



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday, 23rd June 2021 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Friday 25th June 2021

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 6th July 2021. 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)

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

Cabinet Member for:

Councillor Lani-Mae Ball	Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Young People
Councillor Nigel Ball	Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning
Councillor Rachael Blake	Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care, Communities and Equalities
Councillor Mark Houlbrook	Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and Waste
Councillor Jane Nightingale	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources
Councillor Andrea Robinson	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

Apologies:-

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joe Blackham and Phil Cole.

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

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

Decision Record Forms from the meeting held on 9th June 2021 (previously circulated) were noted.

DECISION 1.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. Doncaster Archives Options Appraisal and Capital Business Case.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) Noted the information provided in the report; and
- (2) Approved to drawdown and commence spending the £1.5m allocation for Archives included in 2021/22 Capital Programme, as detailed in the report.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Councillor Nigel Ball presented the options to Cabinet for the modernisation of Doncaster's Archives and Records. In recent years these had been housed off-site which had been inaccessible for many of the Borough's residents. The investment at Danum Gallery, Library and Museum, and move from the Chequer Road Museum provided the opportunity to reconsider where the archives would be stored and allow service modernisation.

The proposals detailed within the report identify 3 phases:-

Phase 1 – Ensuring Compliance

The Cabinet heard that the first and immediate priority for Doncaster Archives was to achieve compliance with The National Archives requirements and enable Doncaster residents to access these records easily.

The suitability of the former museum site on Chequer Road has been reviewed and with costs identified for repairs, compliant storage, public access and maintenance works to be costed, prioritised and planned. In addition to the existing current service budget of £565k, a further investment of £1.5m was required to complete this work. However, once the work has been undertaken, the need to store offsite would cease, therefore saving the Council in the region of £123k per annum.

This investment will bring Doncaster Archives, the Local Studies Library collection and the Doncaster and District Family History Society together under one roof, meaning that residents could readily access the extensive collection in Doncaster town centre. The planned completion date for this work was October 2021.

Phase 2 – Cataloguing and Storage of items at other Heritage sites.

Members noted that once Phase 1 had been completed, there were other sites across the Borough that required future cataloguing, including Bentley Storage Facility and Cusworth Hall, where there was currently a significant backlog.

A detailed feasibility study will be undertaken, with a detailed plan and funding options to be brought to Cabinet for consideration in spring 2022.

Phase 3 – Longer term Transformation Programme

Councillor Ball informed Cabinet that there was a national drive in favour of moving towards a digitisation of archives, although at present, Doncaster was not in a position to consider this option. However, it was noted that once the remedial action for Phases 1 and 2 had been completed, a proposal would be brought to Cabinet for consideration.

Members welcomed the report, and Cabinet were pleased that the modernisation of this facility would enable residents to undertake meaningful research with quick and easy access to Doncaster's archives within the Town Centre.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Options considered were detailed at paragraph 27-33 of the report

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, Skills and Culture (DCS)

DECISION 2.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. To accept funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for delivering a welcome back fund, a follow on from the recently delivered Re-opening High Streets fund.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved the acceptance of the grant funding to be utilised as per the safety measures set out in the approved Action Plan at Appendix 1 with a reduction of the fund for the town centre and an increase to the budget for the other four localities. This will provide £65,200 to each of the four localities (Doncaster Central, North, South and East), and £15,200 to Doncaster Town Centre.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, presented a report to Cabinet that provided information on the award of money from the Government for the safe re-opening of High Streets. In June 2020, following the first lockdown,

Doncaster Council was allocated £276,789 through the European Regional Development Fund Re-Opening high streets fund. The grant had been spent on items such as sanitiser units, safety promotional messages and a pedestrian safety scheme on Nether Hall Road.

Following this, in March 2021 ahead of non-essential retail re-opening on 12th April, the Government allocated a further £276,790 to Doncaster Council under what is now called the 'Welcome Back Fund' and an updated project plan had to be submitted to MHCLG by 31st May, 2021, with all grant funding to be spent by March 2022.

The Welcome Back fund is an extension of the original re-opening High Street fund with the scope of spend being essentially the same, with temporary adaptations to make high streets safer for visitors. However, added to the scope was place-based marketing to support safe celebration events on high streets and in local towns and projects to beautify areas to encourage people back on to our high streets safely.

The Deputy Mayor informed Cabinet that after consultation, the delivery project team proposed to split the budget equally between all five localities with a reduction to the fund for the town centre and an increase to the budgets for the other four localities. This would provide £65,200 to each of the four localities (Doncaster Central, North, South and East), and £15,200 to Doncaster Town Centre.

Cabinet also heard that discussions had taken place surrounding the project plan and it was recommended that greater consultation be carried out with Elected Members in order to ensure funding was focussed on the less affluent areas of the borough, which was a welcome proposal. Members commented that it was good to hear that meaningful engagement was being undertaken as Ward Councillors and their local residents knew their own areas better than anyone, meaning that money was spent effectively and positively. Many areas it was noted, had struggled throughout the Pandemic and many communities would benefit hugely from this funding, in order to safely welcome people back to the streets.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1: Do Nothing

There was the option not to accept the funding but this would have resulted in some of the work not being carried out and some of the cleaning / safety measures required being resourced from existing council budgets

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Dan Swaine, Director of Economy and Environment

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker