



Doncaster Council

To the Chair and Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY REVIEW AND EVALUATION 2017/18

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
The Mayor	All	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Committee is asked to consider the outcome of the evaluation undertaken by the Working Group during September 2017 to February 2018.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. The report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The Committee is asked to agree the following recommendations to Council:
 - i. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Panels are realigned to the Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) themes.
 - ii. That fixed Meetings in the Council Diary continue to be scheduled for OSMC, and the Panels that consider Health and Children and Young People's issues.
 - iii. That the Panels that currently include issues that fall within Regeneration and Housing and Community and Environment Scrutiny Panels schedule two fixed meetings in the Council Diary per year.
4. The Committee is asked to agree the following recommendations:
 - iv. That a more systematic review of the Forward Plan is undertaken by Scrutiny Members to ensure opportunity for timely pre decision scrutiny.
 - v. That links with Directorates remain through regular meetings with Directors or their Deputies, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service.
 - vi. That Review Work continues to remain a key feature of Overview and Scrutiny activity.

- vii. That training and identification of best practice Overview and Scrutiny continue to be undertaken.
- viii. That the Overview and Scrutiny Protocols be reviewed and updated.
- ix. That raising awareness of Overview and Scrutiny activities through social media and other mechanisms are undertaken where appropriate.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Regular review of the Overview and Scrutiny function ensures it remains relevant and is responding to important issues for citizens and the borough. The function helps support good governance through openness, transparency and accountability.

BACKGROUND

5. At its meeting on 30th January, 2014 Council agreed a number of changes to the Overview and Scrutiny function which sought to identify improvements and take account of best practise from leading Councils. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) agreed it would be timely to undertake a self-evaluation to consider the effectiveness of these changes during its 2017/18 work plan.
6. The following key changes were introduced in May 2014:
 - Disapplying political proportionality on OSMC and the standing Panels to support greater cross-party involvement and Member engagement;
 - That the membership of OSMC consist of eight Members (previously 11) and include the Chairs of the four standing Panels, with the Vice Chairs of the standing Panels substituting for Chairs at OSMC where they are unable to attend;
 - That nine elected members be appointed to each of the 4 standing Panels (previously 13 Members were appointed to 3 Panels);
 - That OSMC's role as a business committee be enhanced to co-ordinate the work of the Panels and flexibility to consider any issues (except Health Scrutiny where specific statutory provision exists); and
 - That the Panel structure be aligned to the current Directorate structure and include the establishment of a Health and Adult Social Care Panel that will incorporate the Council's statutory health Scrutiny function.
7. The working group has met a number of times, to consider current ways of working, confirming what scrutiny's role is, work programming, strengths and weaknesses. Additionally Members visited Rotherham Council to observe a scrutiny meeting and discuss how their function operates, collated information from a Member questionnaire and information provided by officers.
8. The outcome report detailing the recommendations and providing an overview of the review process is attached at Appendix A to this report.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9. The Committee is asked to agree the recommendations set out at paragraph 3. The alternative option is to take no action and disregard the proposed improvements and suggestions set out in the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

10. Supporting the recommendations set out in Appendix A provides an improved Overview and Scrutiny Function ensuring the Local Authority continues to provide a service delivering good governance, openness, transparency and accountability. In particular the proposed realignment of the function to the Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) will ensure the function is supporting the Council's key priorities. Prior to consideration by Council on 18th May, further liaison with Members will take place to identify which elements of the DGT themes are aligned to each Panel.
11. Recommendations i. – iii. Are decisions reserved for Full Council which is responsible for agreeing terms of reference for OSMC and the standing Panels, appointing Members to these bodies and setting dates for the Council diary.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

12.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better access to good fulfilling work• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish• Inward Investment	
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage	

	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>The recommendations support the Overview and Scrutiny function to hold decision makers to account, review performance and policy development through monitoring performance of the Council and external partners, services and reviewing issues outside the remit of the Council that have an impact on the residents of the Borough.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

13. To maximise the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function it is important that the function is relevant and is responding to important issues for citizens and the borough. The function helps support openness, transparency and accountability. Citizens are able to contribute to the work of Overview and Scrutiny by attending meetings or contributing to reviews. Failure to achieve this can reduce the overall impact of the function.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials HMP Date 16.3.18]

14. The Local Authority scrutiny function was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 as part of the new political management system and its regime is now governed by the Localism Act 2011. Its role is to scrutinise the executive by investigating their decisions and policies, issuing reports and recommendations where it identifies areas where improvements can be made. This review assists in ensuring scrutiny is effectively carrying out its responsibilities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials AT Date 15/03/18]

15. There are no specific financial implications attached to this report.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials MLV Date 21/03/18]

16. There are no specific HR implications related to the decisions contained within this report. However consideration should be given as to whether the proposed changes will have any impact on the staff who co-ordinate and support the committees referred to. Appropriate advice should be sought if it is considered that the changes could result in any impact on staff.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 16/03/18]

17. There are no specific technology implications in relation to this report. Guidance on the use of social media, together with relevant policies are available via the Intranet. The Communications and Marketing Team will also be able to provide further advice in relation to raising awareness of overview and scrutiny activities, as necessary.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RS Date 15/03/2018]

18. There are no direct health implications from this report. However the alignment of scrutiny and Doncaster Growing Together should maximise the chance of delivering corporate ambition and minimise the risks of duplication.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [CDR) 23rd February, 2018]

19. This report provides an overview of the Scrutiny evaluation and there are no significant equality implications associated with the report. Within Scrutiny's work programmes Overview and Scrutiny will give due consideration to the extent to which the Council has complied with its public equality duty and given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality for opportunity and foster good relations between different communities.

CONSULTATION

20. As part of the review consultation was undertaken with all Members, by way of questionnaire and the Leadership Management team, details of which are set out in appendix A.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

21. Scrutiny Review document appendix A.

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