

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 28TH JUNE, 2018

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 28TH JUNE, 2018 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Kevin Rodgers

Councillors John Healy, Neil Gethin, Jane Kidd, Andrea Robinson and David Nevett

Invitee: - Paul O'Brien  
Bernadette Nesbit

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

**DMBC: -**

Damian Allen – Director of People  
Steve Mawson - Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director of Finance  
Victor Joseph - Consultant in Public Health  
Tracey Harwood – Interim Assistant Director of Environment  
Dave Wilkinson - Assistant Director of Trading & Property Services

**St Leger Homes Doncaster: -**

Steven Waddington - Director of Housing Services

**Doncaster Children's Services Trust: -**

Marks Summers – Consultant - Court and Case Management Team  
Marcus Isman-Egal - Programme Manager - Youth Crime Prevention Service

		<u>ACTION</u>
2	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
	Apologies were submitted by Councillor Paul Wray.	
3	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	None	
4	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	

	Councillors Jane Kidd declared a nonpecuniary interest in Agenda Item No.5, by virtue of being employed by an association that provided services for those with disabilities.	
5	<u>MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 APRIL, 2018</u>	
	The minutes of the meetings held on 4th April, 2018 were agreed as a correct record.  RESOLVED that: The minutes be approved as a correct record.	
6	<u>A. ITEMS WHERE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS MAY NOT BE EXCLUDED.</u>	
	None	
7	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u>	
	There were no public statements made.	
8	<u>QUARTERLY FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE</u>	
	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was presented with the Finance and Performance Report for Quarter 1 2018/19 which provided an overview of progress made since the last report.</p> <p><u>Finance and Performance</u></p> <p>The Assistant Director of Finance was in attendance at the meeting and responded to key issues of concern raised within the report.</p> <p>It was explained that overall performance in Quarter 4 and throughout the year had been good although challenging at times. It was outlined that finances had been well managed with an overspend amounting to 0.5% of total spend. It was reported that at year-end, the Council overspent by £2.5m, a £1.3m reduction from the Quarter 3 forecast.</p> <p>It was stated that £2.8m National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) earmarked reserve was released to general reserves increasing the balance to £12.3m uncommitted reserves.</p> <p>It was recognised that the main reason for the Councils overspend was due to increased demands and pressures on Doncaster Children's Services Trust. It was outlined that Regeneration and Environment, had experienced an improved position in terms of overspend from Quarter 3 and that there had been a reasonable underspend in Corporate Resources, providing some balance. In terms of the Capital Programme there had been expenditure for 2017/18 of £101.7m</p>	

compared to a revised budget of £115.2m, most of which was general slippage in the programme.

In terms of capital receipts, it was explained that not as much had come in as thought. It was reported that there had been a shortfall of capital receipts of £1.3m, which was expected in 2018/19.

- In terms of housing, it was reported that the Council had delivered a further 280 Net Additional Homes built in Quarter 4 bringing the latest figure to 1,173 during the last 12 months.
- More people had been helped to remain at home.
- Local authority spend with local businesses - more was being undertaken with suppliers to use local chains and encourage local firms.
- It was added that overall staff sickness for the year-end stood at an average of 9 days per employee. It was reported that had been a reduction on the previous year but had not met the target due to a number of different reasons.

Uses of consultants – Members were informed that a requirement to develop better workforce planning had been looked at. It was recognised that there had been difficulties in recruiting to certain areas such as IT that necessitated specific expertise. It was shared that there was a desire to take this work forward and formulate recommendations.

Capital Receipts – It was outlined that long term effect on slippages would occur further down the line with most slippages to be seen in IT areas.

Doncaster Children’s Services Trust (DCST) – It was explained that the Council did not own the Trust and that future arrangements were being considered in order to gain greater control and influence.

In respect of recruitment to Senior Management Level, it was outlined that money had been being taken out of this area.

Members were reminded that the Council’s contractual limit was to provide 70% risk share contribution although it was in everyone’s interest to look after the Borough’s children. It was reported that the financial position of the Trust compared around mid-range to others. It was added that issues included increased demand and spend was being experienced across the country and would not be changing in the near future. It was explained that there was no evidence to support that having a Trust increased costs.

Members were assured that more was being undertaken to ensure that there was more transparency to develop a better working relationship with the Trust. An example was provided that there was now monthly monitoring in place. Concern was raised around the impact of future

projects on the budget. It was acknowledged that resources were in place to deliver those projects and there was a great deal of challenge built into the programme.

Members were also informed that work needed to be undertaken with Councillors and within the Council to identify priorities and the resources required to deliver plans around the Borough.

#### Doncaster Living/Doncaster Working

The Assistant Director of Trading and Property Services provided an update to the Committee, giving an overview of the Directorate's successes and any current concerns.

It was reported that the Directorate was performing well and that the majority of targets were being achieved, the following was highlighted to Members:-

- Improvement of £0.8m from Quarter 3 to Quarter 4 2017/18, a positive direction taking into consideration £340K additional cost associated with the snow related activities.
- Changes partly a result of tightening of budgetary control, re-enforcing accountability, minimising non-essential spend, more income than expected in highways third party works and utilities works on highways.
- Capital Receipts: -
  - a. Less than predicted, it was expected that at Quarter 3 2017/18 the shortfall was £4.5m however, at Quarter 4 it was £1.3m.
  - b. A surplus in 18/19 was expected and that there were plans to create a £5m strategic acquisition fund.
- Capital spend was £86.4m against a budget of £95.8. This was due to some delays in FARRRS/Carillion, DN7 and Herton Triangle due to initial issues securing tenants.
- It reported that sickness days had reduced at 8.5 days against a target of 9.5 days and that PDRs were now at 96% against a target of 95%.
- Recycling still exceeded target at Quarter 4 despite new contract issues and the normal lower levels of green waste at this time.
- Major planning applications were being processed within a 13 week timeframe at 94% against national target of 70% (including negotiated extension of time).
- Average wage had increased by 30p
- Fly-tipping had experienced a drop in performance of 83% against a target of 90% which would be looked into.
- That in 18/19, the Investment Level was £252m against a target of £170m Investment with plans in place for it to be even higher.
- Finally, in respect of internal audit, it was reported that there was one action outstanding in relation to waste system which would be resolved in the short term.

In terms of grass cutting, Members were informed that extra resources had been put in place to address existing issues. Also that 6 new staff had been recruited to work specifically on bereavement areas in response to significant complaints made regarding the upkeep of cemeteries.

Regarding apprentices, Members were assured that everything was being done to retain apprentices by working closely with unions and by employing apprentices. It was added that work was being undertaken with colleagues in HR and Finance to consider new funding streams.

In relation to spend on agency and additional workforce spend, this was reported as being above average. It was reported that more could be done to look ahead and recognise what the authority's priorities were and move forward.

It was recognised that agency staff were based largely on the front line in areas such as Adults Social Care (although there was a desire to push the figure down and develop a more stable workforce). It was commented that the task was challenging due to factors such as the quality of the market, sickness absence and agency rates which had to be traded off against local authority recruitment freezes whilst meeting service demands. Members were informed that 'Your Life Doncaster' was considering its workforce strategy and recognised that there was a need to embed this strategy across other service areas.

In terms of fleet management, it was added that there was a future report to consider how the Council's fleet could be made greener. It was explained that electric powered vehicles were expensive to purchase although significantly less expensive to maintain. It was continued that work was being done to access government grants available although there wasn't enough support to use such vehicles, for example, not enough electrical charging points available at present. It was also explained that the Councils current fleet included transit vans and there was no electric powered vehicle comparable with that type for around another four years. In line with the Councils new parking strategy, it was seen that there was a great deal being undertaken in this area.

#### Doncaster Caring

The Chair welcomed the Director of People and Victor Joseph (Public Health Consultant) to the meeting and invited them to update Members with regard to performance updates and key issues.

Members were informed that future pressures were being addressed accordingly and that performance was generally positive and on target.

In terms of Adult Social Care, Members were informed that more focus

was needed around making improvements to address an increasing number of challenges. It was reported that there had been a reduction in residential placements, an increase in Direct Payments, an increase in homecare (especially through the letting of CCASH projects) and with increased demands due to the new Deprivation of Liberty (DoLs) legislation (that had resulted in increased case work and additional care costs) and finally through S117 Mental Health placements. Members were assured that they would always be care led but also be aware of finances and were looking more towards integrated services and as part of Place Plan could be quite complexed.

In terms of direct payments, a Member enquired as to how many people with direct payments used the money to employ their own staff and what direction this was heading. The Director of People offered to provide this information following the meeting.

In respect of physical buildings, it was recognised that there were benefits of joined up thinking which could be better and could support the continuity of community buildings and therefore social investment as well as capital savings.

A comment was made in relation to statistical information shown within the Doncaster Growing Together framework around the lag of one or two years that existed behind certain indicators. In respect of the life expectancy graph, Members were offered details showing the differences between male and female and also more recent information on preventable deaths.

#### Doncaster Learning/Doncaster Caring

The Assistant Director of Commissioning and Business Development was in attendance at the meeting to provide the Committee with an update on issues within the Children and Young People Directorate.

Reference was made to the performance elements of the Trust and challenges attributed to absenteeism and exclusions. In respect of persistent absence stays in secondary schools, it was explained that this figure had flattened at odds in comparison to national figures during the last quarter. It was noted that the launch of an Attendance Strategy had been introduced in November 2017 which focused on working with those schools that were performing below the national average. Reference was made to the challenges faced around parental support and behaviour especially promoting good habits prior to secondary school. It was added that the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools and the Mayor were keen to launch the attendance campaign which would impact on more deprived groups.

It was recognised that high level absenteeism rates were linked with exclusions and that identified areas of focus which included leadership

Director of People

and quality of teaching. In respect of Children in Care, it was reported that one in four of secondary age were not in school and it was felt that there had been a breakdown in the nature of care settings. It was explained that Doncaster was performing better than the national average at 5.9 compared to 10.

Members were informed that the Youth Crime Prevention Team had undertaken work with other organisations, working tirelessly with people in care. Members were informed that concerns would be taken back to the Trust for a direct response on interventions. It was recognised that there was a significant amount of governance around this issue; this included the Children in Care Council and links to the Corporate Parenting Board where there was a regular challenge in place.

Residential Settings – Members were assured that there was a stronger grip on in-house fostering largely where poorer performance was being seen. It was explained that under the Corporate Parenting Board multi-agency partnership is a Virtual School Head teacher whose role it was to consider attendance and achievement outcomes (which had been validated as ‘good’).

Outcomes Framework – Reference was made to performance around the achievement of Level 3 qualification by the age of 19, Members questioned what the Council was doing to support young people and adults with Learning Disabilities into work and questioned how many people had been taken on as a lead to other companies. Members were informed that opportunities had been provided through day centres although they were not permanent positions. It was further explained that Entry to Employment Rates for Looked After Children indicated positive results. It was explained that part of the challenge was achieving entry to apprenticeships and therefore undertaking traineeships was a potential area to look at. It was added that internships and post 16 activity could be considered further.

Concern was raised about reductions in exclusions from schools and if there was a link to violence in schools. Members were told how efforts had been made to promote more inclusivity within schools, it was also emphasised that policies were in place to make exclusions dependent on behaviour. Members were informed that policies had been challenged where there had been an indication of possible excessive judgement. It was supported that schools did not retain pupils who had been violent and that policies dealing with exclusion were triggered at an early stage.

RESOLVED that

- i. the quarter 4 performance and financial information be noted; including;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changes to the Strategic Risks as detailed in paragraphs 39 to 41;</li> <li>• carry forwards approved by the Chief Financial Officer, detailed in Appendix A</li> <li>• virements approved by the Chief Financial Officer, Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder Corporate Resources, detailed in Appendix A</li> <li>• new additions to the Capital Programme, detailed in the Appendix A.</li> <li>• £0.28m funding approved for the Doncaster Children’s Services Trust for the remainder of the 2017/18 overspend</li> </ul>	
9	<p><u>SLHD PERFORMANCE &amp; DELIVERY UPDATE: 2017/18 QUARTER FOUR (Q4)</u></p>	
	<p>Members were presented with the Quarter 4 report for Performance and Delivery from St Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) which provided feedback on performance against Key Performance Indicators for 2017/18.</p> <p>Officers provided Members with any relevant updates on the issues contained within the report, and the Committee were invited to raise any areas of concern in relation to the performance of SLHD. The following issues were raised during the course of the discussions:-</p> <p><u>Green - Void Rent Loss – Percentage of rent loss through vacant dwellings</u> – Members were informed that performance in this area remained strong reducing to 0.78% which was the lowest it had ever been.</p> <p><u>Amber - Percentage of Current Rent Arrears against Annual Debit (within tolerance – amber).</u> It was reported the that since the introduction of Universal Credits, SLHD had seen an almost 50% increase in the number of tenants moving onto Universal Credits, with 220 a month moved over with, compared to the initial Department of Work and Pension (DWP) estimates of 150 per month. SLHD had also seen an increase in arrears for those tenants who have moved to Universal Credits, with the average level of increase in arrears is to £266. It was further added that although the overall level of current arrears had increased during 2017/18, SLHD had outperformed its benchmarking peers and that SLHD arrears increased by only 0.2% compared to the average increase of 0.5% across organisations in all other quartiles.</p> <p><u>Amber - Performance measure: Scheduled repairs, percentage of promises kept (within tolerance – amber)</u> - It was outlined that for the year as a whole, only 108 of the 10,823 jobs raised were not on target.</p> <p><u>Amber - Performance measure: Days Lost to Sickness per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) (within tolerance – amber)</u> - Members were informed</p>	



