

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 4th July, 2017 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Tuesday 11th July, 2017

The end of the call in period is 5.00 p.m. on Thursday 20th July 2017 and therefore, the decisions can be implemented on Friday 21st July, 2017

Present:

Vice-Chair - Councillor Glyn Jones (Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities) (In the Chair)

Cabinet Member for:

Councillor Nigel Ball	Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure and Culture
Councillor Joe Blackham	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Street Scene and Trading Services
Councillor Rachael Blake	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care
Councillor Nuala Fennelly	Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools
Councillor Chris McGuinness	Portfolio Holder for Communities, Voluntary Sector and the Environment
Councillor Bill Mordue	Portfolio Holder for Business, Skills and Economic Development
Councillor Jane Nightingale	Portfolio Holder for Customer and Corporate Services

Apologies:-

An apology for absence was received from the Chair, Mayor Ros Jones

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

There were no public questions or statements made at the meeting.

Decision records dated 20th June, 2017, be noted.

DECISION 1.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE
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6. The Contribution of Affordable Housing Section 106 to Ongo Homes Housing Association for the Development at Ivor Grove, Balby.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) approved the drawdown of £250,000 s106 from Affordable Housing Commuted sums to Ongo Homes to support delivery of the Ivor Grove Scheme; and
- (2) approved the inclusion of the grant within the Council Capital Programme as a grant to be third party.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received a report seeking the approval for the drawdown of £250,000 s106 from the £2.42m commuted sum contributions for Affordable Housing to Ongo Homes Housing Association to support the delivery of the new affordable housing scheme at Ivor Grove, Balby. The scheme itself had already been approved by both Cabinet and the Council's Planning Committee. It was reported that the scheme is scheduled to deliver a mix of 2 and 3 bed family homes along with a proportion of 2 bed bungalows. In total the scheme is scheduled to deliver 50 new affordable homes.

Members were advised that as part of any development appraisal process, the financial viability is assessed. Original viability presented a fully costed scheme; however as a direct consequence of the local community formally requesting the adoption of two rights of way on site, leading to the requirement to significantly alter layouts and the potential risk to the deliverability of the scheme this would pose, resulted in an overall funding shortfall of £830,000. It was also advised that to alleviate the shortfall both Ongo Homes and Keepmoat have both provided additional contributions of £290,000 to reduce the shortfall to a figure of £250,000.

It was reported that the proposed s106 contribution will mitigate this shortfall. Without the contribution the scheme would not be deemed financially viable to progress, and would have to be deferred until additional funding could be found from alternative sources.

Following the presentation of the report, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones stated that as members had heard, colleagues have previously agreed to progress this scheme to deliver new housing in Balby. As the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing, he recognised the benefits that partnership arrangements such as this can play in delivering new social housing for the benefit of Doncaster residents. He stated that there is a local consideration, and Members will also be aware that as Ward Councillor, he had spoken at the Planning Committee on behalf of some residents who are opposed to the development. He commented that clearly these decisions are balanced taking all factors into account and Planning permission for the scheme was granted and the report therefore relates to the provision of Section 106 funding towards the scheme.

Cabinet welcomed the report and scheme which would provide much needed social housing for residents within Balby.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 2 – Identify the funding from an alternative source. The Council does not have the capital funds available to support the scheme (£2.04m), nor does Keepmoat or Ongo Homes.

Option 3 – Do nothing and refuse the contribution. This option would leave the scheme with a £250,000 shortfall, and would prevent the scheme from progressing until additional gap funds can be found.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Peter Dale, Director of Regeneration and Environment.

DECISION 2.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. Options for the future of Doncaster Central Library, Doncaster Museum, Art Gallery, Archives and Library Services for Schools.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) approved the delivery of £14m Doncaster Culture and Learning Centre (DCLC – a working title) Project, to be funded as follows;
 - £10m from MRP underspends;
 - any shortfall in funding from asset disposals and/or external grants is to be funded by using £4m of borrowing from the Council's Investment & Modernisation Fund (IMF),
- (2) noted that the DCLC Project is to be delivered on the site of the former Girls School located at Chequer Road/Waterdale, incorporating the façade of the existing building;
- (3) noted that delivery of the DCLC Project will provide an opportunity for up to £0.51m revenue savings to be made for the Libraries and Heritage Services Budget from 2020/21, by running a more efficient, joined-up service for the public. The exact extent of these revenue savings is to be determined as the new model for Library and Heritage Services is developed with the

DCLC Project;

- (4) delegated authority to the Director of People and the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure and Culture to negotiate and enter into funding agreements with funding organisations (such as Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund) to secure financial support for the new build project;
- (5) delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and Environment and Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio holder for Public Health, Leisure and Culture to negotiate and enter into contract for the construction of the DCLC project. Obtaining funding in this way will be crucial, as the local authority's Section 151 officer will not sign off the project unless it is absolutely clear that funding is viable, realistic and achievable. Whilst prudential borrowing is available to underwrite the project; the Section 151 officer is only willing to borrow knowing that the project meets the criteria, expectations and desired outcomes of national funding bodies;
- (6) agreed that the existing Museum on Chequer Road be retained for a period of time as an interim measure, and used mainly by Heritage Services for 'back of house' functions, including heritage storage, and access to heritage storage, and access to heritage objects for researchers. Doncaster's Heritage Services has on-going and statutory storage requirements, and whilst a robust storage reduction plan will be in place as part of this project, a storage facility will be required of sufficient standards and quality in future. A commercial venue is likely to be significantly more expensive due to the environmental controls and access costs, and there are no other assets in the Council's portfolio which meet the requirements described in Appendix 3. By taking out the majority of storage requirements from the floor space of the new build, this frees up space for public use and commercial letting, which in turn will increase usage and income;
- (7) approved further IMF borrowing of £0.1m to undertake essential building condition works at the Museum building to maintain it as an interim storage facility;
- (8) approved the disposal of the following buildings, and ring fence capital receipt to fund the DCLC Project:
 - Central Library, Waterdale
 - Doncaster Archives, King Edward Road, Balby
 - Library Services for schools, Top Road, Barnby Dun (insofar as the site is not currently subject to a community lease);
- (9) agreed that the project be added to the Council's Capital Programme, to be managed by the Director of Regeneration and Environment; and
- (10) approved the transfer of the £4.1m virement from the Finance and Corporate Services Capital Programme, which contains the Investment & Modernisation Fund allocation, into the Regeneration and Environment

