

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 2ND MARCH, 2017

A MEETING of the COUNCIL was held at the CIVIC OFFICE on THURSDAY, 2ND MARCH, 2017, at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor David Nevett
Vice-Chair - Councillor George Derx
Mayor - Ros Jones
Deputy Mayor - Councillor Glyn Jones

Councillors Nick Allen, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, Joe Blackham, Elsie Butler, Bev Chapman, Phil Cole, John Cooke, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Jessie Credland, Susan Durant, Nuala Fennelly, Neil Gethin, Sean Gibbons, Pat Haith, James Hart, John Healy, Rachel Hodson, Charlie Hogarth, Sandra Holland, Mark Houlbrook, Richard A Jones, Kenneth Keegan, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight, Sue Knowles, Chris McGuinness, Sue McGuinness, John McHale, Bill Mordue, John Mounsey, Jane Nightingale, Andy Pickering, Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Craig Sahman, Alan Smith, Clive Stone, Austen White, Sue Wilkinson, Jonathan Wood and Paul Wray.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tony Corden, Linda Curran, Eva Hughes, Cynthia Ransome and Dave Shaw.

70 Declarations of Interest, if any

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

71 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26th January, 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday, 26th January, 2017, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

72 To receive any announcements from the Chair of Council, the Mayor, Members of the Cabinet or the Head of Paid Service.

The Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, made the following announcement:-

“As you may be aware, this will be the last Council Meeting that a number of Councillors will be attending as they have chosen not to stand again to represent their Ward at the Borough Council Elections in May.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to place on record, our best wishes and acknowledge their contribution to the Borough and the manner in which they fulfilled their duties as Ward Members, during their Terms of Office.”

Following this announcement, Councillor David Nevett allowed Members to make personal statements in relation to retiring Councillors, with heartfelt thanks and tributes paid to Councillors Elsie Butler, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight and Sue Knowles, along with Geraldine Morton, Head of Revenues and Benefits, who was retiring from the Authority at the end of March, 2017.

“I would also like to announce that last Friday, it was my great pleasure and privilege to welcome Fred Adamson and his family to the Mansion House. Fred, who is 97 years old and a D-Day Veteran, has been awarded the Légion d’honneur by the French Government which is given to those who fought and risked their lives to secure France’s liberation during the Second World War.

It was a great honour to meet Fred who kept us entertained with his stories from the war. On behalf of the Council, I would like to send our congratulations to Fred on receiving this honour.”

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Equalities, made the following announcement:-

“I would like to announce that we are launching the ‘Your Life, Your Way’ Campaign shortly from Adult Social Care, which promotes people to be more independent and to enable them to live their lives to the full. There are lots of different things that the Council can help with, but help from the community is also a key element to this. It was to be launched on the 6th March, 2017, and with a lot of publicity to raise awareness of this. I am looking forward to the good take up.”

Councillor Pat Knight, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing, made the following announcement:-

“Thank you, I ask for discretion in allowing me on my last Full Council, to speak longer than the allotted time.

I will start with the Well North Project at Denaby. This was launched in September of 2015 and is supported by the national Well North Programme. The founder, Aidan Halligan, set up this scheme to help disadvantaged communities in the North of England. Doncaster put in a bid for the project and won. Denaby was chosen for the project due to its level of deprivation and potential to benefit from the work. Following the closure of the library in the previous year, the community hub had been lost. Consultation was undertaken which involved joint working with partners and communities in order to find out from local residents, what they felt to be important to their community. Over the course of a year, different aspects of the community started to come together and the library has now re-opened with the help from Re-Read. Local residents have started caring again for their village, litter picks are carried out, allotments cared for and events held for residents to come together. Local initiatives similar to this would be rolled out in different villages across the Borough as a result of its success.

With regard to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, firstly, they have begun the task of producing a BME Health Needs Assessment. This is well overdue and is an extensive piece of work, and its main focus would be on engagement with key groups who represented the many BME populations. The makeup of the BME communities in Doncaster was changing and the Director of public Health report in

2015 identified the inequality of health outcomes between Doncaster communities. An 'evidence safari' had been held with many actions linked to BME communities identified. There would be a great deal of work to be done on this over the next few years.

In terms of smoking, in Doncaster, there is a Tobacco Control Alliance which brings together local partners to review plans and actions related to the control of smoking in the Borough. It is estimated that 54000 people smoke in Doncaster, which in percentage terms, is 3% higher than the national average. Smoking is a very important public health concern and impacts greatly on health and social care, with the cost to the NHS, estimated to be in the region of £15 million per year. More needs to be done to help smokers quit and help and advice should be given to everyone staying in Hospital which is something that is not currently done, but it is something that will be looked at by NHS England in the future. Hospitals now have a smoke-free policy across their sites, but a lot more could be done to support people to stop smoking, with an appropriately skilled clinician employed in Hospitals to oversee and drive forward a smoking cessation service with practitioners employed in every Hospital, and Hospital Boards should be fully involved in delivering smoking related action and actions plans.

Moving on to suicide prevention, this is another initiative by the Health and Wellbeing Board, and our Suicide Prevention Plan was being looked at in order to make it more robust. Suicide prevention was a priority for DMBC as part of our Public Health responsibilities and the development of this Plan would be led by the Suicide Prevention Group, chaired by Dr Niki Seddon. There have been specific areas identified to target, including raising awareness of suicide in men, looking for signs of crisis and improving the skills of those who work in prisons, particularly male prisons, as well as those who work alongside children and young people, especially those who are mentally ill and have a history of self-harming. Additional work could be done to ensure that the safer prescription of anti-depressants and analgesics was promoted, better access to services in order to reduce isolation and improve the awareness of the availability of support services, including the promotion of the 'Safe Haven' bus and the development of the 'Crisis Café'. Finally, work needed to be done to regularly monitor and review local suicide occurrences.

As you can see, there is and has been a lot of work undertaken by Public Health and this is only the beginning. A lot of work has been done to see these studies completed and to make sure they are ongoing and not forgotten. I have started the work for my successor and I wish Mayor Jones and all colleagues in the Chamber today, continued success on making Doncaster a proud place to live, work and visit.

I would also like to thank Dr Rupert Suckling and the Public Health Team, for all their advice over the last 4 years. They have been patient and supportive when I have changed things and are a great Team, dedicated to their jobs.

Simon Wiles, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, made the following announcement:-

"I have two announcements. I would like to express my thanks to Geraldine Morton, Head of Revenue and Benefits, who retires at the end of March; so there will be the opportunity for people to say good bye between now and then. I would like to thank her particularly for her professionalism, integrity and good management that she has shown for many years at Doncaster.

I would also like to inform Members of the sad death of Diane Glancy, who many of you will know worked within the Emergency Planning Team. Her funeral will be held on Wednesday, 22nd March in the Chapel at Rose Hill at 12 noon if anyone wishes to attend.”

73 Questions from the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13:-

There were no questions from the public.

74 Revenue Budget 2017/18

Prior to Members’ consideration of the report, the Monitoring Officer, Scott Fawcus, reminded Members there was a legal requirement to include in the minutes details of how each Elected Member had voted on decisions relating to the budget and level of Council Tax. Therefore, items 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 would all be subject to a recorded vote and voting preferences would be documented in the minutes.

The Monitoring Officer also reminded Members that and Equality Implications were fundamental in making a decision and it was of utmost importance that Members had fully considered the impact on certain groups and individuals, and had given due regard to any implications of this decision under the Equality Act.

The Monitoring Officer also made reference to the Public Sector Equality Duty within today’s Revenue Budget report and the Housing Revenue Account Budget (HRA). Equality issues were fundamental to the exercise of the function of a public authority and that it was inevitable that the implementation of some of the budget proposals, would have an impact on services, service users and individuals and groups, particularly those persons with protected characteristics within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

Members were informed that the Revenue Budget included at Appendix M, a list of items which would require the production of detailed Due Regard Assessments before such time as these savings could be implemented. Further reports taking account of individual Due Regard Statements, would be produced and further decision making required by the Executive before those savings could be implemented.

In relation to the HRA budget, Members were requested to consider the contents of that Due Regard Statement and their obligations under the Equality Act 2010, to have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimization;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between those with protected characteristics and those without such characteristics.

The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, presented the report to Council, which sought approval of the Budget proposals for 2017/18.

The Mayor stated that as everyone in the Chamber was aware, the Council was facing difficult financial times. Local Authority funding continued to face brutal annual cuts from Central Government which favoured wealthy areas over less affluent Towns and Cities, like Doncaster. However, this would not let the perpetual cuts drag Doncaster down and the Mayor assured the Chamber that this would not limit the Council's ambitions for the Borough and its people. The budget proposals therefore continued to deliver the Mayor's priority of ensuring the Council was able to:-

- provide efficient and effective public services, whilst
- investing in the future of the Borough and its residents.

More specifically, the Council was succeeding in its aims to:-

- Increase jobs, apprenticeships and grow our economy – including more well paid, high skilled jobs;
- Deliver homes that met the needs of everyone;
- Raise education standards and increase opportunities;
- Deliver vital services for children and vulnerable residents, and
- Support Doncaster's communities and keep them clean, green and safe.

Members were informed that the Council had already made great progress including:-

- An 11 year high in employment figures with more than 9000 new jobs since 2013 and more than 1000 new apprentices;
- The most homes built for 15 years, nearly 1200 in 2015/16 with something for everyone - including new Council Houses, bungalows and our Extra Care facilities for older people, being developed across the Borough;
- GCSE results going up in Doncaster, bucking the national trend, with an increase in the number of Schools rated good or better. Our new National College for High Speed Rail opens later this year and our Education Commission which we will receive a report on today, is setting out the future for education in our Borough;
- A new Children's Trust to safeguard young people and an Adults Transformation Programme to improve Adult Care services giving people the choice, independence and care they require, whilst ensuring services are sustainable and fit for the future as our population ages; and
- More enforcement against people who did not respect our Borough, with thousands of fines issued against litter louts.

The Mayor referred to the current difficult times and the need to live within our means, and that to meet the Council's goals, it must modernise and improve services, and deliver value for money. Therefore, the Council intended to continue its successful schemes, such as the new energy efficient street lights, and delivering a Council structure which was reducing management costs.

The Mayor promised to support residents with the cost of living where possible; thousands of people and households had benefitted from schemes including the Big Power Switch, new solar panels and by installing insulation in Council housing.

It was reported that in this budget, the Council had minimised the increase in fees and charges and aimed to keep them in line with inflation. Some charges had also been frozen including the cost of school meals and rents at the market, and charges for children's burials and cremations had also been abolished.

It was reported that the Council had worked hard over the last three years to deliver its goals whilst minimising the impact of the draconian austerity measures; this had given the Council a solid foundation to build on.

However, the Mayor was 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 was to underfund vital services and yet increase the financial burden on local taxpayers, was 'outrageous' as it placed a strain on those who could least afford it, through a regressive tax system that benefited wealthy areas over places like Doncaster and South Yorkshire. Unfortunately, Government policy on Local Authority funding meant that Council Tax rises were inevitable in order to sustain vital services.

The Mayor stated that through the Council's careful planning and prudent approach over the last three years, the Council had managed to limit the proposed rise in Doncaster this year to 3.99%. This meant Council Tax in Doncaster would remain one of the lowest in the Country amongst Metropolitan and Unitary Authorities, but the Mayor was deeply disappointed that the Prime Minister had forced these costs on to people who can least afford them.

The Mayor therefore pointed out that the Council's only course of action was to grow its way out of the situation which would be referred to within the Capital Programme.

In conclusion, the Mayor stated that the good news is that in Doncaster, the Council was delivering on that agenda and the promises she had made, the Mayor's approach was paying dividends for Doncaster. The Mayor thanked all of the staff, partners and colleagues in this Chamber, who had helped the Council to deliver these successes, in often difficult circumstances. This proposal continued the Council's prudent and effective, but ambitious, approach to delivering services and supporting the Borough.

The Mayor encouraged all colleagues to support this budget.

Following the Mayor's presentation of the Revenue Budget proposals, Members were afforded the opportunity to comment on the report.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 21.4, a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations contained within the report, which was declared as follows:-

For – 42

The Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, the Vice-Chair of Council Councillor George Derx, the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones and Councillors Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, Joe Blackham, Elsie Butler, Bev Chapman, Phil Cole, John Cooke, Jessie Credland, Susan Durant, Nuala Fennelly, Neil Gethin, Sean Gibbons, Pat Haith, John Healy, Rachel Hodson, Charlie Hogarth, Sandra Holland, Mark Houlbrook, Kenneth Keegan, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight, Chris McGuinness, Sue McGuinness, John McHale, Bill Mordue, John Mounsey, Jane Nightingale, Andy Pickering, Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Craig Sahman, Clive Stone, Austen White, Sue Wilkinson and Paul Wray.

Against – 1

Councillor Jonathan Wood.

Abstain – 5

Councillors Nick Allen, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, R. Allan Jones and Alan Smith.

On being put to the meeting, the Mayor's Revenue Budget was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that the Revenue Budget proposals for 2017/18, as detailed within the report, be approved, including:-

- (1) the revenue budget proposals for 2017/18, as detailed at Appendix B (savings £21.516m) and Appendix C (pressures £5.255m);
- (2) Council Tax to be increased by 3.99% to £1,237.81 for a Band D property (£825.21 for a Band A) for 2017/18. This includes:-
 - i. 1.99% Council Tax increase equates to an increase of £23.69 for Band D per annum, £0.46 per week (£15.79 for Band A per annum, £0.30 per week);
 - ii. 2% Government's Social Care "precept" equates to an increase of £23.80 for Band D per annum, £0.46 per week (£15.87 for Band A per annum, £0.31 per week).
- (3) the 2017/18 Grants to Third Sector Organisations outlined in paragraph 25 and as detailed in Appendix F;
- (4) the summary fees and charges analysis detailed in Appendix G together with the detailed fees and charges proposed for 2017/18 as detailed in Appendix H;
- (5) the Medium Term Financial Forecast including all proposals in the report, as detailed in Appendix J; and

- (6) a gross revenue expenditure budget of £479.7m and a net revenue expenditure budget of £213.4m, as detailed in Appendix J.

75 Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2020/21

The Council considered a report which was presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which set out the Capital Programme for 2017/18 to 2020/21. The Mayor stated that she was pleased to be able to present the Capital Programme and growing the economy, improving education, and creating new jobs was a vital part of the future of Doncaster. These goals would form the cornerstone of the Capital budget, which would see £332 million of Capital investment over the next four years. Members noted that in 2017/18, around £119 million would be spent on stimulating further growth and prosperity, and the Council would deliver projects that would help to bring highly skilled, well paid jobs to the Borough. The Mayor pointed out that the growth stimulated, would be inclusive growth, providing opportunities that local people could benefit from.

It was reported that the new National College for High Speed Rail would be opening in September 2017; a national institution that would provide cutting edge engineering training at Lakeside. This would bring university level skills training to Doncaster and would support the already thriving railway industry in the area.

The Mayor informed the Chamber that £6.6 million would be invested in Phase 2 of the Great Yorkshire Way Airport Link Road 2017/18, on which development would start this year. Phase 1 had already brought record passenger numbers to the airport and had helped to deliver hundreds of new jobs at the iPort, with more still to come despite being open for less than a year. In addition, Great Yorkshire Way was enabling new homes at Rossington and had helped to alleviate the notorious 'Cantley Crawl', with congestion along Bawtry Road significantly reduced.

It was reported that the new Urban Centre Masterplan would help to transform the centre of Doncaster and the Council would be investing more than £30 million with the support of the Sheffield City Region. This would enable Doncaster to have a strong centre that would support retail and professional services, entrepreneurial businesses and new Town Centre housing. Therefore, the delivery of the Masterplan would ensure that Doncaster's centre functioned more as a 'City Centre' which would look to ensure greater sustainability. The Masterplan would look to deliver jobs that were accessible to people across the Borough, as well as providing vibrant retail and leisure facilities for both residents and visitors alike. Members noted that development was already starting on the Railway Station forecourt area, which would provide a welcoming gateway to the Town.

Additionally, the Mayor informed Members that further investment would be made into Doncaster's market in 2017/18, in order to build on the long-term success of this valuable asset.

The Mayor reported that the Capital Programme was also being used in innovative ways. This was demonstrated with the Herten Triangle Leisure scheme, which was a Council led development that would create up to 200 new jobs, as well as delivering £300,000 of income that would then be spent on public services. Additionally, the successful Smartlight Project would be rolled out further, with the modernisation of street lights enabling the Council to both save money and reduce its carbon footprint.

These projects would not just bring new jobs, leisure facilities and improved services, but would deliver vital income and savings that would help to minimise the impact of the cuts from Central Government to the Revenue Budget.

Members noted that the Capital budget would bring the delivery of more Council Houses, with 79 new Council owned affordable units either completed or acquired in 2017/18. Additionally, over the next four years, more Council houses would be developed with new units in Askern, Armthorpe, Hatfield, Carcroft, Rossington, Bentley, Wheatley, Intake, Thorne and Moorends. Furthermore, £18 million would be spent on improving and maintaining the existing Council housing stock, and due to an anticipated funding package of £18.7 million, 1200 housing adaptations for the disabled were estimated per year.

The Council was also investing in projects to further improve the Borough's Schools, with 360 new Primary School places estimated to be created in 2017/18, whilst numerous Schools would have improvement works completed. Leisure and Culture facilities would also be improved, with Members informed that an estimated £1.4 million was to be spent over the next two years on the Borough's public leisure centres, delivered by the Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust.

The Mayor concluded by stating the Capital Programme was a programme to help build on Doncaster's future, a bright future that invested in projects to improve Schools, housing, leisure and culture as well as providing valuable support for vulnerable people.

Following the Mayor's presentation of the Capital Programme proposals, Members were afforded the opportunity to comment on the report.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 21.4, a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations contained within the report, which was declared as follows:-

For – 48

The Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, the Vice-Chair of Council Councillor George Derx, the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones and Councillors Nick Allen, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, Joe Blackham, Elsie Butler, Bev Chapman, Phil Cole, John Cooke, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Jessie Credland, Susan Durant, Nuala Fennelly, Neil Gethin, Pat Haith, John Healy, Rachel Hodson, Charlie Hogarth, Sandra Holland, Mark Houlbrook, Richard A Jones, Kenneth Keegan, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight, Sue Knowles, Chris McGuinness, Sue McGuinness, John McHale, Bill Mordue, John Mounsey, Jane Nightingale, Andy Pickering, Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Craig Sahman, Alan Smith, Clive Stone, Austen White, Sue Wilkinson, Jonathan Wood and Paul Wray.

Against – 0

Abstain – 0

On being put to the meeting, the Mayor's Capital Programme was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that the Capital Budget proposals for 2017/18 to 2020/21, as detailed within the report, be approved, including:-

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

76 Housing Revenue Account Budget 2017/18

The Council considered a report which was presented by Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Housing, which set out the Housing Revenue Account Budget proposals for 2017/18 along with the medium term financial forecast for the next three years. The account had a budget in order to break even and was targeted to have a working balance of £4 million over the next four years. Councillor Nightingale informed the Chamber that the key points to note within the report included the following:-

- Housing rents were to decrease by 1% in 2017/18 and in the two years following. This decrease was a statutory change which was included within the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. 2017/18 was the second of a four year period in which the 1% reduction would be applied. Whilst the reduction had significantly reduced the resources available within the HRA, Councillor Nightingale assured Members that the Council was confident that this would not reduce their ability to deliver excellent, value for money services to all its tenants. It did mean that the Council would be limited in the number of new build Council houses that it was able to delivery, but the Council was working with other partners to look at alternative options for housing delivery;
- The average rent in Doncaster would remain the lowest of all South Yorkshire Councils at £70.20 per week;
- All other fees and charges were frozen. Members noted that this was possible as the Council had invested in all areas across the Housing Service and the charges being frozen were self-funding and were not subsidised by other tenants who did not receive the services. It was reported that these charges would be kept under review in future years, in order to ensure that they remained at the correct levels; and
- The HRA continued to fund £32 million of investment within the Council Stock during 2017/18, with the main areas of investment being the new build programme, the regeneration of the Bristol Grove area in Wheatley and the continued investment in new energy efficient boilers and heating systems, and new roofs including fascias, gutters and soffits.

Following presentation of the Housing Revenue Account Budget proposals, Members were afforded the opportunity to comment on the report.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 21.4, a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations contained within the report, which was declared as follows:-

For – 48

The Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, the Vice-Chair of Council Councillor George Derx, the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones and Councillors Nick Allen, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, Joe Blackham, Elsie Butler, Bev Chapman, Phil Cole, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Jessie Credland, Susan Durant, Nuala Fennelly, Neil Gethin, Sean Gibbons, Pat Haith, John Healy, Rachel Hodson, Charlie Hogarth, Sandra Holland, Mark Houlbrook, Richard A Jones, Kenneth Keegan, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight, Sue Knowles, Chris McGuinness, Sue McGuinness, John McHale, Bill Mordue, John Mounsey, Jane Nightingale, Andy Pickering, Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Craig Sahman, Alan Smith, Clive Stone, Austen White, Sue Wilkinson, Jonathan Wood and Paul Wray.

Against – 0

Abstain – 0

On being put to the meeting, the Housing Revenue Account was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that the Housing Revenue Account budget proposals, as detailed within the report, be approved including:-

- (1) rents be reduced from 3rd April, 2017 by 1.0%, as detailed in paragraphs 7 to 10, in line with Government policy; this will result in an average weekly rent decrease of £0.71, resulting in an average rent of approximately £70.21 per week and rents will be charged every week of the year;
- (2) the budget proposals for the HRA for 2017/18, which are contained in Appendix A, which set a balanced budget for the Housing Revenue Account and maintain a reserve of £4.0m; and
- (3) fees and charges as detailed in paragraph 13 of the report.

77 The Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18 - 2020/21

The Council considered a report, which was presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which detailed the strategy for management of the Council finances and provided a framework for the operation of the treasury management function within the Council. The Treasury Management Strategy would ensure that sufficient money was available to meet service delivery in line with the approved budgets. The key points that the Strategy focused on were described in detail within the report, but related to the following points:-

- Borrowing – whilst borrowing would increase, Members noted that the Council would still remain under-borrowed against its borrowing requirement in order to avoid the higher cost of carrying debt;

- Investments – securing the return of investment funds remained paramount, and the investment strategy would continue to manage the balances available and support cash flow requirements; and
- A low risk policy had been produced in order to protect the Council from loss.

Members noted that the strategy provided a good balance between the Council's existing maturity profile and the production of new savings to support front line budgets and service provision. Remaining under borrowed would also protect the Council from risk of loss from failed investments.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 21.4, a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations contained within the report, which was declared as follows:-

For – 48

The Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, the Vice-Chair of Council Councillor George Derx, the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones and Councillors Nick Allen, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, Joe Blackham, Elsie Butler, Bev Chapman, Phil Cole, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Jessie Credland, Susan Durant, Nuala Fennelly, Neil Gethin, Sean Gibbons, Pat Haith, John Healy, Rachel Hodson, Charlie Hogarth, Sandra Holland, Mark Houlbrook, Richard A Jones, Kenneth Keegan, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight, Sue Knowles, Chris McGuinness, Sue McGuinness, John McHale, Bill Mordue, John Mounsey, Jane Nightingale, Andy Pickering, Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Craig Sahman, Alan Smith, Clive Stone, Austen White, Sue Wilkinson, Jonathan Wood and Paul Wray.

Against – 0

Abstain – 0

On being put to the meeting, the Treasury Management Strategy was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18 to 2020/21 and the Prudential Indicators included therein, be approved; and
- (2) the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, as set out in paragraphs 17 to 19 and in Appendix B to the report, be approved.

78 Council Tax Setting and Statutory Resolutions 2017/18

Members considered the Statutory Resolution report which set out how Council Tax was calculated and made recommendations regarding Doncaster's Council Tax requirement for 2017/18.

It was reported that the increase in the level of Council Tax proposed for Doncaster Council was made up of 2 main elements; these being the core Council Tax and the

Adult Social Care Precept. The proposals presented to the Chamber included an increase in the core Council Tax of 1.99% and an increase in the Adult Social Care precept of 2% which meant that the citizens of Doncaster could see their Council Tax for Council services increase by 3.99%.

The overall increase will mean an additional £47.49 for Band D Council Tax per annum which equated to £0.91 per week, and £31.65 for Band A per annum, which equated to £0.61 per week.

The Mayor stated that she was pleased to inform Members that whilst there was still a rise in Council Tax, in comparison to other Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities, Doncaster was still expected to have one of the lowest levels of Council Tax in the Country and with around 60% of Doncaster's properties sitting in Band A, endeavoured to keep rises to a minimum.

Council was also requested to pass the appropriate Statutory Resolutions, as set out and recommended in Appendix B to the report, which incorporated the Council Taxes of the Joint Authorities, with the Police and Fire increases standing at 3.27% and 1.97% respectively which, taken together with Doncaster's 3.99% increase, represent a 3.81% increase from the 2016/17 Council Tax for Doncaster residents.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 21.4, a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations contained within the report, which was declared as follows:-

For – 43

The Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, the Vice-Chair of Council Councillor George Derx, the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones and Councillors Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, Joe Blackham, Elsie Butler, Bev Chapman, Phil Cole, John Cooke, Jessie Credland, Susan Durant, Nuala Fennelly, Neil Gethin, Sean Gibbons, Pat Haith, John Healy, Rachel Hodson, Charlie Hogarth, Sandra Holland, Mark Houlbrook, Kenneth Keegan, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight, Sue Knowles, Chris McGuinness, Sue McGuinness, John McHale, Bill Mordue, John Mounsey, Jane Nightingale, Andy Pickering, Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Craig Sahman, Clive Stone, Austen White, Sue Wilkinson and Paul Wray

Against – 0

Abstain – 6

Councillors Nick Allen, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, R. Allan Jones, Alan Smith and Jonathan Wood.

On being put to the meeting, the recommendation contained within the report was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that Council approve a Band D Council Tax for 2017/18 of £1,237.81 for Doncaster Council Services and passed the appropriate Statutory Resolutions, as set out and recommended at Appendix B, which incorporate the Council Taxes of the Joint Authorities and which, taken together with Doncaster's 3.99% increase, represent a 3.81% increase from the 2016/17 Council Tax for Doncaster residents.

The Council received a report presented by Ros Jones, Mayor of Doncaster, on the Corporate Plan for 2017/18. Members noted that the current Corporate Plan ran out at the end of 2016/17, and the Mayor was pleased to set out the Council's priorities for 2017/18 within the updated Corporate Plan.

The Mayor outlined that the Corporate Plan was presented alongside her budget proposals, and had four priority themes to focus upon which would look to improve the quality of life for residents of Doncaster. These priority themes were detailed below:-

- Doncaster Working
- Caring
- Living
- Learning

These four priority themes were under-pinned by a cross cutting theme, this being 'Connected Council', which covered the things that must be undertaken to deliver better outcomes, including enabling residents to access modern, on-line customer services.

The Mayor reported that she was grateful to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for considering the Plan, and for their feedback and support, which resulted in several changes being made to the Plan which she felt was a better document as a result.

Members were informed that there was a growing £5 billion economy and record levels of residents in employment had recently been witnessed with many more new jobs in the pipeline. Services were being redesigned and more of them were being delivered in partnership. Significant budget savings had been achieved and the Council was looking forward with confidence although, it was very important not to be complacent. However, despite the positivity, Members noted that quality of life still varied significantly across the Borough and greater emphasis needed to be placed on tackling inequalities and ensuring that local people benefited from the opportunities being created, and therefore, it was essential that services were joined up and effective.

The Mayor stated that it was therefore important that the Plan shifted its focus from monitoring indicators to driving the delivery of plans and programmes. These plans were already shaping how the Council worked with the examples of the One Doncaster Action Plan, Early Help Strategy and the Place Plan given. In conclusion, the Mayor asked for Council to give its support to the updated Corporate Plan in order to guide the Council's work over the next year, to shape Doncaster's future and improve the lives of local people.

Following consideration of the report, Members of Council were invited to make any comments on the Corporate Plan. Whilst Members were largely in support of the Corporate Plan and happy to endorse it, a couple of concerns were raised which the Mayor endeavoured to answer.

Councillor Jonathan Wood, raised concerns regarding Superfast South Yorkshire, at which he expressed dismay in terms of its delivery as he felt it was failing in Doncaster with residents in outlying villages still not receiving adequate broadband services. The Mayor assured Councillor Wood she would find out more information on this issue and provide him with a written response. A concern was also voiced in respect of the airport, but Members were assured that this continued to be a priority of the Sheffield City Region to drive its success forward and increase its connectivity in the region.

RESOLVED that Council approve the updated Corporate Plan.

80 Independent Education and Skills Commission: One Doncaster Report - Statement of Implementation

The Council considered a report presented by Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, that detailed the outcome of the review undertaken by the Independent Education and Skills Commission. Councillor Fennelly informed Members that the review resulted in an excellent piece of work that was very clear about the challenges faced by the Council. The report identified seven characteristics of an effective education and skills system, and made thirty recommendations that would look to improve, enhance and strengthen provision in the Borough. Members noted that the Commission pointed out that a lot of good work and practice was already ongoing in the Borough and in many cases, all that was needed was better connectivity.

The Council was informed that extensive consultation had been undertaken on the 'One Doncaster' report and the response had been overwhelmingly positive, with useful feedback resulting in the reconfiguring of certain details of the report in order to enable it to move forward for delivery, with the Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership response and statement of implementation presented at the Business Doncaster Ambassador Event on 1st February, 2017.

Councillor Fennelly explained that one of the key points of the report to create a Board specifically concerned with Skills and Education, was now being acted upon, with members from different partners appointed as Joint Chairs. They would now work towards establishing the Board and create a detailed Implementation Plan.

Councillor Fennelly concluded by stating that Education and Skills touched on everything that was done in the Borough; it was linked to the economy, health and also to stronger and safer communities. Most importantly, it was about the greatest resource, the Borough's young people, and the sort of world that they would grow up in, the opportunities presented for them, and the role that the Council would play in growing Doncaster as a place to live, learn, work and do business. The report provided a great opportunity to do things differently and make an enormous difference that would impact both now and in generations to come.

Following the consideration of the report, Members were invited to make any comments on the documents before them. Endorsement of the report was widely supported with the 'holistic approach' to education welcomed.

RESOLVED that the response be endorsed by the Council in order to develop plans, including the formal establishment of an Education and Skills Partnership Board, to commission and oversee the implementation of the One Doncaster recommendations.

Further to a Motion unanimously passed by Council in September 2016 objecting to the new Government proposal for the High Speed 2 Route in South Yorkshire, the Mayor introduced this report. It was reported that the Government had launched a consultation on Property and Route Refinement and the final response to this consultation had to be submitted by 9th March, 2017. The Mayor outlined that the proposed Council response would be in line with the position agreed by Members at Council and the paper before them was for endorsement and comment prior to its submission.

The report presented to Members outlined the key issues that would be addressed as part of the consultation response. The new proposals would have a major impact on local residents and communities, particularly in Mexborough and Barnburgh. Additionally, the Sheffield Midland Spur Option would:-

- Provide fewer and smaller trains, giving fewer seats for Sheffield City Region passengers and reducing service frequency;
- Offer inferior connectivity to other major cities; and
- Increase journey times.

The Mayor stated that in her view, the facts made the proposals entirely unacceptable. Furthermore, since the Council had passed its Motion in September, further information had come to light that only served to reinforce the view that it was unacceptable. Members noted that far from saving the £1 billion predicted with the Sheffield Midland Spur, the new proposal would actually cost more than the Meadowhall route; both to develop and operate. Moreover, the Mayor reported that the Meadowhall option would hopefully look to deliver 1000 extra jobs and more than £350 million in GVA to the region compared with the Sheffield Midland option.

In terms of the residents of the Shimmer Estate who would be affected by the route, the Mayor stated that the consultation packages proposed to ensure that they were no worse off as a result were not enough and the Council was calling on HS2 to address this issue.

The Mayor concluded her presentation of the report by stating that the proposals were not acceptable in any way to either Doncaster or the wider region, and asked Members in the Chamber to endorse the Council's approach.

Also in attendance at the meeting, were Neil Firth, Head of Service for Major Projects and Investment, and David Pownall, Senior Project Manager, HS2, who provided Members with an informative presentation which went into great depth and explained in detail, the proposal and its impact, along with the Council's analysis of the HS2 Proposals. Following the presentation, Members were afforded the opportunity to speak on this item and a number of issues were raised.

A number of Members raised concerns in respect of the impact on residents in the Borough, largely in Mexborough on the Shimmer Estate, and also in other areas including Barnburgh, Clayton, Sprotbrough and Hickleton. Strong concerns were voiced that the compensation proposed simply did not go far enough to balance the cost, disturbance and

upset to people's lives. Several Members requested that further weight be added to this in the Council's response, in order to reinforce the devastating impact of the proposal on residents in the Borough. Significant parts of the Shimmer Estate would be affected with upheaval that could not be compensated for fairly and Members were in agreement that any proposed compensation should be considered under special circumstances, and not based on the figures originally quoted as being 'fair and reasonable' in the original scheme.

Additionally, it was requested that a quick and timely decision on the proposal be made as a priority as currently, people's lives were 'in limbo' whilst they waited for the final outcome.

Members also identified environmental and planning concerns such as the impact on Green Belt, wildlife and habitat, disregard for Planning Policy, wildlife and conservation strategies and conservation and ecology statements. It was a project of national significance and therefore, should look to deliver national benefits, but there was the feeling that this was not the case, with utter disregard for the people affected.

Members commended the Mayor and Officers for all their hard work and determination in the preparation of the Council's approach, and Officers agreed to take forward the points raised prior to the submission of the Council's response on 9th March, 2017.

RESOLVED that the Council's approach presented to the Government's consultations on their new High Speed Rail Proposals, as set out within the body of the report, be endorsed.

82 Adjournment of Meeting

RESOLVED that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17(l), the meeting stand adjourned at 4.10p.m, to be reconvened on this day at 4.20 p.m.

83 Reconvening of Meeting

RESOLVED that the meeting reconvened at 4.20 p.m.

84 Proposed Diary of Meetings - 2017/18

The Council considered a report which proposed a provisional Diary of Meetings for the 2017/18 Municipal Year, in order to allow Elected Members to be consulted and comment on the meeting cycle prior to its formal adoption at the Annual Meeting of Council in May, 2017.

The proposed Diary of Meetings for the 2017/18 Municipal Year, was attached at Appendix A to the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the proposed Diary of Meetings for the 2017/18 Municipal Year, attached at Appendix A, be noted; and
- (2) the final version of the Diary of Meetings be presented to the Annual Meeting of Council in May, 2017 for approval.

85 Freedom of the Borough Application - Ben Parkinson MBE

The Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, presented a report to the Chamber, which sought Members support in conferring the Freedom of the Borough on Ben Parkinson, MBE.

The Chair reported that Ben needed little introduction and was a well-known individual both locally and nationally, with no challenge being too great for him despite his disability. As a young boy, Ben's dream had been to join the British Paratroopers, a dream that he achieved; he fought the Battle of Rommalia Bridge on his 19th Birthday, served 7 months in Kosovo at age 20, and volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan in 2003. On 12th September, 3 weeks before the end of his tour, Ben was in a Land Rover when a huge anti-tank mine detonated under the vehicle. Ben was not given a chance of survival and was immediately flown home to be with his family. He remained in a coma for several months whilst his family and friends maintained a vigil at his bedside. Despite his disabilities, Ben had worked tirelessly and gone from strength to strength, dedicated to becoming as fit as possible, improving his physical fitness, speech and memory, and learning to walk on prosthetic limbs and hoped one day, to return to his regiment; a feat never before attempted by anyone who had suffered such a severe head injury.

Over the years since his injuries, Ben had been a Patron of 'The Pilgrim Bandits', a charity that had raised millions of pounds to help and inspire wounded soldiers to live their lives to the full, and Ben had been involved first-hand, in many fund raising efforts and had undertaken many extreme challenges in order to raise money for injured servicemen and women. Ben had been an example of inspiration to old and young alike, and had a passion for overcoming adversity.

The Chair stated that the Freedom of the Borough was the very least the Council could do to recognise the achievements of this heroic young serviceman from Doncaster, who was a brave young man with a wicked sense of humour, a winning smile and an indomitable spirit.

Following the Chair of Council's presentation, Members of the Chamber were afforded the opportunity to comment on the report. Councillors paid tribute to Ben and whole heartedly supported the request to confer the Freedom of the Borough. Members conveyed their thanks and appreciation to Ben for all that he had done for our country and acknowledged he was an inspiration to everyone.

