



# Doncaster Council

24<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

To the Mayor and Members of the Council

Overview and Scrutiny Update – May to December 2018

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Customer and Corporate Services	All	No

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report updates Council on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) and the four standing Overview and Scrutiny Panels for the period May to December 2018.

## EXEMPT REPORT

2. This report is not exempt.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That the Council note and comment on the work of the OSMC and the four standing Scrutiny Panels for the period May to December 2018.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Reviewing the activities of Overview and Scrutiny provides an opportunity to demonstrate to the public how the function has contributed to decision-making and the improvement of services.

## BACKGROUND

5. This report includes a summary of some of the key work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny during the current municipal year. The activities of OSMC and the standing Panels include holding decision makers to account, performance review, policy review and development and external scrutiny.

Work plans are agreed early in the municipal year and reviewed at each meeting to track progress and ensure they take account of emerging issues and future key decisions.

6. The membership of OSMC includes the Chairs of standing Panels and this seeks to ensure greater co-ordination of Overview and Scrutiny activity. The Committee meets approximately once a month to consider performance, pre-decision scrutiny, indepth/spotlight reviews undertaken by the Scrutiny Panels and areas of strategic importance. The Committee considers issues that cut across all Panels and Doncaster Growing Together themes.

7. The Overview and Scrutiny Panels are:-

**Children and Young People’s Panel (CYP)** – considers issues relating to improved outcomes for Children and Young People including Learning and Opportunities, services provided by Doncaster Children’s Services Trust and other areas undertaken by partners;

**Regeneration and Housing (R and H)** – considers issues relating to regeneration, economic development, strategic transport and housing;

**Community and Environment (C and E)** – considers neighbourhood issues, street scene and highways, community safety as well as environmental issues, and

**Health and Adult Social Care (HASC)** – considers issues that fall within the remit of Public Health Directorate, Adult social care and the NHS. The Chair represents the Authority on Regional Health Scrutiny bodies.

8. The Overview and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs meet regularly with the Mayor and respective Cabinet Members to ensure regular communication on portfolio issues and Overview and Scrutiny work plans.

### **Summary of Overview and Scrutiny activities**

9. This report provides a snapshot of some of the key work undertaken by OSMC and the Panels between May and December 2018 reflecting their alignment with the Doncaster Growing Together (DGT) Themes. The work of some of the Panels cuts across more than one DGT theme. A full account of the work undertaken by OSMC and the Panels is included on the Overview and Scrutiny work plan attached at Appendix A and detailed in the minutes of meetings which are available on the Council’s website.

### **Doncaster Living**

10. **Market Place Phase 1 project** – R and H Members received an update on progress with the Enterprise Market Place and noted the project was on time and on budget. Key areas considered included occupancy rates, market mix and developing the necessary transport links and accessibility.

11. **Waste and Recycling** – Members of C and E received a sixth monthly update on the new waste contract. Members sought to analyse its effectiveness by reviewing performance in a number of areas including the percentage of missed collections, new collection routes, technology required to operate each part of the collection and damage to the blue bin lids. The Panel was supportive of the roll out of the new contract and progress to date.
12. **Flood review** – this focused on improvements to flood management since 2007 when areas of Doncaster were subject to significant flooding. The C and E Panel received information from a number of partners on their activities including the Environment Agency, the Water Management Consortium and Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board, Yorkshire Water and the Coal Authority. It was recognised that many positive changes had been made to best manage water levels and reduce the impact of any future possible flooding. Members acknowledged that flooding could never be stopped completely but a number of mitigation measures were in place. The findings from the report will be presented to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for consideration.
13. **Tree Policy** – C and E Scrutiny Members gave consideration and support to the Tree Policy and Trees Risk Management Plan for Doncaster Council's Trees and welcomed the proactive approach to drive improvements in the health and safety of tree maintenance across the borough. A number of issues considered included canopy cover, replanting, trees on St Leger Homes land, tree roots growing across/into pavements. The Committee recommended that, investigation be undertaken into the impact of 5G installation following concern expressed that trees could be lost if communication operators had the right to remove them, if they wished.

### **Doncaster Caring**

14. There is a strong focus on the Caring theme through the work undertaken by the HASC and CYP Panel, some of the key areas considered include:
15. **Corporate Parenting** – Members of the CYP Panel met with children in care to consider how they prepare for living independently. Issues discussed included, changing negative perceptions around young care leavers, managing budgets effectively, opportunities for training and employment and making the right choice of where to live. All these issues were important in helping young people start a secure and safe transition into adulthood and independent living. One of the key issues raised was the fear of being alone and not having support mechanisms in place. This honest and helpful insight will be used to assist the Panel in identifying further issues to consider as part of its ongoing work plan.
16. **Doncaster Youth Council** – CYP Members have actively engaged with Youth Councillors and received an update on their priorities and how they are being addressed. Consideration was given to “Curriculum for Life” a UK Youth Parliament National Campaign to help develop young people’s political

knowledge, improved education on sex and relationships, cultural awareness, community cohesion, finance skills and sustainable living. This was accepted as being a priority locally as well as nationally for young people. It was suggested that, through the Secondary Heads meeting, an audit be undertaken around personal social health and education to identify what was specifically being covered. Members were pleased that young people confirmed they felt they had a voice and their views were being taken seriously.

17. **Doncaster Children's Trust Board (DCTB) Annual Report.** The Chair of the DCTB presented this to the CYP Panel to provide Members with an opportunity to consider the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in Doncaster. Specific issues considered as part of this scrutiny included referrals at the front door, early help offer, ensuring families were more resilient, child protection conferences that agree a child or young person's care package, mental health, unaccompanied asylum seeking children and modern slavery.
18. **Doncaster Children's Services Trust** – The Trust regularly attends the CYP and OSMC. This provides an opportunity for Members to review the operational and financial performance challenge undertaken by the Director of People as well as asking questions directly to the Trust. Discussions have taken place on the impact of other local authorities wishing to place children in care in the Doncaster Borough. It was confirmed that clear and robust protocols were in place for health assessments on the children, which were being used to challenge authorities if children and young people were not receiving the support they required locally.
19. **Doncaster's Strategic Health and Social Care Plans** – HASC Members received updates on the Council's Adults Health and Wellbeing Transformation Programme and the Doncaster Place Plan. Members have addressed operational, governance and resource arrangements that were in place to implement transformation, alternative care models and the sustainability of Community led support by creating a strength-based support practice model for a whole family approach. The Panel will continue to monitor progress of this programme.
20. **Health Protection Assurance Annual Report 2017/18** – HASC Members questioned and sought assurance on the following areas from the report that aided health and well-being improvement:
  - innovative work being undertaken with GP practices as part of the health inequalities work;
  - public health working closely with the NHS on immunisation programmes including the uptake of the MMR and flu vaccinations;
  - Doncaster smoking rates being 19%, noting they were reducing, but expressed concern with issues relating to passive smoking; and
  - the importance of encouraging residents to cycle and walk short journeys.

21. **Mental Health** – the HASC Panel agreed to take this issue as its theme for the year. Whilst receiving a detailed overview of the position in Doncaster including mental health in children and young people, the Panel appreciated that society was making a breakthrough around mental health and mental illness with the stigma being slowly removed. The areas that will be considered in more detail throughout the year are suicide prevention, dementia and mental health in veterans.
22. **All Age Carers Charter** - A presentation was provided to HASC around the All Age Carers' Charter that would enable Team Doncaster to publicly show its commitment to carers. The Panel welcomed the positive work and recommended that the "Young Carers ID Card" once successfully rolled out, be considered for use in the workplace for employees who are carers. It also recommended that Headteachers sign up to the Doncaster Carers Charter and those young carers with parents who did not speak English (and therefore needed to act as translators) are included within the spectrum of the All Age Charter.

### **Doncaster Working**

23. **Doncaster Inclusive Growth Strategy** was considered by R and H, the key areas included:
  - **Opportunities** – Members were pleased with the broad range of infrastructure proposals and projects in place, for example, new links with Castleford and Leeds, which could open up job opportunities for people in the borough who live nearer neighbouring authorities.
  - **Wage rates** – Job security and wage rates were explored by Members. Discussions focused on building a local economy that provided greater security of employment with the opportunity to progress to higher paid positions through specialist areas, for example logistics. Members supported the development of a separate strategy to address its development for Doncaster to succeed.
  - **Transport** – Members looked at the development of the Borough's outlying towns, particularly where a large number of houses were being built and expressed concern that there were transport restrictions and limited work opportunities to support the growth. Members were assured that this issue was being considered through local connectivity and will continue to review this in future.
  - **Enterprise Market Place** - The Panel considered proposals for the Enterprise Market place and the future operating model of the Markets. Members sought further information on the future market mix, occupancy rates and transport and accessibility. Members supported ongoing developments as a means of regenerating and developing the town centre and will receive further updates as the initiative develops further.