	<p>that year-end performance was 8.04 days lost per FTE, which was slightly higher than the target of 7.90 days, this was an improvement on the 8.26 days at the end of the previous year. It was noted that 2017/18 had seen the best performance since the ALMO was established.</p> <p><u>Red - Percentage of decisions made within statutory timescales (33 days) (below target – red)</u> - Members were informed that performance in Quarter 4 2017/18 had improved to 92%, meeting the 90% target, and improving the Quarter 3 2017/18 performance of 76%.</p> <p>It was explained that following the final guidance received regarding the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (which came into force on 3 April 2018), the legal framework had changed around statutory homelessness decision. It was added that a new measure had been agreed from April 2018, which was around the number of cases where a household was deemed statutory homeless and awarded a ‘full duty’, this was where there was a legal duty to secure accommodation. It was outlined that the target for 2018/19 was to see a reduction of approximately 10%.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion around the Home Office funded ‘Through The Gate’ Prisons resettlement service which was no longer in place. It was questioned whether the Council should look at funding something similar as it was felt it may save money down the line. It was recognised that this was not appropriate, and could result in the council picking up costs to provide services that other areas of public service had removed.</p> <p><u>Red - Percentage of Local Expenditure (below target – red)</u> - It was explained that this proved a challenging performance indicator as a great deal of work was undertaken in-house and that whilst work was undertaken to support local businesses (and the Doncaster Chamber to support local businesses tendering for SLHD work), a lot of the contracted work was above OJEU levels. It was explained that this impacted on local businesses ability to complete the work due to the nature of the contract, i.e. sprinkler installation works.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Committee note the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution SLHD makes to supporting DMBC strategic priorities.</p>	
10	<u>YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN</u>	
	<p>Members gave detailed consideration to the Youth Offending Service Plan in Doncaster for 2018/19 prior to deliberation by Cabinet and Full Council and confirmed their support of the Plan. An overview was provided on the background to the plan and performance during the year.</p>	

Members heard about the work that had been undertaken to address issues within the Borough and how positive impacts had been made within the service for children and young people affected. It was explained that performance was strong and had improved as indicated throughout the report. It was recognised that there were challenges around lags in the reporting of information but Members noted the steps taken in response that included live tracking.

There was a brief discussion around Doncaster's binary re-offending performance. It was explained that the latest rate of 30.4% was close to where it was for the same quarter during the previous year. It was explained that as cohorts were now measured quarterly rather than annual, the membership was much smaller leading to greater volatility in the rates from one cohort to the next. It was advised that further work needed to be done to look at the underlying trend although Doncaster's re-offending rate was consistently lower than the regional and national rates.

Members were pleased to hear how there was no young person at completion of an order who was without appropriate or suitable accommodation. It was also outlined that the team benefited from a very good Education, Employment or Training (EET) service, a range of Personal Advisers and dedicated Under 16 staff to support the young person accessing suitable education.

Members heard about the ongoing and positive impact of EPIC who worked with those young people who might have become first time entrants and EPIC often focused on more than one approach. The Committee was told how EPIC looked at cases where it was felt that there were no further options and ensured that the young person would be directed to the right resource. It was explained how work had been undertaken which included targeted action in youth crime hotspots, involved young people in a wide range of activities and engaged with communities and schools. The Panel found the report interesting and were pleased to hear how the work of EPIC was constantly evolving and that the team was always striving for more through its forward thinking and innovative work. For example, it was heard how that in relation to school exclusion, the team endeavoured to start with the young person at an earlier point before they reached that stage in the process.

In terms of other challenges on the horizon, Members were informed that more was being done to raise awareness about child criminal exploitation with professionals and also, that colleagues were developing a better understanding of issues, such as who was at risk. Members were told of the increasing problem in Doncaster of gangs recruiting young people with view to selling drugs.

In conclusion to the above, Members were told about the ongoing successes that had been experienced within the Youth Service and

	<p>how more resources were now being utilised upstream, achievements</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Committee note and support the work outlined in the Youth Justice Plan 17/18.</p>	
11	<p><u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN 2018/19</u></p>	
	<p>The Committee considered the Scrutiny Work Plan, noted the current position and work to be undertaken by the Committee and Panel's for the remainder of the 2017/18 Civic Year.</p> <p>RESOLVED that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2018/2019 work programme be approved.</li> <li>• The report and verbal update be noted</li> <li>• The Committee support further discussions regarding work addressing the use of consultants and agencies and to look at Value for Money and employee resource workplanning and development.</li> </ul>	