

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 14th February, 2017 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Tuesday, 21st February, 2017

With the exception of Decisions 1 to 5 which are subject to Full Council approval on the 2nd March, 2017 the end of the call in period is 5.00 p.m. on Thursday 2nd March, 2017 and therefore, the decisions can be implemented on Friday 3rd March, 2017.

Present:

Chair - Mayor Ros Jones (Mayor of Doncaster with responsibility for Budget and Policy Framework)

Vice-Chair - Councillor Glyn Jones (Deputy Mayor and Portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Equalities)

Cabinet Member for:

Councillor Joe Blackham	Portfolio holder for Regeneration and Transportation
Councillor Nuala Fennelly	Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools
Councillor Pat Knight	Portfolio holder for Public Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Chris McGuinness	Portfolio holder for Communities, the Voluntary Sector and Environment
Councillor Bill Mordue	Portfolio holder for Business, Skills, Tourism and Culture
Councillor Jane Nightingale	Portfolio holder for Housing

Apologies:-

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Tony Corden.

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

Councillor Nick Allen asked the Mayor Ros Jones the following question:-

'Do you think your budget demonstrates value for money? How much of the report was officer led and does the budget reflect your manifesto commitments or the policies of national government?'

In the absence of Councillor Nick Allen, the Mayor said she would provide a written response to his question. The written response sent is:-

“These budget proposals continue to deliver my priority of ensuring the Council is able to provide efficient and effective public services, whilst investing in the future of the borough and its residents, despite the harsh austerity measures imposed on Doncaster by central Government.

The punitive Government cuts will not lower my ambitions for our borough and its people. I have made clear my priorities, to help drive forward our economy, increase job creation, raise education standards, build more homes and support residents and communities across Doncaster. In developing the budget we set a remit to protect, and indeed improve, vital front line services, particularly those which support vulnerable people. To do this, we are living within our means, modernising services and striving to deliver value for money in all of our work. I am proud of the effectiveness we have already achieved, improving services through initiatives like our Smart light programme, whilst making savings that minimise the impact of the Government cuts on our residents.

That said, I am extremely disappointed at the Government’s complete failure to deal with the national funding problems facing adult social care and the health service. Their answer, which is to underfund vital services and yet increase the financial burden on local taxpayers, is frankly outrageous. It places strain on to those who can least afford it, through a regressive tax system that benefits wealthy areas over places like Doncaster and South Yorkshire.

The budget has been developed collaboratively to deliver my priorities and those agreed by the Council and I am grateful for members of Overview and Scrutiny for their input and support for the proposals. I have received no feedback from any other political groups on the Council, which I would have been willing to consider. Given that I published the draft proposals in November to allow for input from all Councillors and it is now mid-February, I assume that there will be no late political games from the opposition and that the budget will be supported unanimously in the Council Chamber in two weeks time.

We are seeing the highest levels of employment for more than 10 years, record house building, improved school standards and a transformation of Council services. All have been positively influenced by our work and these proposals build on the solid foundations that we have put in place over the last three years.

We are sticking to that plan and it is paying dividends for Doncaster”.

Decision records dated 31st January, 2017, were noted.

DECISION 2.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE
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7. Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2020/21.
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2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet recommend to Council that the Capital Budget proposals for 2017/18 to 2020/21, as set out in the report are approved. This includes:-

- (1) approving the capital programme, noting the proposed investment over the next four years and note what that will deliver; and
- (2) approving that Cabinet take responsibility for agreeing any significant changes to the Schools Condition Programme and the Local Transport Plan funding and that they are agreed in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

The Mayor presented the Capital Programme for 2017/18 to 2020/21 to Cabinet stating that growing Doncaster's economy, creating new jobs and improving education were vital to the future of Doncaster and its people. She reported that these goals form the cornerstone of the capital budget which will see £332m of capital investment over the next four years.

