

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 24TH MARCH, 2016

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 24TH MARCH, 2016 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor John Mounsey
Vice Chair – Charlie Hogarth

Councillors Jane Cox, Rachel Hodson and Kevin Rodgers.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Ros Jones and Councillor David Nevett.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Cooke and Jane Kidd.

| | | <u>ACTION</u> |
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| 6 | <u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u> | |
| | There were no declarations made at the meeting. | |
| 7 | <u>MINUTES FROM THE MEETINGS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 12TH JANUARY AND 11TH FEBRUARY, 2016</u> | |
| | <u>RESOLVED</u> that the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee held on 12th January and 11th February, 2016, be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair. | |
| 8 | <u>ACCEPTANCE OF URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS</u> | |
| | The Chair reported that in accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, he was accepting the following item of urgent business in Part 1 which was not included on the Agenda for consideration at the meeting:- 'SLHD Performance and Delivery Update: 2015/16 Quarter Three' | |

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| | <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5 of the Council's Constitution, under Section 100 (B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair accept the report titled 'SLHD performance and Delivery Update: 2015/16 Quarter 3 for consideration by the Committee at the end of the agenda.</p> | |
| 9 | <p><u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u></p> | |
| | <p>There were no Public Statements made at the meeting.</p> | |
| 10 | <p><u>FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT REPORT: 2015/16 QUARTER 3</u></p> | |
| | <p>The Chair welcomed Mayor Ros Jones and Officers to the meeting and invited Officers to address the Committee with regard to any new information, and address any queries in terms of budget and performance.</p> <p>The report before the Committee provided an update with regard to Finance and Performance Improvement for Quarter 3 of 2015/16, and the report aimed to give a clear overview of the financial position of the Council. The report provided progress made with regard to the Corporate Plan objectives and the Council Budget and informed the Committee that an overspend of £2.0 m was currently projected. Members noted that the challenge to deliver savings would get continually harder and these needed to be delivered in order to achieve a sustainable budget going forward into 2016/17.</p> <p><u>Adults, Health and Well-Being</u></p> <p>The Director of Public Health, Dr Rupert Suckling, and the Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Kim Curry, were in attendance at the meeting and provided updates to the Committee with regard to any performance and budget issues.</p> <p>Members raised a number of queries with regard to obesity and how the changes to this service would impact on young people. It was reported that the service that was being removed focused on young people and was in actual fact ineffective, and the money would be better spent refocusing in different areas. Members noted that work would be done on the Adult Obesity Service, with a view to getting more people through this service successfully, encouraging increased use of leisure centres and sporting facilities, along with further investment in schools to improve the level of physical education currently provided and get children moving more. The Director of Public Health also informed Members that school nurses would be put back into schools in an attempt to focus on health inequalities and problems as they manifested themselves and directly address obesity, giving children a better chance from a young age.</p> | |

Queries were raised with regard to drug misuse, and an explanation with regard to the percentages quoted was requested. Members were informed that 1500 people in Doncaster were currently being treated for drug misuse, and of these, 9%, left and successfully did not come back. In terms of alcohol, 50% of those seeking help with alcohol problems were successful in not returning for help.

Concerns were voiced regarding NHS Health Checks as this appeared to be underperforming. Members were informed that this was a very difficult area to target, as it was difficult to engage with men of a certain age who were resistant to the programme. However work was being done with local pharmacists in order to address this and encourage engagement.

In terms of Direct Payments, Members queried how this was working. Officers stated that this was undergoing a full end-to-end review, and it was hoped that this would start to be rolled out in September, 2016. It was a very different system that would be in use, but would look to be a lot more flexible in terms of ensuring that peoples care needs were met. The Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing informed the Committee, that they would work very closely with people in order to ensure that people fully understood how to access and utilise Direct Payments properly. The Mayor reiterated the comments made and stated that this was a journey, and the ultimate aim was to provide people with the best care possible for as long as possible, whilst remaining independent in their own homes.