RESOLVED that Council agree to bestow the Freedom of the Borough on Ben Parkinson, MBE, and recognised and endorsed his selflessness, determination and fighting spirit, and his passion to meet and overcome every adversity and challenge faced before him along with his ability to inspire young and old both locally and nationally.

86 Questions by Elected Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 15.2 and 15.3:-

A. Questions on Notice

No questions on notice had been received for this meeting.

B. Questions Without Notice

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.2, the Chair accepted the following questions from Elected Members during Question Time:-

A. Questions to Ros Jones, Mayor of Doncaster

Q. Councillor Clive Stone asked the following question:-

“The pack we got through was informative to say the least; there was a lot of figures produced that took a lot of going through to find the answers we wanted to find out. What I would like to ask is, going back to the Budget figures, there are a lot of figures where we are saving money, but what I would like to see is, what were the original figures which we were saving money from in as much as it does not state how much. For instance, Consultancy and Agency costs; we are going to save money there, but it does not say how much the original budget was. It gives a figure, but not where we are coming from. I would like a bit more information to see how much we are saving and what the budget was originally. I am pleased to see we are saving £100,000 in Consultancy and Agency fees?”

A. The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“I don't think you are actually asking a question; I think you are asking for some information. I will ask Officers to provide you with more information; that is not a problem.”

B. Questions to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Equalities

There were no questions put to Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Equalities.

C. Questions to Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport

Q. Councillor Alan Smith asked the following question:-

“Joe, I have been informed by your fellow Cabinet Members that you are the person responsible for Transport. Going back to the Capital Plan, can you please tell me when the Local Transport Policy will be produced?”

A. Councillor Joe Blackham gave the following response:-

“You are actually talking about the Local Transport Plan. It is something that’s produced on a Sheffield City Region basis and an amount of money is allocated back to Doncaster. It is not something that we have a great deal of control of on how that money is spent. For example, money is allocated for cycling provision. It is a specified sum of money that we have very little input into how this is spent.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.7, Councillor Alan Smith asked the following supplementary question:-

Q. “So basically, we do not have any input into any kind of decision or control of what the plan comprises of?”

A. Councillor Joe Blackham gave the following response:-

“It’s the Combined Authority that takes the decisions. The allocation is then sent through to Doncaster and by and large, it is pre-allocated and ring fenced for specific uses.”

D. Questions to Councillor Tony Corden, Cabinet Member for Customer, Corporate and Trading Services

In the absence of Councillor Tony Corden, Cabinet Member for Customer, Corporate and Trading Services, the Chair of Council informed Members that any questions for Councillor Corden be submitted in writing to the Executive Office after the meeting and a response would be provided.

E. Questions to Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools

There were no questions put to Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools.

F. Questions to Councillor Pat Knight, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

There were no questions put to Councillor Pat Knight, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

G. Questions to Councillor Chris McGuinness, Cabinet Member for Communities, the Voluntary Sector and Environment

There were no questions put to Councillor Chris McGuinness, Cabinet Member for Communities, the Voluntary Sector and Environment.

H. Questions to Councillor Bill Mordue, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills, Tourism and Culture

There were no questions put to Councillor Bill Mordue, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills, Tourism and Culture.

I. Questions to Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Housing

Q. Councillor Bev Chapman asked the following question:-

“Please can you confirm that you became aware of the fly-tipping issues on the derelict Windhill site on Tuesday 14th February, following a visit from the CEO of St Leger Homes, Paul Tanney, and Local Ward Councillors?”

A. Councillor Jane Nightingale gave the following response:-

“Yes Bev, that’s right.”

J. Questions to Councillor John Mounsey, Chair of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

There were no questions put to Councillor John Mounsey, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

87 Annual Report on Executive Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency Provisions

The Council considered a report which informed Members of Key Decisions taken under Special Urgency Provisions, which had been taken by the Executive between the period 1st March, 2016 and 2nd March, 2017, which had not been included on the Forward Plan. The ability to take decisions under Special Urgency, was provided for within legislation and reflected in the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council’s Constitution.

The report informed Council that one decision had been taken by the Mayor of Doncaster under Special Urgency provisions during the period:-

- Appointment of Willmott Dixon Construction Limited to deliver the construction of the National College for High Speed Rail in Doncaster.

The decision was decision taken by Mayor Ros Jones on Monday, 11th April, 2016, in consultation with Councillor John Mounsey, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. A copy of the decision record and accompanying report was circulated to all Members on Monday, 11th April, 2016.

RESOLVED that the action taken in accordance with Special Urgency provisions of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, be noted.

88 To receive the Minutes of the following Joint Authorities:-

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following Joint Authorities be noted:-

- A. Sheffield City Region Combined Authority held on 30th January, 2017;
- B. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority held on 16th January, 2017; and
- C. South Yorkshire Pensions Authority held on 12th January, 2017.

89 Conveyance of Thanks

At the conclusion of formal business, the Chair of Council, Councillor David Nevett, expressed his thanks and appreciation to all Elected Members for their work and contributions over the year which had allowed them to make informed choices in the course of their deliberations. The Chair wished Members all the best for the future and thanked them for giving him the opportunity to undertake the role of Chair of Council, and stated that it was an experience he would remember for the rest of his life.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____