



# Doncaster Council

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20<sup>th</sup> January, 2022

To the Mayor and Members of the Council

Overview and Scrutiny Update – May to December 2021

## 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 2021.

## 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 2021.

## 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 ordinary OSMC and Panel 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, the budget and policy framework, pre-decision scrutiny, in-depth/spotlight reviews undertaken by the Scrutiny Panels and areas of strategic importance.
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 2021. A full account of the work undertaken by OSMC and the Panels is included on the Overview and Scrutiny work plan, which can be accessed through the following link <https://doncaster.moderngov.co.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13289> and minutes of meetings, which are available on the Council's website.
10. Twenty three new Councillors were elected in May 2021 and as a result, the Chairs, Vice-Chairs and memberships of OSMC and the Panels has changed significantly since last year. New Members have all received an induction on the role of Scrutiny and received ongoing support in terms of work planning, adding value, questioning skills and understanding their role. OSMC and Panels are bedding in well with a mix of experienced and new Members and all have developed work programmes. Importantly OSMC and the Panels have all held a number of meetings and have engaged with the public, partners, officers and Executive Members.

## Prosperous and Connected

11. Policy Framework - A number of Statutory Plans are considered by the OSMC and Panels prior to their adoption by full Council, this provides an opportunity for Scrutiny Members to feed in any views and comments. It also requires the Executive to respond to any specific comments and recommendations put forward by Overview and Scrutiny. These plans cut across the Doncaster Delivering Together themes and during the reporting period the following plans and strategies have been considered and supported:
  - Youth Justice Plan;
  - Local Plan;
  - Doncaster Delivering Together (Borough Strategy 2030);
  - Statement of Licensing Policy;
  - Community Safety Strategy; and
  - Domestic Abuse Strategy.
12. Areas highlighted through discussion will be used as a basis for further work by the Panels, for example, the Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel at its Crime and Disorder meeting in February 2022, will address the demands and delivery of the Community Safety Strategy.

### Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

13. OSMC continues to review quarterly performance and financial management of the Council, St Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) and Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST). This is a key role for the Committee and supports the Council's performance management arrangements by reviewing the extent to which the Council and its key partners are operating within resources and delivering value for money. It is also used as a means of identifying future work plan issues. In particular the Committee has focused on the impact of Covid on service delivery and the long-term performance implications for important front line services, including support for Domestic Violence, Waste Collection and Fly Tipping.
14. Members acknowledged the potential risks in relation to the budget, particularly relating to the unprecedented number of children being referred to Children's services, the collection and payment of business rates, Council Tax and fees and charges. With regard to performance, the Committee seeks clarity on the actions in place to bring about improvements to key performance and service issues. The Committee has also considered how key partners such as Doncaster Children's Services Trust and St Leger Homes of Doncaster work together to address cross cutting issues which impact on the delivery of a range of services e.g. the EU exit, fuel poverty etc. In reviewing the impact of COVID on social housing and improving value for money, the Committee has sought assurances around pro-active ways of assessing SLHD properties to ensure they can be quickly re-let once they have been vacated, thereby reducing the number of voids.
15. Localities – OSMC received a general update on the proposals for the Localities

Model and the associated governance arrangements. The Committee has considered the role of the Councillor within the governance structure and the role of Directors as leads for geographical areas (North, South, East and West) how communication will work between the different 'tiers' within each locality, funding streams to support the work and areas of best practice. There will be an opportunity to consider further progress at a meeting of the Committee in March 2022 prior to the Locality Plans being presented to Cabinet in March 2022.

16. 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. It has provided Members with an understanding of customer perceptions of Council services, St Leger Homes, Doncaster Children's Services Trust and Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust. The report also enables Councillors to understand the extent to which service complaints impact on performance detailed within the quarterly performance and finance meeting.

#### Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Panel

17. Delivery of the Management of Doncaster Markets –Members received an update on the progress with the Delivery of the Management of Doncaster Markets. Members welcomed the future development plans for the market as well as the impact on the regeneration of the town centre.

### **Safe and Resilient**

#### Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

18. Commissioning – The Committee was provided with an overview and agreed to focus on commissioning services for people who suffered with drug and alcohol abuse. As part of the Committee's consideration, a meeting was held with service users, where good practice and service gaps were considered. The service users provided a massive insight into the lived experience, difficulties they faced but more importantly the positive outcomes through support they had received. Going forward, the Committee will meet with partners to address key questions highlighted from discussions with service users.

#### The Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel

19. Flood Planning Preparation – Over recent years the Panel has undertaken reviews into the effects of flooding across the Borough. As part of its overview role, Members were provided with an update on the work carried out by the Council's Flood Risk Team, the Local Authority's winter readiness arrangements and borough's overall flood risk. The challenges faced in delivering flood alleviation schemes, including funding projects, were also addressed. The Panel will continue to monitor the position moving forward.
20. Sustainability / Environmental Strategy – the issues addressed by Members related to communication and engagement, the Council's fleet, biodiversity lost as part of new developments, tree planting targets and energy co-operatives.

The Panel acknowledged the 111 environmental actions which helped reinforce the enormity and complexity of the issue. To focus its efforts more effectively, the Panel will focus on a small number of key areas over the coming year.

21. Social Inclusion Alliance – the Panel received an update on the Alliance, that comprises of around 60 organisations that raise awareness of the scale of social isolation and loneliness and provides community support within Doncaster. Following the Panel’s initial consideration in early 2019, Members were informed that based on the measure of sustainability and support from local voluntary groups, communities and faith groups, that the work had been deemed a success, particularly during the lockdown. It was recognised that more work was required in relation to raising awareness about the positive work undertaken.

#### The Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Panel

22. Town centre economy – The Panel has continued to undertake a watching brief around town centre issues, particularly the impact of Covid-19 and changing socio economic demands on the town centre.
23. Social housing post Covid easing restrictions – The Panel was presented with a report relating to homelessness which outlined the duty to provide temporary accommodation to certain prescribed groups, namely those with dependent children or deemed to be vulnerable. The position following the Covid Lockdown was recognised and the Panel wished to highlight the good practice in Doncaster, achieved through partnership working. It was recognised that the Complex Lives Alliance, pre-Covid, had made a positive impact that had continued throughout the pandemic.
24. Regeneration – Members reviewed the broader context of the Urban Masterplan, how it had been developed and delivered and new proposals moving forward. The immediate challenges faced were recognised with the importance of focusing on the urgent needs of the Town Centre and its businesses. Discussion also focused on Doncaster’s Town Deal, the Waterdale area and Levelling up fund. The Panel will continue to review and spotlight these issues as part of its ongoing work plan.

#### Health and Adult Social Care Panel

25. Asset Based Community Development and Well Doncaster – Members addressed European funding, learning from the past and the success of working with the third sector, locality working and communication with communities. The Panel noted the information provided would help inform areas of the Scrutiny Work plan throughout the year.

### **Healthy and Compassionate**

#### Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel

26. Changes to the NHS working (Integrated Care System (ICS) White Paper) and potential impacts – Members were provided with an outline of the changes to

how the NHS operated in England and how the CCG's (Clinical Commissioning Groups) would become part of the ICS and possible impacts on local provision.

27. It was noted that the landscape was changing regularly and proposals were subject to Parliamentary approval. One area of concern was the focus on equality, but with the absence of a national target, it was the responsibility of "the place" to set ambitions to meet this. The proposals created a greater opportunity to place more emphasis on prevention work than it would through commissioning or contracting models. It was agreed that Scrutiny would continue to closely monitor the issue.
28. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) – The Panel received the Annual Report providing intelligence on the health and wellbeing of Doncaster and its communities. The report highlighted areas of work delivered and next steps. The information provided would be used to continue shaping the Scrutiny work Plan.
29. Winter Strategy - The Panel was provided with a presentation from the Assistant Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing and Deputy Director of Strategy & Delivery, NHS Doncaster CCG. The information focused on the Winter Planning Context and Approach to Winter Planning/Managing Winter. It was reported that there was a well-established system in Doncaster through joint planning undertaken across health and social care involving partners from both the public and private sector. The following issues were raised during consideration; Support/Care Package for supporting social care staff, catch-up work/waiting times reassessments, financial assessments, bed and care capacity, prevention, accessibility/take-up of Covid booster vaccines and communication.
30. Update from Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals - An annual update from the Chief Executive of Doncaster Royal Infirmary on a range of strategic issues was presented including future aspirations, challenges and impacts. Members considered a number of topics including staff welfare and sickness, mandatory Covid vaccinations for staff, meeting cancer targets, waiting times for the provision of assessments, ambulance care, Emergency Departments, mental health care and finally, suicides amongst young men. It was recommended that as part of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel Workplan 2020/21 that there be a future update on mental health and suicide.

#### Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

31. Children's Social Care – the Panel focused on early help as part of its Safeguarding themed report, particularly impacts during lock down. Some of the areas addressed included the number of referrals, partners refilling their substantive roles following easing of Covid restrictions, family support during lockdown and communication following early help referrals. It was agreed that the Panel would undertake further work on early help referrals, seeking the opinions of headteachers.
32. Doncaster Children's Trust – The CYP Panel was able to meet the representatives from the Trust, Council's Young Advisors and the Youth

Councillors to gain an understanding of how the service operated. Presentations on priorities and work undertaken were received from representatives of the Youth Parliament, Youth Council, Young Advisers and Care Leavers, which addressed the following;

- Make your Mark Results & Drug Awareness
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Local Offer for Care Leavers

33. This positive engagement will assist the Panel moving forward in capturing the views of young people and developing their understanding of how they are impacted by the delivery of services.
34. The Panel also received an overview of upcoming policies that would require its input.

### **Skilled and Creative**

#### Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

35. Education and Skills in Doncaster – The Panel considered developments in Education and Skills during the academic year 2020-2021 and further developments during the Autumn Term 2021. This included the Education and Skills Strategy 2030 and the development of a Talent and Innovation Eco-system, school attendance, developments in Speech and Language Therapy and finally, the continuing work to further develop good inclusion practices within schools and reduce exclusions (including developments in alternative provision). The Panel supported the work being undertaken within the strategy and development of the Talent and Innovation Eco-system. In terms of children's health issues including mental health and Speech and Language Therapy, the Panel requested that a further meeting be held to focus on those areas.

### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

36. There are no specific options to consider within this report as it provides the Council an opportunity to review the activities undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny over the period May to December 2021.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

37. 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**

38. 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**

39. 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 [NC Date: 4/1/22]**

40. In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 23 b the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is required to take a half yearly update report to Full Council, to provide an overview of the work being undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny and progress against any priorities set out in the Annual Report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (MS Date: 14.12.21)**

- 41 There are no specific financial implications attached to this report.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES (SH Date: 07.12.21)**

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

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (PW 15/12/21)**

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

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS (RS Date 08/12/2021)**

44. 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: 01.12.21)**

45. 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**

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

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

47. Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan 2021/22 and minutes of Overview and Scrutiny meetings.

## **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

OSMC – Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

CYP – Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

HASC – Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel

R and H – Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Panel

C and E – Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel

JNSA – Joint Needs Strategic Assessment

CCG – Clinical Commissioning Group

ICS – Integrated Care System

DDT – Doncaster Delivering Together

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