Members queried what was being done with regard to overspends in the Directorate, as it was imperative that a strategy was in place and any problems were being addressed. The Committee noted that the biggest cause of the overspend was the overuse of residential places. More stringent requirement had been put into place and it was hoped that the budget would be back on track for the next financial year. With regard to the current £4.7m overspend, this was now already in the system and could not be changed. Focus would now be placed on utilising services effectively and ensuring that there wasn't misuse of residential care which ultimately cost money.

There was concern voiced with regard to the removal of a large proportion of the Public Health Budget as this would surely mean that a number of services may suffer and outcomes weren't achieved. Members were informed that services would need to be redesigned and Public Health would need to take greater advantage of the services of the Council at their disposal and ensure that they worked with colleagues to provide the best outcomes within the resources available.

The Chair thanked Officers for their attendance and for their valued input to the meeting.

Finance and Corporate Services

Simon Wiles, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, was in attendance at the meeting, and endeavoured to alleviate any concerns and respond to any queries on the matters raised by the Committee.

A query was raised with regard to the One Stop Shop and Customer Services, as the report seemed to state that whilst there were less people in the one stop shop, they had to wait longer to see someone. Members were informed that this was largely due to a number of problems with waste and recycling in Quarter 3, and Customer Services was overrun with queries and complaints at that point of the year. Members were assured that this wasn't reflective of the services as a whole, and was a one-off occurrence. However, the Committee noted that customer service was good and the staff in the one stop shop and on the phone lines dealt with people more effectively than they had in the past.

Simon Wiles drew the Committees attention to a number of points that he wished to highlight, and speaking on the projected £2 m overspend, the level of reserves, and the overall performance of the Councils service measures. With regard to the overspend, Members noted that this took account of having to manage unprecedented reductions in funding and whilst work was ongoing to manage this, the challenge to deliver further savings would only get harder. In terms of the overall performance of the service measures, the Committee were informed that 89% of targets had been met, and the majority had now been delivered, with the highest levels of house building in 15 years and over 27% of new business start-ups. In terms of Reserves, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that at the present time, these were in a reasonably healthy state, although there was the expectation that these would have to deal with any funding and budget cuts in 2017/18.

Queries were raised with regard to the targets and how realistic they were to achieve. Members noted that these targets were believed to be achievable, and whilst it was always unrealistic to meet some of them, the Council needed to demonstrate where it was now, and where it needed to be. There were always risks involved with everything, but only the key risks needed to be reported.

A number of queries were also raised regarding austerity measures, workforce development, and the Transformation and Change Agenda, all of which were responded to by Officers within the meeting.

Learning, Opportunities and Skills

Damian Allen, Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills was in attendance at the meeting in order to provide updates to the Committee, and information as to how DMBC was working alongside

the Doncaster Childrens Services Trust. Members were keen to find out how effectively the Council was holding the Trust to account, and were informed that the Trust was subjected to a significant amount of monitoring. Concerns were voiced regarding the ongoing overspends and the Director of Finance and Corporate Services intimated that he felt that this would continue to be an issue into the next financial year. The risk of overspend was difficult to manage within Childrens Services, as it was difficult to predict what may happen, as it was imperative that the needs of children were met. However, regular monitoring was undertaken, and pressure was placed on the Trust to perform. They were on an improvement journey, with assurance given that the correct tools were in place to do this.

The Chair queried if there were any Performance Indicators that raised any particular concern to officers, and what would the Schools Commissioner be looking specifically at. Members were informed that there were a number of challenges facing primary and secondary schools, particularly with regard to Key Stage 2 where a dip in levels had been seen recently. A strategy for improvement had been implemented and it was hoped that improvement would be brought about in schools. The Schools Commissioner had been notified of the schools that were underperforming, and would be looking at these. Improvements however had been made at Key Stage 4, and the launch of the 'Move on, Move Up' initiative by the Mayor was proving to be positive in terms of supporting youngsters through their studies.