It was reported that in 2017/18 the Council will spend around £119m to stimulate growth and prosperity and deliver projects that will help to bring high skilled, well-paid jobs to Doncaster. In addition, and most importantly, it was noted that growth will be inclusive growth providing new opportunities that local people can benefit from.

The Mayor highlighted the opening in September, 2017 of the new National College for High Speed Rail, a national institution providing cutting edge engineering training at Lakeside which will bring university level skills training to Doncaster and support the town's already thriving railway industry.

£6.6m will be invested in phase 2 of the FARRRS airport link road which will also start this year. Phase 1, the Great Yorkshire Way had brought record passenger numbers to the airport and was already delivering hundreds of new jobs at iPort despite being open less than a year.

It was noted that the new Urban Centre Masterplan would transform the centre of Doncaster and the Council will be investing more than £30m with the support of the Sheffield City Region. The Mayor stated that to be a successful place, the Borough needs a strong centre. One that supports not just retail but professional services, entrepreneurial businesses and new town centre housing.

In delivering the Masterplan, it will ensure that Doncaster's centre acts more like a 'city centre' and is sustainable. It will deliver jobs that are accessible to people across the borough as well as vibrant retail and leisure facilities for residents and visitors alike.

The Mayor advised Cabinet that the Council were already seeing development start to improve the railway station forecourt area and further investments will be made in the markets in 2017/18 which is one of Doncaster's most important assets and

the Council is committed to its success.

The Mayor further advised that the Capital Programme will also be used in innovative ways such as the Herten Triangle Leisure Scheme which is a Council led development that will create up to 200 new jobs as well as delivering £300,000 of income that can then be spent on public services.

The Council will also be rolling out the successful Smartlight project, modernising street lights whilst saving money and reducing our carbon footprint. It was noted that these projects will not just bring new jobs, leisure facilities and improved services to Doncaster but will deliver vital income and savings that help to minimise the impact of the Government cuts to the Revenue Budget.

It was reported that more council houses will be delivered, with 79 new Council owned affordable units completed or acquired in 2017/18. Over the next four years more Council Houses will be developed with new units across the borough.

The Council are also investing in projects to further improve existing schools, housing, leisure and culture facilities as well as support vulnerable people such as:-

- 1,200 housing adaptations for the disabled were estimated to be completed per year with an estimated funding package of £15.7m;
- £18m will be spent on improving and maintaining the existing Council housing stock;
- 360 new primary school places were estimated to be created in 2017/18, whilst numerous schools would have improvement works completed; and
- £1.4m is expected to be spent on the Borough's public leisure centres provided by Doncaster Culture & Leisure Trust over the next two years.

Following the Mayor's introduction, Cabinet welcomed the report and made the following comments:-

Councillor Jane Nightingale stated that it was pleasing to see the continuing support for Housing within the Borough. She highlighted the work being carried out with Social landlords and was also pleased with the amount of housing investment being made within the town.

Councillor Nuala Fennelly praised the programme of improvement in relation to primary school places, which had increased to 70% over the last 3 years.

Councillor Pat Knight stated that it was good to see the improvements being made within leisure facilities which will go towards improving the health and wellbeing of residents within the borough.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones reported that with regard to Adult Health and Well-being, he was pleased to see the 1,200 housing adaptations would be made which will enable people to stay within their own homes for as long as possible.

Councillor Bill Mordue stated that the report presented was a testament to the hard work carried out. Doncaster's economy was growing faster and capital investment was bringing jobs to the Borough and in turn providing good standards of living.

Councillor Joe Blackham echoed members comments stating that the Capital Programme report demonstrated what can be done when a Council functions together. He praised staff for the clear and concise report.

The comments raised by Cabinet were also echoed by Councillor John Mounsey, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

In conclusion, the Mayor stated that the report showed what Team Doncaster can do to drive improvements forward for the residents of the borough, who deserve it.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1 – Do not invite any new capital proposals for the 2017/18 to 2020/21 Capital budget process.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Steve Mawson, Chief Financial Officer & Assistant Director Finance