



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 30th June, 2020 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Thursday, 2nd July, 2020

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Monday, 13th July, 2020. These decisions will not be implemented until after this date and time.

Present:

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

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

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 Jane Nightingale	Portfolio Holder for Customer and Corporate Services.

Apologies:-

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Bill Mordue

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

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

Decision Records dated 16th June 2020, be noted.

DECISION 1.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. Charter Against Modern Slavery

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved that:-

- (1) the Council sign up to the Co-operative Party's Charter Against Modern Slavery, as shown in Appendix 1; and
- (2) the Council implement practices and policy changes to adhere to the principles of the Charter and ensure compliance with its requirements.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received a report introduced by Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet member for Customer and Corporate Services stating that the proposal is that Doncaster council sign up to the Co-operative Party's Charter Against Modern Slavery.

She reported that although slavery was abolished in the UK by the Slavery Abolition Act 1833, there are more slaves today than ever before in human history. Figures from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) suggest that there are more than 40 million people in modern slavery across the world, with nearly 25 million held in forced labour.

Councillor Nightingale advised that there were 3,805 victims of modern slavery identified in the UK in 2016 alone, although the Home Office estimate that true figures may actually exceed 10,000 in the UK alone.

She stated that modern slavery is happening worldwide. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. This can also include sexual and criminal exploitation.

Cabinet were advised that Local authorities have a number of statutory duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 which DMBC adhere to.

This Charter is a way of recognising what councils can do above their statutory obligations to raise awareness and ensure that their own supply chains do not contribute to modern slavery.

The Charter relates specifically to local authorities' approach to procurement. UK Councils spend over £40bn procuring services through the contracts they sign every year. Such serious spending lends them leverage, which they can use to stamp out any modern slavery being practised in their supply chains.

In conclusion, Councillor Nightingale stated that when signing up to the Charter the Council commits to taking up the ten associated practical steps.

Following the introduction of the report, a number of comments were made as follows:-

Councillor Nigel Ball welcomed the report, which made a welcome addition to an already progressive Council and has an impact on how the Council will be working with contractors. He looked forward to receiving the annual report and stated that the Charter will provide added impetus for giving support to people to join free trade unions and act accordingly and he fully supported the proposal.

Councillor Glyn Jones echoed the comments made by Councillor Ball and welcomed the report, which was something that he had been trying to achieve for a number of years and he was glad this had been introduced. He stated that there were a number of different facets to Modern Slavery all of which are victims, some indigenous and some brought in to perform activities some of which are less savoury. He stressed that there was a need to keep on top of this and follow national guidance. He was in full support of the proposal.

Councillor Nuala Fennelly also supported the proposal, highlighting that Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation was on the rise in the UK. There was a need to ensure that children are protected from these activities. She stated that it was important for the Council to have a Charter and the Council to show what it is doing in response to this issue.

Councillor Rachel Blake like other colleagues supported the proposal, which sends a clear message to organisations that this issue will be taken into account within the Council's Procurement Strategy. She highlighted the risk of vulnerable people including those with learning disabilities being exploited and the importance for the Council to make sure that support is given and including a clear message to both companies and the wider community that the Council will be supporting the most vulnerable.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Do not sign up to the Charter Against Modern Slavery but continue to ensure statutory compliance.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Scott Fawcus, Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services

DECISION 2.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. Supported Living Providers Hourly Rates 2020/21

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved the implementation of option 3, uplift based on a consistent costs basis/methodology and appropriate increases in the National Living Wage and Consumer Price Index, which recognises the cost pressures arising from general inflation, and, also provides a standardised cost basis approach that builds up the hourly rate for each provider.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report introduced by Councillor Rachel Blake, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care stating that the Council commissions a number of Supported Living Services (SLS) for people with learning disabilities.

She stated that SLS play a key role in enabling vulnerable members of communities to live more independent lives within those communities and services are typically delivered in small-scale shared housing and involve supporting individuals to access a range of community based opportunities that most of us take for granted.

Councillor Blake advised that a review of current SLS hourly rates has taken place as part of the annual contracted rate uplift process and benchmarking against other LAs in the region showed that Doncaster's SLS hourly rates were amongst the lowest and lower than rates for services similar to SLS also contracted with Doncaster.

She commented that a low rate for SLS reduces the ability of providers to provide the stable and consistent support required by people and also hampers SLS providers in recruiting and retaining staff.

Councillor Blake advised that having sustainable rates for SLS will:

- Support the objective of helping people move from more restrictive often institutional settings which often incurs significant additional expense
- Support the delivery of the Doncaster Growing Together Housing Programme (Learning Disability work stream) to explore a range of housing options to meet the needs and aspirations of individuals
- Support SLS providers to recruit and retain staff

In conclusion, she commented that the recommendation of this report will therefore promote better outcomes for vulnerable members of our communities and support Doncaster jobs.

Councillor Chris McGuinness asked whether there would be any financial implications for existing users which would have been covered by the Green Paper if it had of been introduced by Central Government. In response, Councillor Blake advised Cabinet that there were currently 323 existing users and none will receive

an increase in charges.

In addition, the Mayor emphasised that it was important that people receive the appropriate sums of money for the important work they do, and give them quality of life.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1 – Do nothing

This option would not allow providers to meet the statutory obligations to pay the 2020-21 increase in National Living Wage and is not recommended.

Option 2 – Uplift hourly rates to take account of NLW increase and CPI inflation

This option would allow providers to meet the statutory obligation to pay the 2020-21 increase in National Living Wage and address other inflationary pressures via the Consumer Prices Index. However it would not address the impact, sustainability and standardisation issues raised in the report, inhibiting delivery of the strategic ambitions of the Doncaster Growing Together Housing (Homes for All) Programme and Doncaster's Learning Disability and Autism Strategy housing work stream to provide a range of accommodation (and support) solutions to meet the needs and aspirations of people with a learning disability and/or autism so is not recommended. The hourly rates per provider under option 2 are shown in the appendix.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Appendix 1 to the report is Not for Publication because it contains commercially sensitive information which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Phil Holmes, Director of Adults, Health and Well-Being

DECISION 3.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

8. Future High Street Fund (FHSF) Full Business Case Waterdale and Spring Gardens.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved:-

- (1) that Doncaster Council applies for £21.06m from the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) (Appendix 1) which represents a 43% contribution to the total cost of £49.19m to develop business, leisure, culture and arts, retail space and associated infrastructure and public realm in Waterdale, Spring Gardens and potentially the site of St James' Baths;
- (2) subject to receipt of FHSF, the Council will:-
 - (a) Commit FHSF resources to the repurposing of Waterdale and Spring Gardens in line with investment profiled in Appendix 1;
 - (b) Enter into Heads of Terms with landowners identified in Appendix 1;
 - (c) Commence negotiations with interested parties to identify options for the redevelopment of Copley House and the old library site; and
- (3) authority be delegated to the Director of Economy and Environment (or in his absence the Assistant Director of Economy) and Director of Corporate Services (or in her absence the Assistant Director of Finance) in consultation with the Mayor and Portfolio Holder to conclude satisfactory funding agreements with both the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and, where appropriate facilitate agreements with the private sector

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received a report on the Future High Street Fund introduced by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones. He reported that Councillor Bill Mordue, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Economic Development, had played a part in bringing together ideas and putting pressure on Government to bring real investment and opportunities to towns which still feel the impact from the loss of traditional industries and jobs.

He stated that as early as September 2018, Mayor Ros hosted a national conference at the Mansion House to refine the 'ask' of Government and begin a concerted campaign to keep traditional industrial towns on the Government's agenda.

Councillor Jones reported that while the Future High Street Fund (and lately the Towns Deals for Doncaster's town centre and Stainforth) are welcome, there is more to do through the devolution agenda - and new funding programmes in the UK as the Council emerges from the transitional arrangements with the European Union.

Cabinet were advised that transformational change in town centres across Doncaster is at the heart of the Council's ambition moving out of the Covid-19 crisis. The Council want to be able to build on the investment already committed in the Civic and Cultural Quarter – with the Danum Library and Museum, the University Technical College and the Cinema and Restaurants, which are all due to open in the next 12 months.

In 2019, a borough-wide consultation 'Doncaster Talks' took place, with the residents of Doncaster giving a clear mandate for more "regeneration and investment" in the town centre. The Council is working to make this happen.

It was noted that Doncaster is one of around 100 towns selected to bid for the Future High Street Fund and our proposal is ambitious, but it is also achievable.

The Council are seeking £21m from the Government Fund to invest in transforming the pedestrian route through town from the Railway Station Gateway to the Civic and Cultural Quarter, breathing new life back into the Waterdale and Spring Gardens areas and help bring forward redevelopment of buildings in the Civic and Cultural Quarter in conjunction with private sector investment

In conclusion, he welcomed the scheme presented today, as a clear sign that Doncaster continues to move forward its ambitious plans for the town centre.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the Mayor stated that this was clearly something that will enhance the Town Centre. However, the Council are also keen to enhance other town centres within Doncaster and will continue to press Central Government for further funding to facilitate this.

In addition, Scott Cardwell, Assistant Director of Economy and Environment, commented that this proposal was adding onto the investment already made within the town such as the Civic & Cultural Quarter (CCQ), the Wool Market and Station Gateway. He stated that this specifically focussed around improving the route between railway station and the CCQ opening up a nice pedestrian area, which will lead to further investment from the private sector in and around that area.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Leave the market – two decades of under-investment in Waterdale has resulted in a gradual decline in a dilapidated state. History shows that the market will not pump prime the site and it will continue to stagnate without public intervention.

Do nothing – leave this area of the town centre in a dilapidated state, with the ensuing detrimental impact on the Civic and Cultural Quarter.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

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7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Scott Cardwell, Assistant Director Economy and Environment

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker