



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 17th December, 2019 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Wednesday, 18th December, 2019

The call in period for these decisions expires at 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 31st December, 2019. The decisions cannot be implemented until after that date and time.

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 Bill Mordue	Portfolio Holder for Business, Skills and Economic Development
Councillor Jane Nightingale	Portfolio Holder for Customer and Corporate Services.

Apologies:-

Apologies were received from the Chair, Mayor Ros Jones and Councillors Nuala Fennelly and Chris McGuinness.

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

No Public questions or statements were made at the meeting.

Decision records dated 3rd December, 2019, be noted.

DECISION 1.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. Get Doncaster Cycling Strategy.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) endorsed the Get Doncaster Cycling Strategy; and
- (2) committed its support to the development of the ambitions within the strategy

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received a report introduced by Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure and Culture seeking the endorsement of the Get Doncaster Cycling Strategy.

He reported that there had been significant investment in cycling infrastructure, support and events since Doncaster previously adopted a Cycling Strategy in 2013. As a result, the level of motivation and ambition surrounding cycling has increased and it is important that the Get Doncaster Cycling Strategy should match this.

The Get Doncaster Cycling Strategy aims to:-

- Build on the successes of the previous Strategy;
- Provide the opportunity to better coordinate the complex strands that make up the best active travel environment;
- Tackle barriers that make cycling less attractive to some; and
- Contribute to Doncaster being a better, nicer place to live, learn and work.

It was reported, that the Council want to continue to support people to consider cycling as part of everyday life, for work, pleasure and everything in between, by ensuring riding a bike is easy, safe and pleasant. The Council would also like Doncaster residents to benefit from the positive impact that cycling can have on their individual health and wellbeing, including various aspects of physical mental and social health.

In addition, the Council recognise the positive contribution that cycling can have on improving air quality and addressing the climate emergency by reducing car use, particularly for short journeys and therefore traffic and emissions, further benefitting the health and wellbeing of residents.

Cabinet were advised that the Council has consulted and listened to over 300 residents, community organisations and stakeholders and Councillor Ball wished to thank them for their views, support and help in developing this strategy and shaping ambitions for the future.

Councillor Ball commented that the Strategy and Action Plan should not be seen as static documents, and they will be reviewed, updated and developed to accurately reflect learning and what is and is not working.

In conclusion, Cabinet noted that the Doncaster Active Travel Alliance would be responsible for overseeing these processes and the implementation of the Strategy.

Cabinet welcomed the report, but, asked that more emphasis on safe cycle parking be encompassed within the Strategy.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 2 – To not develop, adopt and implement an improved Cycling Strategy for Doncaster, therefore to not capitalise on the existing ambition to support cycling as a means to improve the place of Doncaster; and not coordinating a more effective and comprehensive approach that builds upon previous investment.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Dr Rupert Suckling, Director of Public Health/Peter Dale, Director of Economy and Environment.

DECISION 2.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. Future Placements Strategy.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) endorsed the development of six new, two bedroomed Children's homes, which will reduce the need for out of authority providers, and ensure Doncaster children are looked after in Doncaster, in secure and stable environments akin to family settings;
- (2) approved the purchase and refurbishment of two, two bedroomed Children's homes to the Learning and Opportunities: Children and Young People capital programme and transfer budget of £0.6m from the Investment & Modernisation Fund held in the Corporate Resources capital programme;

- (3) approved the increase in the 'Staying Put' rate to foster carers, to enable more young people to remain at home with their foster carers once they become 18 years old;
- (4) endorsed the decision to develop a more modern and improved Short Breaks overnight offer, and to note that a further report will be presented to the Executive following conclusion of a consultation exercise with stakeholders;
- (5) supported the plan to recruit more in-house foster carers, including specialist foster carers and reduce the number of children in independent fostering agency placements and out of authority providers;
- (6) supported the plan to develop a new in-house residential setting, for young people with the most complex needs aged 16 years and above;
- (7) welcomed associated savings arising in the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block and Doncaster Children's Services Trust cost of service delivery; and
- (8) acknowledged the level of consultation to date and the commitment to continue to consult throughout subsequent phases.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report introduced by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones on a Future Placement Strategy for Doncaster. He reported that Doncaster had experienced higher levels of demand for Children in Care than previously anticipated, which has placed a huge pressure on the system in relation to capacity, quality and cost. Doncaster had experienced a growth rate of 11% from 2013 to 2018. However, over the last year, this has reduced, and whilst it remains high in overall terms, it does give confidence moving forward.

Councillor Jones reported that the Council, Children's Trust and Clinical Commissioning Group have developed the Future Placements Strategy. The vision is for all children to have the right to a family life and wherever possible they will be supported to live with their birth parents or family. Where this is not possible, they will live with nurturing and supportive families. If they cannot live in a family home, they will live in a Children's home, which replicates family life as closely as possible. It was noted that every effort will be made either to safely return children to their families or to ensure they have a permanent alternative family as soon as possible. This presented another example of the developing relationships across the partnership that have and continue to, bring improvements to children's services.

The report provided a background of:-

- Current provision for Children in Care in-house residential homes
- Families who receive an overnight Short Breaks service
- The offer for young people leaving care, to stay with their foster carers when they become 18 years old.

Councillor Jones stated that it was important to note the wider context around foster care provision and semi-independent living arrangements for young people leaving care, as this has an impact on how young people will adjust into an adult world. In conclusion, the report sets out a series of recommendations that will improve services for children and young people by providing greater opportunities for them to thrive in secure and stable environments akin to family settings within Doncaster.

Cabinet welcomed the report and commented that the continued support for young people after leaving care would make a huge difference to a young person's life. Cabinet noted that in some circumstances, there is a need for a child to be placed out of authority, but it was pleasing to see that every endeavour was being made to bring those children back into the borough whether that be with their own families or within an alternative family environment.

In response to a question raised with regard to recruitment for specialist foster carers, Cabinet were advised that numbers of foster carers had already increased and the Trust were confident of obtaining 25 new carers this year. It was reported that under the Mocking Bird Model, there were four existing carers who had come forward to become hub carers. Further recruitment campaigns would be taking place around specialisms and this would provide an opportunity for existing carers or other similar people to step into a new role.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Riana Nelson, Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills & Director of Children's Services.

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker