

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2018

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2018 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Kevin Rodgers

Councillors Neil Gethin, Jane Kidd, Andrea Robinson and Paul Wray

Co-optees –

Invitee: -

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Healy, Bev Chapman and Richard A Jones and

		<u>ACTION</u>
22	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	Councillor Kidd declared an interest during agenda item number 6 due to her employment with Live Inclusive.	
23	<u>MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 2ND NOVEMBER, 2018</u>	
	<u>RESOLVED</u> that the minutes of the meetings held on 2nd November, 2019, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	
24	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u>	
	There were no public statements made at the meeting.	
25	<u>2018-19 QUARTER 2 FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE</u>	

IMPROVEMENT REPORT AND DELIVERING FOR DONCASTER'
BOOKLET

Debbie Hogg Director of Corporate Resources introduced the report informing Members that performance overall was positive with 78% of Service Standards being Green or Amber and 82% of the Outcome Framework Performance indicators being Green or Amber.

Steve Mawson, Chief Finance Officer and Assistant Director of Financial Services updated on the overall financial position at Quarter 2, which was a projected £400k, overspend. £10m one off funding, including £6m additional funding agreed by Cabinet on 16th October, 2018, to improve the Children's Trust financial position, had been allocated to reach this position, which was an improvement on the Quarter 1 outturn figure. It was emphasised that the use of one of funding was not a sustainable approach to meeting the future budget gap.

Connected Council

Debbie Hogg identified the following highlights from Corporate Services identified in the Connected Council theme.

- Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) currently exceed target
- Spend has reduced on agency workers.
- Sickness was slightly below target at 9.11 days against a target of 8.50 days.
- The Council's overall collection rate was positive and targets for processing new housing benefit and Council Tax support applications were being exceeded.

One of the key challenges was to improve the number of initial online interactions with customers to improve both customer experience and efficiency.

Members were invited to ask questions and the following issues were raised:

Reference was made to the Chief Financial Officer's concerns detailed in the report about the ongoing budget pressures, impact on the medium term financial strategy, key risks to achieving a balanced budget and the actions in place to address these.

The Committee was informed that increased demand on social care services continued to be a significant pressure on the Council's budget. One off grant funding had been made available to reduce the current overspend but it was difficult to predict with any certainty the level of resources required to meet future demand. Using one off funding to balance the budget was not a sustainable strategy moving forward. Reference was made to the Better Care Fund and Improved Better

Care Fund, which at times were being used to support mainstream services rather than supporting transformation costs.

The Committee asked if the level of reserves remained adequate. It was reported that most reserves were allocated for future spend. Non-earmarked reserves currently stood at around £12.1m. This was available for unforeseen future expenditure. It was reported there is no statutory minimum level of reserves but the Council assesses key risks to identify the adequacy of its reserves.

Members sought clarity on the impact of the £7.3m shortfall on the capital budget. It was reported that not achieving asset sales in the current financial year would mean that delivery of capital schemes would slip into future years. There had been a significant switch between the projections at Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 and further work would be undertaken to ensure more realistic timeframes were in place when developing the programme.

The Committee enquired how the slippage on the capital programme would impact on invest to save schemes. It was reported that the Council was waiting for some significant grants from the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority but these would have limited effect on the revenue budget. Ensuring previous investment in ICT systems to provide efficiencies by reducing customer contacts and improve system functionality. This would require further education of users to ensure there was a channel shift to more online processes.

The Committee identified the heat map highlighting strategic risks was not consistently presented in the body of the report and in the Appendix. It was agreed this would be reviewed and amended for consistency in future.

The Committee sought clarity on thresholds used to identify RAG ratings for Days lost through sickness per Full Time Equivalent for the Council and St Leger Homes Doncaster (SLHD). The report identified that SLHD was performing at 92% against its target and was identified as "Red" whereas the Council was 93% against its target and identified as "Amber".

The Committee was informed that the Council works closely with its partners to encourage a greater alignment of processes in its approach to performance monitoring and discussions were ongoing between the Council and SLHD to ensure a consistent approach for measuring common performance indicators.

The Committee recommended a consistent approach across partnership organisations be put in place for recording Performance Indicators.

Doncaster Working

Peter Dale Director of Regeneration and Environment identified some of the key highlights and challenges contained within the report relating to the Working and Living themes:

The delivery of the capital programme would continue to support the regeneration and economic viability of the borough. The Committee was provided with an update on the Unity Project at Junction 5 of the M18 to develop a link road that would improve access and promote jobs and housing.

There was a projected overspend in markets due to vacancies in market stalls.

Job growth and employment rates in the Borough were increasing and employment in knowledge intensive hi tech-manufacturing industries increased to 4.8% from a 2016 figure of 3.9%. In response to further information, it was reported that this measure was identified as an important indicator as it included high skilled high paid jobs that help stimulate the local economy and provide further opportunities through supply chain growth.

Members asked about relationships between schools, education providers and businesses to ensure awareness of current and future job opportunities in the Borough. It was reported that there are strong links with the Chamber and learning providers such as Doncaster College. This helps ensure courses can be developed to meet future skills and employment requirements.

Members asked about the opportunities for young people in care and with special needs to access employment and apprenticeships. The Committee identified that approximately 87% of children in care do not access sixth form or university and requested further information on measures in place to address this.

It was reported there was a partnership approach to identifying the needs of care leavers and disadvantaged groups and aligning them to future jobs. One of the priorities within the Opportunity Area is looking at pathways to employment for disadvantaged groups. This has resulted in the creation of a careers hub working with schools to develop a sustainable approach. The Council also worked with an alliance of providers to provide meaningful experiences of work opportunities for young people from disadvantaged groups.

The Committee enquired how the Council would influence above inflation wages to promote growth and encourage greater spend in the local economy. Members were informed that work was ongoing with partners and businesses to encourage inward investment in Doncaster generally but also targeting opportunities in higher skilled jobs such as

knowledge intensive or high tech manufacturing.

Members asked if there was any monitoring of people on disability benefit who were accessing work. It was agreed this information would be forwarded to Members following the meeting.

Doncaster Living

New additional homes delivered by the end of quarter 2 (628) was expected to exceed the 2018/19 target of 920.

Other areas performing well included recycling, processing of planning applications, street cleaning and highways. Fly tipping incidents investigated and removed within 5 days had seen a significant reduction against target (74%) against a target of 85%.

In response to the Committee's request for information on underperformance on fly tipping, it was reported that there had been long standing fly tipping issues that had resulted in a targeted approach in five specific areas. A partnership approach to working with communities in those areas was in place to encourage changes in behaviours and attitudes to improve the local environment and reduce the resources allocated to those areas in future.

Doncaster Caring

Damian Allen provided an overview of Adult Health and Social Care stating that the adequacy of funding to meet increased demand remained a key challenge for the service particularly around supporting independent living and reducing the number of clients in residential care. Concerns also remained in respect of performance against a 28-day completion for Adult Social care assessments.

The Committee sought further information on the pressure and blockages around people transferring to their own home following adult social care assessments. Members were informed that clients are required to be medically fit to be discharged to remain in their own homes failure to meet this criteria can result in additional safety concerns and cost pressures. There was a focus on reviewing the duration of the stay and discussions with health colleagues to deploy winter monies to support re-ablement and assessments. It was reported that further work was required to map the customer journey to improve efficiency and a seamless process to support clients moving from residential care back in to their own homes.

Members sought details on the number of people with learning disabilities in work. The Committee was informed that the target was 6.7% and current performance was at 15.5%.

In acknowledging the reduction in the number of delayed discharges

Members enquired whether this had been over resourced to achieve this improvement. Members were informed that there was a financial inducement to improve this, as it was an earmarked area within the Improved Better Care Fund. If performance was not at a satisfactory level this could lead to a loss of funding. This funding was an important element in ensuring basic services were delivered.

In terms of the Outcomes Framework, the Committee questioned how outcomes with no aspirational targets could be classed as “Green” on the RAG rating. The Committee was informed the rating related to the direction of travel and further work would be undertaken to populate the targets consistently where necessary.

Doncaster Learning

Damian Allen provided an overview of issues in respect of Children’s Services highlighting improvements that had been made in exam results at Key Stages 1 and 2 and at A-level and informed Committee that Doncaster was closing the gap nationally. Reading would continue to be a key area for improvement across the Borough.

Members were informed that in respect of children in need, depression and anxiety ranked highly as issues of concern amongst young people.

A further challenge for the authority was to reduce persistent absenteeism and fixed term exclusions in secondary schools. It was reported this was high amongst disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Plans were in place to seek funding opportunities and to create and develop an inclusion charter and promote good attendance. Further measures would also include a pro-active attendance campaign to reward and promote 100% attendance and emphasise to parents the importance of good attendance.

The Committee was informed there was a £350k overspend on school transport and an all age transport review would give consideration to this issue and promote more independent travel.

In respect of additional payments to agency workers it was noted that spend had reduced although it was still a high-risk area and sustained actions were needed to address this further. The Committee was informed that there was a reduction strategy in place to reduce the number of agency workers and the overall staffing structure was now more stable. Members were informed that the SCYP Panel would be considering Performance of the Doncaster Children’s Trust at its meeting on 11th December 2018.

Members enquired about the role of schools in reviewing exclusions. It was reported that training Governors sitting on exclusion Panels was important and 45% of those children going to exclusion Panels remained in schools on alternative provision. The Director explained

	<p>that budget pressures put additional constraints on schools to ensure resources were available to provide the necessary professional support. Headteachers were regularly challenged over exclusion rates and there was a recognition of the challenges faced by schools in ensuring the correct professional help was sought within existing budgets.</p> <p>The Committee sought clarification on whether there was an increase or decline in achievement within academies. The Director reported that the authority was engaging with the regional School's Commissioner and there was a regular cycle of meetings with the Multi Academy Trusts to challenge performance of schools. The Committee discussed the need for encouraging transparency in the performance information published by Academies. The Committee was informed a Headteacher's summit on the 24th January, 2019 would be considering performance information published within each school's admissions statement to ensure greater transparency.</p> <p>It was identified that 52% of pupils at secondary level have access to good or outstanding education the Committee sought assurances that Academies were putting measures in place to ensure this figure increased. It was reported that there was variation between the standards within the numerous academies and where there had been no recent Ofsted inspection the Council would undertake its own assessment however, no formal process existed. It was reported that exam results for 2018 were pleasing and overall showed an improvement.</p> <p>The Chair thanked those present for their contribution and responding to the issues raised by Members.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Committee receive and review the Quarter 2 performance and financial information; including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the changes to the Strategic Risks as detailed in paragraphs 48 to 50; • the new additions to the Capital Programme, detailed in the Appendix A – Finance Profile; and • the new fee/charges detailed in paragraph 45; and 2) That the Council continue to work with its partners to ensure a consistent and timely approach to recording and reporting performance information. 	
26	<u>ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING</u>	
	<u>RESOLVED</u> that the meeting stand adjourned for a period of five minutes.	

27	<u>RECONVENING OF MEETING</u>	
	The Meeting reconvened.	
28	<u>SLHD PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY UPDATE: 2018/19 QUARTER TWO (Q2)</u>	
	<p>Steve Waddington, Director of Housing services St Leger Homes Doncaster (SLHD) summarised key areas of performance detailed in the report, identifying improvement in the percentage of rent loss through vacant dwellings and the average number of days to re let standard properties. The Committee was informed one of the key challenges moving forward was the impact on rent arrears resulting from the roll out of Universal Credit. For some tenants one Universal Credit payment would replace up to six different benefits previously paid at different times. A key issue for tenants was understanding the importance of financial management and effective budgeting and SLHD were providing support for budget management to those effected by these changes.</p> <p>It was reported that £9m of rents, which had previously been paid directly to SLHD, would now be paid to 3000 tenants, collecting these rents was a significant challenge for SLHD.</p> <p>It was reported that reducing sickness absence also remained a challenge. Stress was identified as the most common reason for absence, both work and non-work related. In response to a question, it was agreed that the percentage breakdown of the three main reasons for sickness would be emailed to members following the meeting.</p> <p>In comparing the RAG ratings used for SLHD, Members identified that this should be consistent with the system used by the Council. It was reported that the HR system measured and monitored sickness in a uniformed way.</p> <p>Members enquired why there was no target for the “number of households placed in bed and breakfast accommodation” as this had risen from the Quarter 1 outturn. Members also enquired if there was a measure of control that could be exercised particularly when considering the implications for larger families in Bed and breakfasts. It was reported there had been a significant increase during the summer when levels of rough sleeping had also increased. The Committee was informed that it was difficult to set targets for this indicator and was a difficult issue to manage due to the complex lives of those involved. Work was ongoing with partners to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping but there were a number of factors and issues that affected this such as domestic violence and numbers of children involved. Whilst bed and breakfast accommodation was not considered ideal, it was a preferred solution to rough sleeping and homelessness.</p>	

	<p>Members enquired about provision of housing for veterans and sought information on the Homes for Heroes Scheme. It was reported that this scheme had been implemented by the Charity and not SLHD. Efforts were being made to ensure support was being made available to veterans where appropriate.</p> <p>In respect of rent arrears, it was reported that this tended to decline in November and December as residents were preparing for Christmas. SLHD would continue to support residents to improve performance around paying rent.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Steve Waddington for his attendance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>RESOLVED</u> That the Committee note the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution SLHD makes to supporting DMBC strategic priorities</p>	
29	<p><u>COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18</u></p>	
	<p>Julie Grant Assistant Director presented the report and informed Members that the Council would now present an Annual Report to cover all complaints and compliments including Children and Adult Social Care, which had previously been reported separately.</p> <p>Members were informed that complaints and compliments provided a useful source of information in delivering Council Services. It was reported that in future the Annual Report would be presented earlier in the year and would look to include further reports from partners including SLHD.</p> <p>The Committee supported the monitoring of complaints to help inform the delivery of services. The Committee was informed that further work would be undertaken to consider capturing and learning from complaints that cross cut a number of services. Members also referred to the increase of on line services as a means of capturing more accurate information relating to complaints.</p> <p>The Committee thanked Julie Grant for her attendance.</p>	

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee receive both the Doncaster Council and Doncaster Children's Services Trust annual complaints and compliment reports for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018;
- 2) the intention to consolidate the corporate and adult social care complaint procedures be noted by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee; and
- 3) the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee note the intention to improve the monitoring of how complaints inform service improvement