Members raised a number of pertinent points during the course of the discussion and continued to stress the importance of improving education in the Borough. It was noted that parents needed to be more critical of the education that their children were receiving, voices needed to be heard, and action taken.

Regeneration and Environment

The Assistant Director for Trading Services and Assets, Dave Wilkinson, was in attendance at the meeting on behalf of the Director for Regeneration and Environment and aimed to provide any updates where needed on the areas Members felt were cause for concern. A query was raised regarding Performance Indicators 35 and 36 on page 29 of the report, and Members were informed that the Assistant Director for Environment would provide a more detailed explanation on these outside the meeting.

Councillors voiced concern that despite the fact that the local economy was good, and there would be many jobs available in the future, there was the concern, that these would not be accessible for Doncaster people, based on their skill levels. Members were informed that this was of course a worry but it was an issue that was being looked at from both an immediate and a long term angle. The Assistant Director for Strategy and Performance informed Members that they were driving up the numbers of apprenticeships, working with local businesses and

Gill Gillies

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| | <p>were looking to make improvements over time, with a view to creating an ‘end to end’ skills system. It was added that the Devolution deal would be of huge benefit and would help the Council on its journey to achieving this.</p> <p>Apprenticeships continued to be an area of concern and a discussion was held on this issue, as Members wanted reassurance that young people were achieving high levels on the scheme and quality apprenticeships were being achieved. There was concern that some were only achieving minimum wage pay, and there needed to be a push for all apprentices to reach Level 3 or above. The Director of Trading Services and Assets informed the Committee that as he didn’t have any figures to hand regarding this, he would provide a written response on this issue. Members acknowledged, that the way in which apprenticeships were now moving however, was very different and the offer given by the Council had to be much more diverse, with a range of opportunities in different fields in order that a broad range of skills was created.</p> <p>The Chair and Committee thanked all Officers for their input and knowledge and felt that the report was a well-produced document, and their queries had been answered by the relevant Officer.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the Chair and Members of OSMC:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Note the areas of performance and financial information; 2) Note the virements approved by the Chief Executive and approve the virements for Cabinet detailed in paragraph 33 and Appendix B; 3) Note the new additions to the Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix D. | <p>Dave Wilkinson</p> |
| <p>11</p> | <p><u>ST LEGER HOMES OF DONCASTER PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY UPDATE: 2015/16 QUARTER 3</u></p> | |
| | <p>The Chief Executive of St Leger Homes of Doncaster, Susan Jordan, was in attendance at the meeting, along with Stephen Thorlby-Coy, Head of Business Excellence in order to update the Committee with regard to any performance issues for Quarter 3.</p> <p>Members noted that as part of the Management Agreement between SLHD and DMBC, a quarterly performance report is provided to OSMC for monitoring. Members noted that of the ten key performance indicators, four were currently on target, four were within acceptable tolerance levels, and two were below target. The two indicators that were currently below target are detailed below:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Households maintaining or established independent | |

living

It was noted that this had declined from over 40 in October and November, to 34 which was below the contractual level of 40. However, it was stated that SLHD were confident that this would soon be back on track.

- Void Rent Loss – Percentage of rent loss through vacant dwellings (lettable voids)

Members were informed that there had been a slight improvement seen each quarter, with Officers confident that changes would be made as the figures were moving in the right direction. The Void Pilot Project was being rolled out in quarter 4 and continuing through 2016, which would test different ways of working, and would look to deliver a better quality product for tenants.

Following the consideration of the report, Members were afforded the opportunity to pose any concerns to Officers. It was noted that 6 areas of performance were now green, including several areas that were previously depicted as amber with 'Right First Time' and '% of Invoices Paid within 30 days' now moving from amber to green.

Members congratulated Officers on the green areas, and the Committee felt it was clear that SLHD were clearly doing something good with a number of areas performing well.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee note the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution made to supporting DMBC strategic priorities.