Region and Peel was out for tender for the support for a business case submission. It was explained that the business case will be strong and be able to start capturing market away from London. It was acknowledged that Doncaster has a number of benefits including a good land supply, location, skills levels and transport links.</p> <p>Members were informed that Doncaster was better than it has been for a number of years with a strong amount of growth. It was added that there had been a number of developments in the pipeline, with an indication that jobs were of a higher skills level supporting the economy. A Member enquired whether there was a measurement of jobs coming in and whether they were going to local people. The Director of Regeneration and Environment offered to provide those figures to Members.</p> <p>Members were informed that Doncaster in the future would continue with its current growth and also develop a new Economic Plan. It was explained that it was about undertaking different types of opportunities in improving the economy and making Doncaster more interactive for investors for the future and to develop in it as an economy with lots of strengths.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Chair and members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Panel note areas of performance and financial information;</p> <p>a) Note the write-offs of outstanding debt detailed in paragraph 50;  b) Note the virements approved by the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Executive and approve the virements over £0.5m for Cabinet, detailed in Appendix B;  c) Note the new additions to the Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix D.</p>	<p>Director of Regeneratio n and Environmen t</p>
7	<p><u>ST LEGER HOMES OF DONCASTER PERFORMANCE &amp; DELIVERY UPDATE: 2016/17 QUARTER FOUR</u></p>	
	<p>The Committee gave consideration to the St Leger Homes Doncaster (SLHD) Finance and Performance report for Quarter 4 and addressed the following areas:</p> <p><u>Areas Near to Target</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints - % of Service Failure and Dissatisfaction (24% against a target of 20%)</li> </ul> <p>It was recognised that St Leger Homes Doncaster was seeing more complaints that were justifiable where things could have been addressed quite easily. It was recognised that it was about delivering the sort of service that anyone would expect to receive.</p>	

- Scheduled Repairs – Promises Kept (99.45% - end of year target of 100%)

It was explained that the last quarter performed well with gas servicing 100% and that amber had been achieved through the impact of 39 scheduled repairs not being completed within the target timeframe.

- Days Lost Through Sickness per Full Time Equivalent (8.26 days – end of year target of 7.90 days)

It was explained that the top 3 categories for days lost through sickness included 1. Infections and Viruses, 2. Depression, Stress and Anxiety and finally 3. Musculoskeletal. Members were informed that there was a new health provider in place to give additional support and St Leger had agreed to sign up for the Workplace Wellbeing Charter.

#### Requiring Improvement

- Number of Households in Temporary Accommodation (25 End of year target of 10)

Members were informed that 25 households were in temporary accommodation at the end of Quarter 4 with a 34% significant increase in those presenting as homeless in the last 12 months up to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. It was explained that this had led to a change of how the use of temporary accommodation was targeted and the way information was provided and reported. It was finally explained that consideration was being provided creating a new model of service delivery through working with RDaSH and Adult Services to support people with complex needs. It was explained that the Council commissioned specialist services in silos, however, this cohort of people did not always fit into one of those silos.

- Rental income – Members were informed that Housing Management Services Teams were being restructured to move more resources onto the frontline to support those who have problems paying rent. There was a discussion around the issue of welfare reforms with a full rollout happening in October. It was explained that once universal credit had been fully rolled out there would be £20 million rental income involved that would have previously been received direct from the tenant.

It was explained that every tenant would receive rent straight into their own bank account (apart from with certain exceptions for an interim period) and that there were mechanisms in place to be able to take rent straight out of Universal Credits. It was explained that where a tenant was in arrears, St Leger would be able to apply to

receive the rent direct but as soon as the debt was cleared the rent money would go direct back to the tenant.

Members were informed that the rent reduction of 1% had removed around £23m out of the Housing Revenue Account over the next 4 years and as a result had slashed the planned development programme to build new homes. It was reported that St Leger Homes Doncaster had built in efficiencies for resources to be built into the front line. Members were also informed how the Council was changing systems such as by using the council direct debit system and moving to 'Anyday' direct debit system so that the money goes into the rent account that same day. It was stated that post 2020 there had been no decision as to what the rent model would be.

**RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee note the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution SLHD makes to supporting DMBC strategic priorities.