Capital Programme, where this scheme will be delivered and monitored.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet member for Public Health, Leisure & Culture presented the report to Cabinet stating that as portfolio holder for culture and libraries, he was passionate about the wide ranging benefits which libraries and museums can deliver to the Council and its partners, and more importantly to the public.

He reported that the traditional access points to information and the written word are at the beginning of the 21st Century being redefined with the continued and growing competition of digital access to information and published books. Commercial providers offer greater services for those who can afford to pay, but little for those individuals who cannot afford broadband, new technology or commercial contracts. This is ultimately where the contemporary library/museum steps in, in the same way as it did 150 years ago, to provide access to information services free at the point of need to individuals and local communities who need access to services, but who cannot afford to pay.

Councillor Ball commented that the new build proposed will cost less than the current service offer, and yet be a game-changer, and a significant step change in terms of the benefits the library and museum will be able to deliver for all our residents, from across the borough, regardless of age or background. In this new building, with its focus especially on supporting the local curriculum, on the digital and creative economy, and support for the self-employed and small businesses, our residents will be able to learn how to build a robotic arm as easily as borrow a book, to experience our railway heritage from the footage of the Mallard, through virtual reality, as easily as to view great works of art.

It was stated that the aim of the building is to inspire and delight all our residents, to achieve a sense of pride in our culture and learning and to support our residents on the learning and skills ladder, to take the step from interest, to a skill, to a formal course of learning in our schools, academies, colleges and the proposed UTC. Councillor Ball commented that with this project, we know that we are punching above our weight, but that is the Council's ambition. We want our people to see and experience the borough as a quality place, to live, work, to see our children through their education, to learn and to enjoy and this new build fits in with that aspiration.

He went on to say that the build fits in with quality aspirations of excellence in planning and building within the town centre master plan. It is aligned to the focus on STEM Skills and creative business growth. It will be a centre for public diversity, showcasing the works of our schoolchildren alongside installations of national and international significance. It will be a true gateway to the super-digital highway.

Members were advised that the plan will see the following four existing buildings will be consolidated into one high quality modern building capable of providing residents, businesses and visitors with a first class 21st Century experience:-

- Doncaster Central Library
- Doncaster Archives in Balby
- Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery

- Library Services for Schools at Top Road, Barnby Dun

It was noted that the wide consultation with residents will take place to ensure the design and resources are put in place which best reflects needs and aspirations.

Councillor Ball stated that the current buildings are old, tired and some are in need of significant maintenance and repair. Money would need to be spent on refurbishing these and even then, they could not offer the types of services we want to provide. The Council has a plan to revolutionise its cultural services and the best way to do this is from one purpose built, flexible building which is easy to get to, thanks to its town centre location. He reported that with the condition of the existing buildings and our plans, all bar Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery would be disposed of or found an alternative use once the new building opens. As an example the existing Central Library could be turned into a new retail use or residential properties. He stated that this will be a transformational change of how library and heritage resources are provided for the benefit of the residents of the borough. He advised Cabinet that this was not about maintaining the status quo, it was a total step change which meets our aspirations and ambitions to deliver top quality modern services and facilities.

In conclusion Councillor Ball reported that this was a once in a generation opportunity to pull our library and heritage service buildings from the 1960s into the 21st Century, transforming its services and future proofing them for the benefit of all our residents. He further stated that no matter where our residents are from, what their background was, this will be a building of and for the people of Doncaster. He commented that libraries are machines of enlightenment, information and knowledge. They lead to the empowerment of the people. 'Libraries do indeed give us power' and this decision if approved will hand that power back to our people.

Cabinet welcomed the report highlighting the particular benefits to Doncaster's Children and Young People and the need for them to be encouraged to use the enhanced digital systems the building will offer. It was felt that the building was a fantastic venture and good news story which will produce an iconic worldwide facility for the borough. Comments were also made in relation to the due regard statement which was considered to be a well thought out process which had given consideration to all communities within the borough.

At this point, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones requested that the members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting, whilst Cabinet considered the exempt appendix attached to the report.

Members were provided with further details in relation to funding for the glass encasement to the frontage of the building.

Members of the public and press were invited back into the meeting.

In conclusion, the Deputy Mayor stated that Cabinet were happy to approve the report and indicated that they liked the glass encasement design and would like the delivery of the building to remain within the existing financial envelope. However, by obtaining funding through grants this would meet any shortfall that may occur within the budget.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Options considered were outlined with paragraphs 53 to 56 of the report.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Appendix 6 to the report was exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Peter Dale, Director of Regeneration and Environment/Damian Allen, Director of People.

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker