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DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2019

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2019 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Kevin Rodgers

Councillors John Healy, Neil Gethin, Richard A Jones, Jane Kidd, Andrea Robinson and Paul Wray

Invitee: - Paul O'Brien (GMB)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Other Councillors;

Councillor David Nevett

Doncaster Children's Services Trust;

Robert Moore - Director of Corporate Resources and Company Secretary

DMBC;

Debbie Hogg - Director of Corporate Resources

Damian Allen – Director of People – (Children & Young People & Adult Social Care)

Rupert Suckling – Director of Public Health

Peter Dale – Director of Regeneration and Environment

Steve Mawson - Chief Financial Officer & Assistant Director of Finance

Patrick Birch - Strategic Lead for Adults Transformation

Allan Wiltshire - Head of Policy and Partnerships

		<u>ACTION</u>
7	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
	There were no apologies for absence made.	
8	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	A declaration of interest was made by Councillor Jane Kidd by virtue of	

	her being employed by a voluntary sector project undertaking Mental Health evaluation work.	
9	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	A declaration of interest was made by Councillor Jane Kidd by virtue of being employed by a voluntary sector project undertaking Mental Health evaluation work.	
10	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u>	
	There were no public statements made.	
11	<u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION OF THE MAYOR'S BUDGET PROPOSALS 2019/20-2022/23</u>	
	<p>The purpose of this report was for the Committee to consider the Mayor's draft Budget proposals 2019/2020 and develop a formal response. The Committee's response would enable the Mayor to take account of these when presenting her proposals to Council on 4th March 2019.</p> <p>Highlights presented to the Committee included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional money into Adults and Social Care to address budget pressures. • Increased pressures in Children Social Care resulting in £6m additional money provided 2018/19. • An unbalanced budget for 2020/2021 showing a £13m gap. <p>Clarification was sort around Appendix J 'Detailed Budget' on page 144 of the Cabinet report. It was explained that this had been introduced to provide the breakdown of the budget plan by Heads of Service to demonstrate on an incremental basis what was changing and what the impact would be.</p> <p>Concern was raised around the significant amount of savings of approximately £7 million, to be made in adult social care and children services. It was continued that although the Council was looking for additional savings in social care, stability was paramount.</p> <p>It was recognised that the budget in Children's Services had been rebased in order to reach base position and steps were being taken to ensure that robust plans were in place. It was recognised that there had been a slight reduction in Looked After Children although this area had the potential to increase over the long term.</p> <p>Concern was raised around the impact of savings on jobs and services provided. Members were told that there was an aim to deliver high level goals through the Mayor and strategic plans through Doncaster</p>	

Growing Together (DGT) Doncaster Learning and Doncaster Caring themes

Members were informed that the Council was making the best use of resources within Adult Social Care, had made significant investments of around £12m and had an awareness about the wider objectives. It was commented that more would like to be invested in areas such as direct payments and extra care.

It was outlined that budget pressures were being faced in residential places and homecare. It was stated that within homecare there was an opportunity to make use of assistive technology and benefit from a community-based input. Members were told about a major retendering of RDaSH residential homes, which would be implemented in July 2019 and result in financial and service benefits.

Members were reminded of how steps had been taken to develop a more robust transformation plan within adult's social care and that there was now a revised plan with four different system drivers. It was added that in terms of customer experiences and demand that further work needed to be undertaken to look at the front door. Concern was raised whether the Council would be able to sustain the services and the vision considering the 5% rise in budget around social care.

It was explained that a peer review from Leeds showed that positive signs of improvement had been made. That quality of children social care was now reported as being good, however, a CQC judgement of Adults Social Care was not as positive. It was noted that there was a drive to improve practices, to choose appropriate practice models and start addressing statutory assessments and high care packages.

It was outlined that it would not be possible to develop a long-term plan as there were no base figures going forward and a number of areas were still unknown for 2020/21 such as the settlement, waiting for the spending review and business rates. Reference was also made to the delayed Social Care Green Paper that included options for future funding. It was hoped that after next year the Council would be able to return to a 4-year settlement.

It was acknowledged that there was a significant amount of one-off money that had been used to support the base budget. It was recognised that the cost of rising contracts and growing demand had created a number challenges for the Council.

Early intervention and outcome for residents - It was commented that earlier intervention and community led support worked well. It was reported that day opportunities was a positive example of what could be achieved. It was explained that it was about how we spend the community pot to achieve the best outcomes.

Job Losses - Concern was raised around the proposed number of job losses and Members were assured that all possible steps would be taken. These steps included reviewing vacant posts, offering Voluntary Early Retirement or Voluntary Redundancy and finally, compulsory redundancies would only be taken as the last course of action. It was commented that the figure was estimated on the high side and would be reduced if possible. Members were informed that appropriate consultation would be undertaken with union representatives and affected staff groups. It was commented by the union invitee that 78 Full Time Equivalent (F.T.Es.) could result in an even higher number of people affected than the number presented (as they may not be all in full time posts). Concern was raised about the impact that job losses would have on the workforce such as deprivation faced by those employees affected.

Concern was raised by the union invitee that there were more agency staff employed than the number of the proposed FTE posts to be reduced. It was responded that agency staff had been recruited to help manage the business and used to provide resources on a short and long-term basis. It was commented that estimate methodology needed to be reviewed as well as the level of need around temporary staff. The Director of People clarified that agency staff had been used to recruit frontline staff and to undertake improvement work that could generate further opportunities.

The Director of People noted that the Council understood its services and systems more and that it had not previously understood the impact of demand. It was noted that Doncaster needed to start looking at a whole system approach.

Children in Care - Concern was raised regarding the escalating need moving up the care ladder of those coming through the system transitioning from children services. It was commented that there was an understanding about where costs had arisen as result of increases in demand. Members were provided with assurances that Doncaster Council were as prepared as other authorities in addressing such issues and were making critical decisions on a daily basis as well as taking into consideration the financial element.

Public Health Grant Reductions – Concern was raised around the reduction of the Public Health Grant. It was explained that since Public Health had moved over to the Council in 2013, they had inherited a set of commissioning responsibilities alongside a public health grant that is now around £26m. It was added that the role of the Public Health team was maintain Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) as the team's role was to help people live for as long as possible but as healthily as possible.

A breakdown was provided on how the grant was applied, the strategy behind it and the key outcomes involved. A number of contracts had received small percentage reductions in year such as school nursing,

children's health visiting, substance misuse and sexual health services. It was explained that if nothing was done, then the public health grant would be overspent next year and with possible further potential reductions, different options would need to be considered.

Members were informed that the Public Health team were considering what the future delivery model might look like particularly for substance misuse services. It was explained that there was the potential to negotiate with providers. In addition, health services for most vulnerable and those who needed them, could be better targeted and could allow a reduction in financial investment.

It was noted that the lack of national guidance on the future of the public health grant from April 2020, placed a risk on future public health activity. Members were informed that the grant reduction of £0.63m for 2019/20 had been confirmed. It was commented that this reduction will exhaust the public health reserve and meant that further options needed to be developed for how substance misuse services and children's public health services were commissioned. An example was provided in respect of substance misuse where of the 1600 individuals in treatment a number had been in treatment for as long as 15 years. It was explained that there was the potential for new service models to provide proportionate support depending on an individuals need.

Mental Health Services - A Member raised concern that there were a number of people in need of mental health support when there was a significant lack of mental health services. It was questioned what influence the Council had on the budget for mental health services and how would it affect the Councils own services.

It was explained that the budget for those areas rested with health colleagues jointly agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and that there was a NHS Long-Term Plan in motion. Members were reminded that there had been a recent announcement that the NHS was uniting with schools and colleges in 25 areas across England which included Doncaster, to provide expert mental health support to pupils. This formed part of the Government's ambitious plans to transform children and young people's mental health through the NHS Long-Term Plan.

Members were also told that the Mental Health Prevention Concordat would be returning to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Concern was raised about the number of adults with complex needs that included mental health issues as this would add further pressures in this area. Members were informed that work was being undertaken with partners such as RDaSH, to provide the necessary support.

Concern was also raised about the number of Looked After Children who had mental health problems.

SEN Transport Demand Pressure - A Councillor raised concern around transport within children services and how this was being impacted by Special Educational Needs (SEN) demand pressures. It was reported that there was an overspend in this area of £250k for 2018/2019. Members were informed that this area needed to be reviewed and look at the possibility of additional funding in order for it to meet sufficient need. It was explained that additional money was put into the Passenger Transport to reflect the annual increase of £10k as well as other one off costs

It was explained that this was one element of the strategic transport review. That consideration needed to be taken of the whole ethos including what the Council's approach was and having a clear mandate about maintaining quality and efficiency of how that can be done. It was added that good practice was taking place within neighbouring authorities.

The Committee was told that there was currently a retendering exercise taking place and that consultation was taking place with affected parties. It was noted that this would coincide with outcomes and recommendations of the strategic review.

Council Tax Receipts - It was reported that the figures had slipped to 95% for a number of reasons. Members were informed that Doncaster Council was in a better position in comparison to other authorities and continued to support those on benefits. It was explained that rather than pursuing long-term debt, the Council was focusing on retrieving money in-year as this proved to be a more efficient approach.

Regeneration and Environment - It was questioned whether the budget had presented any risks to delivering its programme due to budget cuts. It was recognised that there would always be challenges resulting from budget reductions, and savings may need to be found. An example was used of Streetscene that had considered different ways of delivering its service and had achieved savings as well as being able to deliver better quality and more modern services through smart lighting. One area highlighted as a potential area of challenge was highways, which it was stated could be made sustainable short-term but would need further consideration for the long-term.

Brexit – Members recognised that there was a level of uncertainty around Brexit and contingency bearing in mind pressures around Adult Social Care and Children Services.

Delivery of the Corporate Plan - Assurances were provided that through time taken to go through the budget and with development planning, the Council had the resources to meet what had been set out in the Corporate Plan.

Risk Management - Reference was made to the Risk Management

	<p>Strategy outlined in the report that underpinned and would support the delivery of those proposed savings. It was outlined that risks included controlling demand, the delivery of Council tax and base, all which could impact on future years and reserves.</p> <p>Reserves – It was recognised that although adequate reserves had been maintained they were being gradually being used. It was recognised that the use of one-off reserves was not a sustainable solution</p> <p>Assets – It was explained that there was a programme in place to maximise assets (a number of which were buildings). That over a 3-year period, efforts had been made to rationalise assets to ensure that the Council was not holding onto those that were no longer used. It was added that there was also a programme to ensure that those assets provided a return that at least covered their costs. It was reported that as a result, significant savings of around £4.5 million had been achieved and this approach would be continued to review performance of each asset and maximise income.</p> <p>RESOLVED;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. That the Mayor’s budget draft proposals be accepted and the Chair undertakes to provide a formal written response. ii. That assets be considered as part of the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel draft workplan for 2019/20. 	
12	<p><u>CORPORATE PLAN 2019-20</u></p>	
	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considered the updated 2019/20 Corporate Plan.</p> <p>It was explained that the current Corporate Plan runs out at the end of 2018/19 and that an updated 2018/19 Corporate Plan was required to provide clear direction for the work of the Council for the next year. It was added that the new Plan brings together agreed priorities in the one document, that were already shaping how the Council work and summarises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s contribution over the next year to the Doncaster Growing Together (DGT). • How the Council will ensure it has the capacity to deliver DGT transformational priorities and quality services day in, day out. <p>It was explained that the Corporate Plan was framed around the four DGT priority themes (Working, Learning, Living and Caring) and the crosscutting ‘Connected Council’ theme.</p>	

A brief outline gave information about the new additions and changes to the plan. Members provided their support to the plan and made the following comments.

The Committee stressed the importance of highlighting and promoting the notable successes in the document, achieved from pathways created as a result of the Corporate Plan. Members were reminded of the purpose of the Annual Report and the efforts being made to communicate those achievements.

The following was raised around the **Doncaster Learning** theme - **How we want to make life better for residents - Pupil attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged young people is improved.**

Concern was raised around the progress being made within this area and reference to the term 'disadvantaged young people' as part of the above statement. The Committee was informed that the Council undertook a corporate responsibility for the Looked After Children indicator around the attendance of Children in Need (that included all categories of Children in Need).

Members were informed that although performance in this area had improved, Doncaster currently performed less well in comparison to its statistical neighbours. Members were reminded about the positive and targeted work being undertaken to monitor, challenge and address this issue. The Committee acknowledged these positive actions and how those schools were developing and improving as a result.

There was a brief discussion around attendance and inclusion and what was being undertaken to address those issues. It was recognised that the Councils limited resources and best endeavours needed to be applied in the right way and that positive outcomes were starting to be seen.

The Committee stressed the importance of reaching the objectives in the Corporate Plan in partnership with the voluntary sector and questioned the support available to enable them to have a voice. Members were informed that this featured within the **Five Imperatives (1. Harnessing community strengths, collaboration and assets, particularly to enable more improvements in well-being to be delivered by communities)** and that it was set out early in the Plan, as it was considered as a key issue that cross-cut across all areas.

Reference was made to the Health Implications as outlined in the Corporate Plan covering report and the importance of how interventions and preventative measures allowed local authorities to play its part in creating health and addressing unequal patterns of illness.

Finally, it was commented that the Glossary was a useful addition to

	<p>the plan.</p> <p>Reference was made to the reporting and monitoring of armed forces progress.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Committee supported the Plan and the Chair undertakes to provide a formal written response.</p>	
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