## **Doncaster Learning**

24. **Learning provision and organisation** – The CYP Panel considered the effective delivery of high quality learning provision in response to local pressures and demand for learning places across Doncaster. As part of the discussion around school exclusions particular attention was given to the level of support for children and young people who were dealing with complex family behaviours. Members also learnt that attendance/exclusion policies were varied across the school spectrum but supported ongoing proactive mechanisms to address this issue.
25. **Education Attainment and Skills in Doncaster** - Members of the CYP Panel received its annual provisional data following SATS, GCSE's and 'A' Levels with further information due for consideration later in the year. This provided an opportunity to consider the improvements made by schools in the Borough.
26. The Panel also received progress with the Education and Skills thematic programme. It was noted that stakeholder engagement had increased to offer greater flexibility and maximum impact and that activity was being agreed on a rolling programme rather than on an annual basis.
27. **Youth Council** – There has been regular engagement with the Youth Council over the course of the year. This has given the Panel a valuable insight in hearing first-hand the views and experiences of young people. The CYP Panel supported the "Takeover Challenge" meeting that puts children and young people into real-life decision-making positions in organisations, to gain a valuable insight and gain experience of a workplace. Members from the Youth Parliament provided a further update on the annual Make Your Mark consultation, Doncaster's priorities were identified as being Mental Health and End Knife Crime.
28. **Attendance Strategy** - The CYP Panel was provided with an update of the Attendance Strategy and Members heard how it was strongly correlated with the work of the Social Mobility Opportunity Area in relation to connected issues such as school exclusion and the narrowing of gaps in outcomes between groups of young people. The discussion considered areas such as home-schooling, full time exclusions and engagement with schools, Academies and Trusts.

## **Connected Council**

29. **Corporate health** - OSMC continues to review quarterly performance and finance management of the Council and St Leger Homes of Doncaster to identify the extent to which the Council and its key partners are operating within resources and delivering value for money. This is a key role for the Committee and supports the Council's performance monitoring arrangements, assists the Committee's role in supporting the budget process and helps identify future work plan issues.

30. **Annual Complaints and Compliments Report** - this is an important document for raising awareness of the types and volumes of complaints, identifying trends, communicating lessons learned and service improvements and has provided Members with an understanding of customer perceptions of Council services.
31. **Policy Framework** - A number of Statutory Plans that form part of the Council's policy framework are considered and supported by Scrutiny prior to adoption by Council. This provides an opportunity for Scrutiny Members to feed in any views and comments prior to the decision being taken. These plans cut across the Doncaster Growing Together themes and during the reporting period the following plans and strategies have been considered; the Children and Young People's Plan, Statement of Licensing Policy 2019 – Gambling Act 2005 the Community Safety Strategy and Youth Justice Plan.
32. **Brexit** – this Scrutiny led session was held to keep all Members informed of the possible impact of a Deal or No Deal Brexit for the Borough. This issue cross cuts all themes and a detailed presentation instigated a focused discussion on, the economy, business confidence, the Council as well as other more general issues. Further updates will be provided as this matter progresses.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

33. There are no specific options to consider within this report as it provides Council an opportunity to review the activities undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny over the period May to December 2018.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

34. Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 23 b) requires the Chair of OSMC to take a half yearly update report to Full Council to provide an overview of the work being undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny.

## **IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES**

35. The Overview and Scrutiny function has the potential to impact upon all of the Council's key objectives by holding decision makers to account, reviewing performance and policy development through robust recommendations, 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.

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

36. To maximise the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function it is important that the work plan is manageable. Failure to achieve this can reduce the overall impact of the function. National research has identified that over ambitious work plans that include too many items are a common cause of frustration for Scrutiny Members as they fail to achieve any

outcomes. The Overview and Scrutiny work plan will continue to be reviewed at each ordinary meeting of OSMC and officers will advise on the capacity available to undertake any additional work.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [SRF Date: 21.12.18]**

37. There are no specific legal implications relating to this report.
38. The Constitution requires OSMC to report to Council at least twice per year to ensure there is accountability and transparency of its activities.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (VJB Date: 21.12.18)**

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

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES (RH Date: 21.12.2018)**

40. There are no specific HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

#### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (PW Date: 21.12.18)**

41. There are no specific technology implications in relation to this update report.

#### **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS (RS Date: 21.12.18)**

42. All areas of the committee's work plan can impact on health and it is important that the health implications of each item are considered separately given that 20% of what contributes to health is from clinical care, 30% from healthy behaviours, 40% from socio-economic factors and 10% from the built environment. Within its programme of work, Overview and Scrutiny will need to ensure it is also able to review how the Council and partners addresses health inequalities within its policies and programmes and ensure that these do not widen inequalities.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS (CR Date: 20.12.18)**

43. This report provides an overview on the work programme undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny and there are no significant equality implications associated with the report. Within its programme of work Overview and Scrutiny gives 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 of opportunity and foster good relations between different communities.

#### **CONSULTATION**

44. The Chairs of OSMC and Scrutiny Panels have been consulted in respect of feedback on the progress against work plans.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

45. Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan 2018/19 and minutes of Overview and Scrutiny meetings.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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