



# Doncaster Council

## Agenda

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To all Members of the

# CABINET

Notice is given that a Meeting of the Cabinet is to be held as follows:

**Venue:** Council Chamber - Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

**Date:** Wednesday, 23rd June, 2021

**Time:** 10.00 am

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### **PLEASE NOTE VENUE FOR THIS MEETING**

**Please Note:** Due to current restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, there will be very limited capacity in the public gallery for observers of the meeting. If you would like to attend to observe in person, please contact Governance Services on 01302 737462 / 736723 / 736716 / 736709 to request a place, no later than **12.00 noon on Tuesday, 22nd June, 2021**. Please note that the pre-booked places will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis and once pre-booked capacity has been reached there will be no further public admittance to the meeting. For those who are attending the meeting, please bring a face covering, unless you are exempt.

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**Damian Allen**  
Chief Executive

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Issued on: Tuesday, 15 June 2021

**Governance Services Officer for this meeting:** Amber Torrington  
01302 737462

**Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council**

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## Items

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To consider the extent, if any, to which the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting.
3. Public Questions and Statements.

**(A period not exceeding 20 minutes for questions and statements from members of the public and Elected Members to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones. Questions/Statements should relate specifically to an item of business on the agenda and be limited to a maximum of 100 words. As stated within Executive Procedure Rule 3.3 each person will be allowed to submit one question/statement per meeting. A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it by e-mail to the Governance Team no later than 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 18 June, 2021. Each question or statement must give the name and address of the person submitting it. Questions/Statements should be sent to the Governance Team, Floor 2, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU, or by email to [Democratic.Services@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@doncaster.gov.uk)).**

4. Declarations of Interest, if any.
5. Decision Record Forms from the meeting held on 9th June, 2021 for noting (previously circulated).

### **A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded**

#### **Key Decisions**

6. Doncaster Archives Options Appraisal and Capital Business Case. 1 - 12
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. 13 - 24

## **Cabinet Members**

### **Cabinet Responsibility For:**

**Chair – Ros Jones, Mayor of  
Doncaster**

Budget and Policy Framework

**Vice-Chair – Deputy Mayor  
Councillor Glyn Jones**

Housing and Equalities

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 Joe Blackham

Portfolio Holder for Highways, Infrastructure  
and Enforcement

Councillor Rachael Blake

Portfolio Holder for Children’s Social Care,  
Communities and Equalities

Councillor Phil Cole

Portfolio Holder for Finance

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

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## Doncaster Council

Date: 23 JUNE 2021

To the Chair and Members of CABINET

### DONCASTER ARCHIVES OPTIONS APPRAISAL AND CAPITAL BUSINESS CASE

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member, Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning	All	YES

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Doncaster has a significant historical asset in its archives collection, dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. The scale of archives and local history has the potential to offer a wide-ranging research facility to the borough's residents, enhances learning, skills, engagement, family history tourism, and pride in place.
2. The local authority has statutory duty to provide for the management of its historical records and artefacts as an essential part of their effective administration and governance. It is the Local Authority's responsibility to receive and maintain all local archaeological finds as directed by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
3. Before the development of the Danum Gallery Library and Museum, improved strategic engagement and development of a strategy, alignment to The National Archives (TNA) and organisations such as English Heritage progress has been limited; the result of which has meant that access to investment opportunities and thus for the public availability has been insufficient.
4. In 1982, a temporary decision was made to relocate historical and public records in to a former school building (Balby Archives). This facility had poor public access and storage conditions that were not fit for purpose and therefore reviewed in recent years, resulting in a number of archives being stored off site, whilst a new facility was identified.
5. The investment at Danum Gallery, Library and Museum and move from the Chequer Road Museum has presented the opportunity to reconsider where the archives could be accessed, stored and public service delivered through a process of modernisation, transformation, and consolidation, working with colleagues from the Council, service users, and The National Archives. The proposal in this report

identifies the refurbishment of the Museum on Chequer Road to house a range of Doncaster Archives, currently located offsite to enable a longer-term solution with the aim of this investment plan will ultimately enable archives to underpin and enhance knowledge of, and access to, Doncaster's history, heritage and public records. This will not be the case without investment, and a development and transformation plan.

6. The site of the previous museum on Chequer Road has been identified as a potential location for Doncaster's Archives, the Local Studies Library collection and co-location with the Doncaster and District Family History Society. A condition survey of the building indicates that with improved internal conditions, some additional refurbishment, improved public access and compliant storage installation, alongside environmental controls, the facility could be developed for this use. There are also large numbers of archaeological items in storage, resulting in significant ongoing cost.
7. This report outlines plans for the short, medium and long term, with a primary focus on the short term requirement for compliance in line with legislation and The National Archives, identified a phase 1 in paragraph 5.2. The report outlines the current ongoing costs of storing historical records and artefacts off site and the cost associated with the refurbishment of the previous museum site.
8. In addition to the archives stored off site, whilst not subject to immediate concerns, paragraph 5.3 identifies the need to undertake a further review of assets stored in other facilities that house a number of artefacts and exhibits. In the medium to longer term, neither facility is suitable for storage purposes.
9. At present there is a 16 year backlog to accession and inventory museum assets which have not been catalogued; 3-5 years' worth of archaeological finds, and as yet unidentified number of years' worth of archives backlog.

## **EXEMPT REPORT**

N/A

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

10. Cabinet is asked to:
  - Note the information provided in the report; and
  - Approve to drawdown and commence spending the £1.5m allocation for Archives included in 2021/22 Capital Programme, as detailed in this report.

## **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

11. Doncaster Archives will achieve better value for money for Doncaster's residents, improving the service offer significantly, making it more accessible, increasing usage and value by residents.
12. The service will be better integrated into Doncaster's cultural strategy and learning offer, providing greater opportunities for residents to conduct research more easily.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Context**

13. Doncaster archives maintains a collection of approximately 420m<sup>3</sup> of historical and public records. Public records, which include historical and contemporaneous documents from the health, education, police and justice sectors, at 33.17m<sup>3</sup> amount to approximately 12% of the collection. There are tens of thousands of individual items in the collection, in various media and sizes. A large majority of items can be stored in standard archive boxes; equally, many items are unique and individual in size and shape. Most Local Authority archives collections would typically maintain sufficient space for 25 years' worth of growth in accessions.
14. By October 2019, the premises used for storage in Doncaster (Balby Archives) were severely compromised due to the archives building fabric deteriorating at a rapid rate, and due to significant health and safety concerns that meant that staff and public were at risk of injury on site. Water ingress, damp, mould and dry rot left the structure of the building significantly weakened, with the heritage assets inside exposed to some deterioration. The site lacked sufficient on-site security as the building degraded, leading to an increased risk of theft of the historical and public records (most of the lead from the building roof was in the last two years of its use stripped and stolen).
15. The challenges of working on site and the significant risk posed to the archives location necessitated the commissioning of specialist contractors to be used for temporary storage. The collections were successfully decanted into facilities outside of the borough (Deep store in Cheshire for historical and public records that were not contaminated by mould, and Harwell in Oxfordshire for the thousands of records that required treatment and conservation). In line with regulations, permission was sought from The National Archives' in order to transfer records (where permission was necessary) to another location.
16. Throughout this time, the service has continued to engage both strategically and operationally with the statutory body for overseeing how local authorities manage their archives; The National Archives (TNA). Council officers and The National Archives regional and national staff have developed a positive working relationship, with Doncaster Council's continually appraising The National Archives of the plans for Doncaster.

### **Phase 1 – Ensuring Compliance**

17. The first and immediate priority for Doncaster Archives is to achieve compliance with The National Archives and to return Doncaster assets back to the borough for residents to access.
18. A condition survey has been undertaken to establish the suitability of the Chequer Road premises. The survey has identified costs for repairs, compliant storage, public access and maintenance works to be costed, prioritised and planned. The survey has reviewed the suitability of the building to operate as a multi-use facility, incorporating museum and art gallery stores, archives research and storage a local studies library, staff and volunteer work areas was commissioned. The survey identifies works necessary to bring the premises up to a serviceable state of repair and to rectify potential breaches of legislation and health and safety regulations.

19. To date an allocation from the directorate's service and capital budgets of £565k has been allocated, however, to ensure that the works identified in the condition survey are met and to secure the return of the archives currently located offsite, a further investment of £1.5m is required..

20. This investment would be required for the following items identified in the condition survey:

- Building Fabric: £672k
- Electrical Installations: £694k
- Mechanical Installations: £34k
- Museum Asset Removal and Management (creating space for archives to be returned from commercial storage: £50k
- Creation of a public research area in the Chequer Road site: £50k

21. The investment identified above will enable the co-locating of the Doncaster Archives, the Local Studies Library collection and the Doncaster and District Family History Society, meaning that residents have access to an extensive publicly accessible collection located in the town centre, and with archives (currently located off site at the cost of £123,594 per annum) returned to Doncaster.

22. The planned completion date for this work is October 2021. The service is working closely with The National Archives (TNA) to ensure that any works is compliant and fit for purpose, ultimately resulting in the return of the Doncaster Archives to a central facility with access to the public. The items currently in storage are conserved, and used for exhibition, display and educational purposes.

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

23. In addition to the archives stored off site, the following sites all store Doncaster artefacts, exhibits and archives. All of the identified sites require some remedial action to ensure suitability for storage, therefore it is recommended that a further review of assets is undertaken, a condition rectification plan is developed and working closely with key agencies identify opportunities to access external funding, to bring provisions to the required standard to ensure that these sites are suitable for storage in the medium to longer term. The sites currently storing assets are:

- Cusworth Hall (Second Floor Rooms)
- Bentley Storage Facility
- Chequer Road Building

24. It should also be noted that at present there is a 16 year backlog to accession and inventory museum assets which have not been catalogued; 3-5 years' worth of archaeological finds, and as yet unidentified number of years' worth of archives backlog.

25. A detailed feasibility study will be undertaken, a detailed plan and funding options will be returned to Cabinet in spring 2022.

## **Phase 3 – Longer term Transformation Programme**

26. There is a national drive as well as local benefit for moving towards a digitisation of archives, and whilst this would enable a much broader reach, reduce pressure on storage and present commercial opportunity, Doncaster is not yet in a position to consider this option, until the remedial action in the short and medium terms identified above are completed.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

27. Stop providing the service all together – this was not considered further. The collections in Archives detail the history and heritage of the borough from at least the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. A modern Archives service can enhance learning and skills, and enhance aspirations and understanding for both the borough's adults and young people. It would be difficult to apply a financial value to the assets in the collection. The reputational damage, and strategic relationship damage, with major funders would be long lasting and of greater consequence and cost than the cost of maintaining the Archives.
28. Consortium services – there is the potential to explore further the shared storage of some of the Archives (cold storage) across the South Yorkshire region, and there is also an offer of support from Sheffield Archives to reassess what we hold, how it is catalogued and managed, and how it can be improved in future. It is too early for Doncaster to consider this, but due to needing to deliver on phases 1 and 2 of this report first, however, this exploration will form part of the review as part of the phase 3 element highlighted in this report.
29. Commercial Storage Facility/Outsourcing – The National Archives commercial storage venues are limited, those available have been assessed, which prices upward of the figures currently being paid for a proportion of the Councils archive assets and artefacts offsite storage. Where facilities are lower in cost, these facilities do not provide the assurances for the Council or TNA compliance in relation to environmental and conservation requirements. These facilities lack the technical requirements to conserve and maintain historical and public records safely and effectively.
30. Working with the Council's property services team, a review was undertaken of sites available e.g. the former Stapleton Centre in Warmsworth was examined at length as a possible interim storage site, but The National Archives raised concerns related to the levels of fire detection, fire doors/resistance and intruder detection, which would present too big a risk for any classified categories of documents to be stored at this location. The costs of adapting and fitting-out the building (and therefore any existing vacant Council asset) were prohibitive for what would have been a temporary site. The Council does not have any other property available that would be suitable for the service's needs, for the same reasons. The service has considered the option of acquiring and converting a warehouse, but in the final analysis, it was clear that this would not be a cost effective solution for temporary storage needs.
31. The service is however able to use a Council-owned shop unit in Colonnades to store museum assets on a short-term basis, to create space in the Chequer Road building for shelving to be installed, and archives to be returned. This is considered cost prohibitive for the type of service offer detailed in this report. No land nor scoping nor capital has been identified for this purpose. A long term option, in maintaining the Chequer Road building, could be to apply for external capital funds to extend to that building, or convert part or all of it.
32. The Chequer Road building, despite the issues described in this report, continues to be advantageous compared to other options. It is a Council-owned building, in an accessible location for the public, with car parking and on-site amenities. £565k is allocated within current capital budgets and service budgets for improvement works

from May 2021 onwards, pending Cabinet decisions,, with the team ready to conduct works of the phase one improvement works to the Chequer Road building as soon as necessary approvals are given for the additional £1.5m from the capital finance programme, and with work conducted from May to October 2021.

33. The recommended way focus for phase 1 is to safeguard the archival materials, make the materials finally and definitively accessible to the public, with higher levels of engagement and income generation, would be a mixed economy of:

33.1 Retention of the Chequer Road facility for hot and medium storage (phase one, dependent on approval of this report), whilst

33.2 Returning Archives which are currently in store at commercial rates and which would go in to the Chequer Road site, and publically accessible (also part of phase one, dependent on approval of this report).

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

34. It is expected that the recommended options will have less ongoing revenue cost and / or less capital costs than any other option detail in section 6 of this report. The location of the former museum site on Chequer Road is still the best location for accessible research for the public using the borough’s archives. Whilst requiring a range of adaptations and improvements, the building is secure, has good storage capabilities, and has environmental control capabilities. In terms of long-term cost implications, enhanced customer service, efficiencies in service, and the equality and opportunity of access.

35. This investment made by Doncaster Council will help safeguard and enrich our wide and expansive range of archives and broaden the service offer in line with the revised Borough Strategy and ensure the service can continue to invest in the rich historical heritage of Doncaster.

### IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

36.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>	<p>Access to quality cultural experiences, including heritage experiences which Archives can support and enhance, are reported to be a factor as important as quality of schools in an area when people make decisions on where to live.</p>

	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster’s people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	<p>High quality heritage-focused interventions require professional, organised heritage asset management. These interventions then build on social and cultural capital. Heritage Doncaster has demonstrated in 2019/20 that interaction with heritage has increased respondents appreciation for where they live by 14% by accessing heritage in their community. 94% of participants in the Arts Council England-funded National Portfolio Organisation work reported learning new skills, and 86% shared their knowledge, skills and memories.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p>	<p>Children and Families with access to good heritage and broader cultural experiences demonstrate better quality of life outcomes, including in terms of educational</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	<p>Achievement, health and wellbeing, pride in place and social cohesion. Access to heritage can enhance learning across a broad range of curricular activity, and enrich learning across age ranges.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	<p>Doncaster Archives has worked previously with people living with dementia in care homes; more work is required to evaluate the impact locally, although there is an evidence base that shows how people interacting with heritage resources can have improved recall and in turn improve their wellbeing. Reminiscence can give people with dementia a sense of competence and confidence through using a skill they still have. See: <a href="https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/living-with-dementia/keeping-active/remembrance.asp">https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/living-with-dementia/keeping-active/remembrance.asp</a></p>

	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	<p>The transformation plan described in this report, if fulfilled, will create an Archives service which is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agile and responsive to customer needs</li> <li>- Modern, fit for purpose, outward-looking</li> <li>- Engaged with priorities which support people's needs in localities</li> <li>- Utilises technology to deliver efficiencies</li> <li>- Utilise effective commissioning and partnership working to deliver efficiencies</li> <li>- Demonstrates effective Governance and records management.</li> </ul>
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## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

37. The condition survey has identified significant concerns with the museum building that must be addressed to bring the premises up to a serviceable state of repair and to rectify breaches of legislation and health and safety regulations.
- 37.1 The Council must provide a suitable location to house Public Records and it must be approved by the National Archives otherwise there is a risk that the records may be removed. The records are currently stored externally and this is incurring additional costs for the Council. Loss of records will create reputational damage which will make it more difficult for Heritage Doncaster to access external funding in future, having secured c.£1.7m of external funds for programmes of activity since 2016-17.
- 37.2 If additional storage is not provided it may be necessary to dispose more of the Council's valuable and often irreplaceable heritage collections, again with high reputational risk in the sector. Museum stores in the Bentley storage site are mainly large, heavy items. Further assessments will be required on load bearing weights within the Chequer Road site to understand where heavier and bulky items in storage can go.
- 37.3 It is a risk that further works are required on site that have not been identified at the start of the design stage, or for other reasons, that lead to overspend on the capital budget.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SRF Date 30.04.21]**

38. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with a general power of competence, allowing the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to purchase goods and services.
39. Any procurements made in relation to converting the former museum into an archive research facility, to fit out the museum to allow the storage of frequently accessed archive store and to arrange archive storage for less frequently accessed archives off site must be carried out in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
40. Any plans to convert the former museum will require further legal, procurement and planning considerations.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [SB 05/05/21]**

41. The cost of investment to the former Museum site based on Chequer Road for the storage of the Council's future archives, including historical records and artefacts is expected to cost £2.065m for a work as follows.

42.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount (£000)</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
Fire Safety Work	242	Capital
Racking	323	Earmarked Reserve
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>565</b>	
Improvement work	1,500	Capital
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,065</b>	

43. The £1.500m capital budget provisionally approved as part of the 2021-22 capital budget setting process will be funded from Corporate Resources, subject to approval by cabinet. This £1.500m will be added to the £0.242m capital budget and the £0.323m earmarked reserve to give a total capital budget of £2.065m for this project. The capital programme will be adjusted to include the revised budget of £2.065m.
44. The current annual external storage costs for the archives service are £123k or £10.3k a month (based on current contract costs). This is a continued budget pressure for Learning Opportunities and Skills. Following completion of phase 1 this pressure is expected to reduce to zero as archives material is brought back to Doncaster.
45. As part of this proposal, the service is to use a Council-owned shop unit in Colonnades to store museum assets on a short-term basis, to create space in the Chequer Road building for shelving to be installed, and archives to be returned. The estimated cost for this building is £20,000 per annum. This is also a short-term budget pressure for the 2021-22 financial year.
46. The phase 2 cataloguing and storage of items at other heritage sites will be subject to a further Cabinet report that will be presented in spring 2022. This cabinet report will provide a detailed feasibility study on the review of current assets of the Service alongside the funding options to ensure that storage sites are suitable for storage in the medium to longer term.
47. As part of the phase 3 longer-term transformation programme the service may move towards a digitisation of archives. Further reports would be required at this stage to identify any costs or savings resulting from this programme.
48. Facilities Management currently hold a general fund revenue budget of £284,670 for the former Museum site on Chequer Road. This budget covers the current running costs of the building including utilities, rates and insurance and it is assumed sufficient for the running costs of the archives facility.
49. The museum and archives Service is still subject to a pending restructure and the Service has confirmed that the new structure will be sufficient to manage with increased public access and outstanding cataloguing work still required.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials CR Date 30/04/2021]**

50. There are no immediate HR implications arising from the approval of this report and the proposed move of Archives, however, future changes, such as relocation, that may impact on the workforce will require HR engagement and would involve separate

approval or consultation as appropriate.

### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 29/04/21]**

51. There are no specific technology implications at this stage. However, the project manager/lead should consult with ICT at the earliest opportunity to discuss the refurbishment plans for the Chequer Road site, so that the impact on the existing ICT infrastructure and any new technology requirements for Doncaster Archives can be fully considered. All ICT costs would need to be funded as part of the overall scheme. Where applicable, a report may be needed for consideration and prioritisation by the Technology Governance Board (TGB), depending on the scope and nature of the work needed. A TGB report will also be needed in relation to the longer-term transformation programme/digitisation of archives when the service is able to consider this further following the remedial action in the short and medium

### **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RS ...Date 26/04/2021]**

52. There is increasing evidence that heritage services including archives can contribute to health and wellbeing. Decision makers will want to ensure that future services are accessible to all Doncaster residents.

### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials NS...Date 5/5/21]**

53. Access to historical and public records must be achieved in a way, which does not discriminate against the service user or potential service users, and the same applies to how and why materials are collected and conserved. Any procurement processes will show due regard for equalities, both in the commissioner and in the contractor. Any future service will ensure changes and new ways of working have accounted for the needs of residents with protected characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act 2010.

### **CONSULTATION**

54. Consultation with TNA has been ongoing and extensive. The Council has secured TNA's ongoing support during a challenging period for the service of change management. Consultation also continues on an ongoing basis with Heritage Doncaster staff, local heritage groups of interest, and further consultation on any building adaptations and installations will be in consultation with the same groups and other local providers of expertise, particularly when considering the Council's statutory equality duty.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A

### **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

DGLAM - Danum Gallery, Library and Museum  
KOYLI - King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry  
TNA - The National Archives

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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**Riana Nelson**

**Director, Learning Opportunities, Skills and Culture (DCS)**



## Doncaster Council

### Report

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23rd June 2021

**To: The Mayor and Members of the Cabinet**

**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**

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Glyn Jones	All	Yes

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In response to the Coronavirus, COVID-19, in June 2020 the Government announced an award of £50 million to local councils to deliver a re-opening High Streets safely programme. Doncaster Council were allocated £276,789 through this fund. The money is ERDF money but with an 100% intervention meaning no financial match is required.
2. Councils were requested to submit an action plan which would cover activity eligible under the fund. A steering group was formed to put together a plan for spend. This was approved by Cabinet and Exec Board. The subsequent plan was approved by MHCLG and delivery of the plan was executed. Grant was spent on items such as sanitiser units across the main high streets in the borough, safety promotional messages including talking and digital signs in the town centres throughout the borough and a pedestrian safety scheme on Nether Hall Road being delivered by Doncaster Council major projects team.
3. In March 2021 ahead of non-essential retail re-opening on 12<sup>th</sup> April, the government allocated a further £276,790 to Doncaster Council under what is now called the Welcome Back Fund.
4. All budget has to be spent by March 2022 with the updated plan submitted to MHCLG by 30<sup>TH</sup> May 2021. The plan can be amended after this date following agreement with an allocated contract manager.

### EXEMPT REPORT

5. The report is not exempt.  
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

6. It is recommended that Cabinet:

Approves the acceptance of the grant funding to be utilised as per the safety measures set out in the approved Action Plan at Appendix 1.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

7. Town centres and local high streets in the borough will have increased COVID-19 safety measures put in place to help keep them informed and safe. Events will also take place to encourage footfall in these areas and to support businesses

## BACKGROUND

8. There is a need to spend the money quickly to put measure in place to improve the safety of our high streets for residents in light of ongoing changes to the government roadmap and the need to spend the money by the end of March 2022
9. The Welcome Back fund is an extension of the original re-opening High Street fund. Regulations for spending the fund were received on 16<sup>th</sup> April. Although MHCLG are not expecting a new project plan but an update of the existing plan to approve they have added new areas of spend and slightly adjusted the criteria.

There were four measure in scope under the original fund:

- Support to develop an action plan
- Communication and public information activity to ensure re-opening high streets are managed successfully and safely
- Business facing awareness activities to ensure that re-opening local economies are managed safely
- Temporary public realm changes to ensure that re-opening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely

Now added is

Support to promote a safe public environment for a local areas visitor economy, which can include:

- Placed based marketing, for example, supporting safe celebration events on high streets and in local towns.
- Marshals.
- Public space maintenance.
- Maintenance of public conveniences (toilets) including new temporary facilities (toilets) provision.
- Beautification activities including graffiti removal.
- Non-permanent public realm adaptations.

- Activities that future proof the high street.
- Improvement of green spaces and provision of outdoor seating areas.

Support local authorities to develop plans for responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19 including trialling new ideas particularly where these relate to the High Street

- The strand will support opportunities to further develop, pilot projects and strategic responses to address and reverse the long-term impacts of covid-19 on local economies, particularly where they relate to the high street.
- In addition, where temporary changes to the public realm are being proposed as a part of a trial the respective local authority should work in partnership with public sector landowners as appropriate.

10. One of the main changes of the guidance which is now much more explicit in that the fund should be spent on high streets across towns and cities not just the main town centre. It is also clear that more consultation should be carried out with businesses, towns and parish councils in how this funding is spent and to partner them in delivery

*'MHCLG expects local authorities to engage with stakeholders including local businesses, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Destination Management Organisations (DMO), town and parish councils. Where appropriate, MHCLG encourages local authorities to enter into suitable delivery partnership arrangements with town and parish councils to improve delivery outcomes for communities and high streets'*

11. The project team who delivered the Re—Opening High Street fund have met to discuss the Welcome Back fund and due to lessons learnt from delivering that fund, new government guidelines and interest from parties across the borough recommended the following. The team is

Chris Dungworth	(Chair)
Lorna Reeve	(Visit Doncaster)
Andrew McMahon	(Town Centre)
Adrian Banks	(Business Doncaster)
Karen South	(Policy, Insight and Change)
Charlotte Coupe	(Communications)
Glyn Sparrow	(Corporate Procurement)
Sandra Gough	(Major Projects)
Michaela Rowlands	(Street Scene)

12. Localities leads consulted and discussed with local stakeholders and brought forward recommendations for spend to the steering group
13. Because of the tight timescales on submitting an updated project plan to MLCLG (31<sup>st</sup> May) it was not possible to consult widely
14. Based on the recommendations the steering group completed an up to date project plan and submitted to MHCLG for approval by the deadline date of 30<sup>th</sup> May. This project plan needs sign off by the MHCLG project manager and can subsequently be changed

15. It is important to note that all members have been emailed seeking their feedback and suggestions. We will then work with members to accommodate any suggestions we receive into the project plan.
16. Once approved the steering Group will oversee procurement of spend and delivery of the plan
17. Representations from MP's and elected members have been made asking how they can get involved using the funding in their areas
18. Breakdown of spend

	BUDGET
Doncaster Town Centre	£15,200
Doncaster Central	£65,200
Doncaster North	£65,200
Doncaster East	£65,200
Doncaster South	£65,200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£276,000.00</b>

The Re-opening High Street committee having already discussed ideas with localities are recommending the following projects subject to agreement and sign off with Cabinet. There has been a reduction in the number of town centre projects put forward due to less budget and increased budget to other localities.

- Continuation of key safety messages across social media, print and digital advertising.
  - Installation / Repair of electrical outlets – Several electric points in the town centre were decommissioned a few years ago. These could be repaired, or new ones installed to be used for events or for pop up business stalls to improve the vibrancy of the town centre.
  - Marketing and promotion of high streets and shopping parades across the borough with safety messages and a 'buy local' theme
  - Seating repairs and improvements across all major high streets to encourage visitors and make them safer for residents
  - Welcome signs on fencing and welcome bollards on lampposts and bollards to encourage visitors and add vibrancy to high streets
  - Wrapping of empty shop fronts, shutters to improve vibrancy and improve the look of high streets
19. The scheme criteria had a large number of exceptions which included not giving money direct to businesses, which had to be factored in when putting together a project plan
  20. All measures put in place have to be of a temporary nature
  21. All measures have to be in place and the money spent and claims submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

22. The plan only includes projects to be delivered. Additional revenue for staff time i.e. additional cleaning has to be picked up by council budgets.
23. An updated action plan will be submitted and discussed with MHCLG following further consultations and activities agreed

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

### 24. 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

### Option 2: Accept the grant and deliver a project plan

By accepting the funding it allows the council to utilise external resource and deliver a project plan aimed at supporting making the high streets across the borough safer to combat COVID-19, increasing the use of safety messages for residents and make outlying town centres cleaner and more attractive to residents

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

25. **Option 2** is the recommended option as it provides additional government funding to spend on measure to make our high streets safer for residents and visitors and helps combat the further potential spread of COVID-19

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

26.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>	<p>The programme has positive implications for all residents of Doncaster boroughs</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

27. There is a risk that the project will not be delivered on time and as this is a ERDF programme MHCLG may require financial claw back
28. The project actions as detailed in the plan must be temporary in nature. Some of the actions that are proposed to be delivered have the capacity and opportunity to become permanent as which stage financial claw back penalties may be imposed.
29. Risk that all spend has not been defrayed by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 would mean funding couldn't be claimed for those items. This would then be shown as overspend against the relevant service area

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [ND 01/06/21]**

30. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything that individuals may generally do. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to purchase goods and services.
31. The Council will be asked to enter into a funding contract. The funding contract is likely to set out delivery measures and the money provided must be used in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding contract.
32. The Council must comply with all laws and regulatory requirements when delivering the scheme (including, without limitation compliance with all laws and regulatory requirements relating to public procurement and subsidies) when administering the funding. Failure to comply with such terms may lead to claw back.
33. Following contract signature, the scheme manager should be completely familiar with the contractual terms in order to protect the interest of the Council and enforce any terms as and when necessary.
34. Further legal advice and assistance will be given as the scheme progresses.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [BC 01/06/21]**

35. In 2020, as a result of the impact of Covid-19, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced that Councils across England were to share £50m of additional funding from ERDF grant to support the safe re-opening of high streets and commercial areas (Re-opening the High Street Safely Fund/ROHSSF). Doncaster's allocation from this award was £276,789. An action plan was approved by MHCLG and acceptance of the grant to spend in accordance with that action plan was agreed by Executive Decision on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
36. Building on the above allocation, MHCLG have announced a further £56m Welcome Back Fund (WBF), of which Doncaster has been awarded £276,790.

37. The grant is at a 100% intervention rate and therefore there is no requirement for the Council to identify match funding
38. The existing grant funding agreement between the Council and MHCLG for the ROHSSF will be varied to include an extension to the original spend deadline and the additional WBF allocation. Expenditure to be reimbursed from both of these allocations (ROHSSF and WBF) must be defrayed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
39. The action plan at Appendix 1 to this report sets out the proposed use of the WBF allocation. This is subject to agreement by MHCLG
40. A separate revenue cost centre has been created to capture the WBF project costs. Activity included in the attached action plan is temporary in nature and therefore it is not anticipated that there will be any capital expenditure in relation to WBF.
41. All project costs must be managed within the grant available as no additional budget has been identified to support these, however it is acknowledged that there could be increased on-going revenue costs as a result of this activity which would need to be met from existing service budget. Service Managers should be consulted where this may be the case. Budget pressures arising as a result of the scheme should be highlighted for consideration as part of the annual budget setting process .
42. All of the above is subject to a signed variation to the original funding agreement between the Council and MHCLG which sets out the terms and conditions of the grant and cover issues such as eligibility, risks, and claw back. No expenditure should be incurred or contracts awarded until all of the necessary requirements are in place. The approval of this decision by the Executive will allow for the signing of the variation to the funding agreement.
43. In order to claim grant, all of the expenditure incurred in relation to the project must be eligible and comply with the terms and conditions of the grant funder, Failure to do so could lead to claw back up to the full value of the grant. The project officer must also administer the grant in line with the Council's Contract and Financial Procedure Rules (particularly rule E for External Arrangements). However, as an EU grant the funder's terms and conditions are one of the most stringent and in certain cases exceed the provisions of the Council's minimum requirements. In the past, the Council has suffered claw back in relation to EU projects, particularly in respect of procurement and where interpretation of the terms and conditions differ from that of the auditor. The project officer should be aware of the issues surrounding compliance with both the internal and external requirements to reduce the risk of claw back happening.
44. FPR's also require that Directors are responsible for ensuring that plans are in place (including exit strategies) for all external funding within the

Directorate, including any associated cost which cannot be recovered from the project funding.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [A.A 02/06/2021]**

45. There are no direct HR Implications in relation to this report and the proposal to accept the grant and deliver a project plan.

#### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [PW 28/05/21]**

46. There are no anticipated technology implications associated with this report.

#### **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [RS 01/06/2021]**

47. The Welcome Back fund should support the reopening of the 'high street' in a COVID secure way.

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [CJD 28/05/2021]**

48. There are no equality implications associated with this report.

#### **CONSULTATION**

49. Consultations have taken place with a number of Doncaster Council departments along with MHCLG representatives

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

50. Appendix 1 Action Plan

#### **GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ERDF = European Regional Development Fund

MHCLG = Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government

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**Doncaster Council**  
**Welcome Back Fund**  
**Grant Action Plan**

ERDF Logo must be included in designed work

Area of Spend / Activity	Approx £	Rating (RAG)	Risks and Benefits	Additional Costs	Locations	Quantities
<b>Town Centre</b>						
Event electricity points	£10,000.00		Future proof high street, facilitates greater event options and pop up uses	Cost of electricity when in use. Charge out with MPAN?	Town Centre x multiple	
Marketing to promote area	£5,200.00		Better perception and visitor increase (Includes on street promotion, social media, leaflets)	N/A		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£15,200.00</b>					
<b>Doncaster Central</b>						
Marketing to promote area	£7,000.00		Better perception and visitor	N/A	Across ward	
Events to promote the area / High Street animation	£17,200.00		Increases visitor enjoyment,	N/A	Across ward	
Seating improvements	£7,500.00		Improves visitor enjoyment	N/A	Across ward	
Bin aesthetic improvements	£10,000.00		Aesthetic improvement through	N/A	Across ward	
Welcome to 'X' banners on roundabout fencing	£2,000.00		Needs Highway enforcement	N/A	Across ward	
Bollard / Lamp post sleeves	£5,000.00		Aesthetic improvement, budget includes replacements for when damaged	N/A	Across ward	
Wrapping of voids / security shutters	£6,500.00		Aesthetic improvement, requires owner permission (town centre approach of just do was approved by legal)	N/A	Across ward	
Other activities to be decided	£10,000.00					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£65,200.00</b>					
<b>Doncaster North</b>						
Marketing to promote area	£7,000.00		Better perception and visitor	N/A	Across ward	
Events to promote the area / High Street animation	£17,200.00		Increases visitor enjoyment, promotes use of local areas	N/A	Across ward	
Seating improvements	£7,500.00		Improves visitor enjoyment	N/A	Across ward	
Bin aesthetic improvements	£10,000.00		Aesthetic improvement through wrapping in different colours or replacement to modern style	N/A	Across ward	

Welcome to 'X' banners on roundabout fencing	£2,000.00		Needs Highway enforcement approval (has been given before)	N/A	Across ward	
Bollard / Lamp post sleeves	£5,000.00		Aesthetic improvement, budget includes replacements for when damaged	N/A	Across ward	
Wrapping of voids / security shutters	£6,500.00		Aesthetic improvement, requires owner permission (town centre approach of just do was approved by legal)	N/A	Across ward	
Other activities to be decided	£10,000.00					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£65,200.00</b>					
<b>Doncaster East</b>						
Marketing to promote area	£7,000.00		Better perception and visitor increase (Includes on street promotion, social media, leaflets)	N/A	Across ward	
Events to promote the area / High Street animation	£17,200.00		Increases visitor enjoyment, promotes use of local areas	N/A	Across ward	
Seating improvements	£7,500.00		Improves visitor enjoyment	N/A	Across ward	
Bin aesthetic improvements	£10,000.00		Aesthetic improvement through wrapping in different colours or replacement to modern style	N/A	Across ward	
Welcome to 'X' banners on roundabout fencing	£2,000.00		Needs Highway enforcement approval (has been given before)	N/A	Across ward	
Bollard / Lamp post sleeves	£5,000.00		Aesthetic improvement, budget includes replacements for when damaged	N/A	Across ward	
Wrapping of voids / security shutters	£6,500.00		Aesthetic improvement, requires owner permission (town centre approach of just do was approved by legal)	N/A	Across ward	
Other activities to be decided	£10,000.00					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£65,200.00</b>					
<b>Doncaster South</b>						

Marketing to promote area	£7,000.00		Better perception and visitor increase (Includes on street promotion, social media, leaflets)	N/A	Across ward	
Events to promote the area / High Street animation	£17,200.00		Increases visitor enjoyment, promotes use of local areas	N/A	Across ward	
Seating improvements	£7,500.00		Improves visitor enjoyment	N/A	Across ward	
Bin aesthetic improvements	£10,000.00		Aesthetic improvement through wrapping in different colours or replacement to modern style	N/A	Across ward	
Welcome to 'X' banners on roundabout fencing	£2,000.00		Needs Highway enforcement approval (has been given before)	N/A	Across ward	
Bollard / Lamp post sleeves	£5,000.00		Aesthetic improvement, budget includes replacements for when damaged	N/A	Across ward	
Wrapping of voids / security shutters	£6,500.00		Aesthetic improvement, requires owner permission (town centre approach of just do was approved by legal)	N/A	Across ward	
Other activities to be decided	£10,000.00					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£65,200.00</b>					
<b>Overall Total</b>						

	BUDGET	SPEND
Town Centre	£15,200.00	<b>£15,200.00</b>
Doncaster Central	£65,200.00	<b>£65,200.00</b>
Doncaster North	£65,200.00	<b>£65,200.00</b>
Doncaster East	£65,200.00	<b>£65,200.00</b>
Doncaster South	£65,200.00	<b>£65,200.00</b>
Contingency	£790.00	<b>£790.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£276,790.00</b>	<b>£276,790.00</b>

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