



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday, 22nd September, 2021 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: **Thursday, 23rd September, 2021**

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on **Monday, 4th October, 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 Joe Blackham	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Infrastructure and Enforcement
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

Apologies:-

Apologies were received from Councillor Joe Blackham and Councillor Rachael Blake.

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

No public questions or statements were submitted.

Decision Record Forms from the meeting held on 8th September, 2021 (previously circulated) were noted.

DECISION 1

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| 1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE |
| 6. Hexthorpe Selective Licensing Scheme. |
| 2. DECISION TAKEN |

Cabinet resolved to make a selective licensing designation for the area shown on the map in Appendix A. The designation will be made on 15th November 2021 and will come into force on 1st March 2022; and

- (i) To adopt the model conditions, set out in Appendix D, to be applied as appropriate to each individual property, on a case by case basis;
- (ii) The scheme to be administered, monitored for compliance and enforced exclusively by the Council;
- (iii) The licence fee to be as set out in Appendix E with the part 2 fee (£400) being payable prior to the licence being granted. A discount of £50 will be applied to the part 2 fee for membership of a recognised body, as detailed in Appendix E; and that Licences will be issued on a pro-rata basis if a landlord requires a licence after the start date of the scheme. The cost will be reduced annually on a sliding scale to reflect the length of time for which the licence has been granted.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report introduced by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Business which informed Members of the outcome of the public consultation to re-introduce a Selective Licensing Scheme in the Hexthorpe ward for a further 5 years, to help address the problem of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the private rented sector.

The Deputy Mayor, summarised the key points in the report and highlighted the evidential basis for the proposal and the consultation process undertaken.

It was proposed that a Selective Licensing Scheme in Hexthorpe, together with other initiatives by the Council and partners, would lead to a reduction in ASB. The proposal would look to directly address the problem of ASB in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) where landlords fail to take appropriate action to address tenant behaviour, through management of the tenancy.

The Deputy Mayor took the opportunity to recognise and thank the Council's delivery partner (HomeSafe) for the contribution they have made to the successes of the previous Hexthorpe scheme and continue to make with the existing Edlington scheme. Going forward, it was considered that by operating the next phase of Selective Licensing in Hexthorpe entirely in-house would ensure that sufficient resources were provided to effectively run the scheme, enforce conditions and ensure a consistent approach was taken against any breach of licence conditions.

To conclude, the Deputy Mayor stated that the Council would continue with its co-ordinated approach with dealing with homelessness, empty properties and anti-social behaviour, by combining licensing with other courses of action available, and by combining licensing with measures taken by other partners.

Cabinet was asked, based on the findings of a recent consultation, to decide whether to:

- a) Make a designation and implement the scheme as proposed;
- b) Make a designation and implement the scheme in a revised form; or
- c) Decide not to designate the area for selective licensing but instead support the existing powers available to tackle the identified issues in Hexthorpe.

Councillor Nigel Ball welcomed the proposal and was fully supportive of the continuation of this initiative for the community of Hexthorpe. He commended the report and was particularly impressed with the thorough consultation process.

The Mayor stated that there was clear evidence that certain types of anti-social behaviour in Hexthorpe were significant and persistent, with the majority of it being directly associated with the Private Rented Sector and it was considered that making a designation would combine with other measures taken by the Council and its partners, and would lead to a reduction in the problems identified.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1 – Do nothing (educate, empower and enforce using existing powers)

The Council considered other options to address the problems associated with the PRS in Hexthorpe before bringing the proposal for a further selective licensing scheme forward.

The Council continued to look for effective means of assisting and encouraging improvements in the quality of the Private Rented Sector through their day-to-day service delivery. Management Orders and enforcement powers were arguably limited in addressing management standards in the PRS.

Significant and persistent anti-social behaviour associated with the PRS where the landlord fails to take action were the only prescribed circumstances when a Special Management Order could be used and this would limit the options to make an application for such a management order.

Where necessary, enforcement of property standards and management orders would continue to be considered, not as an alternative to licensing, but as essential supporting tools as part of the Council's programme of measures to improve the area.

In addition to the alternative options, the Council have also considered the use and effectiveness of a landlord accreditation scheme. Due to such schemes being voluntary with no statutory basis, this alternative would not have the required impact compared with a regulated scheme.

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

DECISION 2

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. Gypsy and Traveller Sites - Investment Strategy.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet agreed that a two year investment strategy be put in place from 2022/23 to carry out improvements across all three Gypsy and Traveller sites, starting with White Towers in 2022/23 and Little Lane and Lands End sites in subsequent years.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, introduced a report which sought approval of a two year investment Strategy to be put in place from 2022/23 to carry out improvements across three Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough.

Historically investment in improving facilities at the sites had been limited, although £2.64m was invested during 2011/12 to 2018/19, of which £1.98m related to new provision, creating 16 new pitches; 12 at the Lands End site and 4 at the White Towers site. During 2012/13 to 2014/15, £0.66m was invested into new meter blocks and general site improvements across the three Gypsy and Traveller sites. There has been very limited investment in the individual pitches, which had resulted in a number becoming unlettable due to their condition.

Of the Gypsy and Traveller sites, the White Towers site provides the biggest management challenge and has the worst site conditions and highest number of voids. Pitch layout adds to some of the management challenges, including the ability to comply with the 6m separation distance requirements between caravans.

In June 2018, Faithful and Gould were commissioned to undertake an assessment of the sites, to provide budget cost estimates for improvement works required at each individual site, review the fire safety separation distances required by the Department of Communities and Local Government guidance/standards, and provide potential site layout alterations.

Given the surplus provision highlighted through the formal assessment, combined with the management challenges at the White Towers site, it was therefore proposed that in 2022/23, the White Towers site be reconfigured reducing the number of pitches by 7 from 23 to 16. This would remove void pitches and therefore the opportunity to fly tip on them, whilst at the same time providing the opportunity to increase pitch size, enabling more space to be provided to facilitate the provision of the required separation distances. It was also proposed that improvements be made to the remaining pitches on the Lands End and Little Lane sites to bring them up to modern standards in line with new provision that was created in 2013/14.

The Deputy Mayor highlighted that in accordance with Government guidance, the Strategy sought to ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations to provide an appropriate number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches and that pitches are well maintained and include appropriate amenities. He outlined the proposed works required on all 3 sites. The Deputy Mayor emphasised that the works represented a considerable undertaking, and as a result, it was planned that works be undertaken over a two-year period, with completion in 2022/23.

Mayor Ros Jones said that the roads on the sites should only be brought up to a similar standard as the estate roads surrounding them.

Councillor Jane Nightingale was pleased to observe that the Council was meeting its statutory obligations by ensuring that sufficient pitches were provided on Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough which meets with the required standards.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not to invest in the Gypsy and Traveller sites.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt.

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Dave Richmond, Chief Executive, St. Leger Homes of Doncaster.

DECISION 3

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

8. Public Health Research Programme - Born and Bred in (BaBi) e cohorts (data acceleration project).

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet agreed to accept the grant and that Doncaster Council act as the accountable body to administer the full award of £810,363.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning presented a report which sought approval to accept grant funding of £810,363 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Local Data Accelerator Fund to develop Born and Bred in Doncaster (BaBi D) e-cohorts research programme to help improve the health and wellbeing of children and families across Doncaster.

The Public Health team within the Council had led a consortium of partners to apply for the Government funding, with £292,631 allocated to Doncaster.

The Council was working in partnership, led by Doncaster Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals Trust, to develop Doncaster's Born and Bred birth cohort. It was expected that the first family would be recruited in Winter 2021. The funding would accelerate recent work to develop the BaBi, in particular, in relation to linking data and stakeholder involvement and would bring together learning from other Born and Bred sites in Yorkshire. The data provided from this cohort would help Team Doncaster gain a better understanding of what local families want and need from services across the Borough.

Councillor Nigel Ball outlined the basis of the study which related to the award winning Born in Bradford cohort study to investigate issues that are important to local people, practitioners and policy makers. It was noted that a recent study examined air pollution, specifically exposure to polluted air during pregnancy and respiratory illnesses. This evidence was used to influence local decisions in relation to reducing pollution across schools. In time, Doncaster's cohorts would be able to influence similar issues that impacted people across the Borough.

Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, in welcoming the report, stated that this initiative was a good news story for Doncaster and praised the 'cradle to the grave' approach to the research which would help to shape services and to track the Borough's health needs over a period of time. She added that presently, post Covid-19, it was beneficial that the Council have got a strong focus in tackling health inequalities and promote inclusion across the Borough

Councillor Andrea Robinson echoed Members' comments in acknowledging the great piece of work and that it was pleasing to observe that research was being conducted in Doncaster, and gave thanks to all involved. She welcomed the research which had been founded on listening to the voice of experience, which she felt was important.

In noting that the research was inclusive, and that every pregnant person was invited to participate and get involved, Councillor Robinson asked whether it was likely that certain groups would be under-represented in the sample. In response, the Director of Public Health advised that in common with all research programmes, entering into the programmes was voluntarily. He explained the two approaches taken to make sure that all information about the research programme was available and was communicated effectively to as a wide ranging an audience as possible, to make sure there were no barriers for people. He further explained that to assist in this process, Doncaster was part of a team of the National Institute of Health Services Research Race Equality framework, and one of the few authorities in the country to be involved in this. For those people who had not engaged in the process, the Council would look at ways of encouraging people to be part of the research and to seek their views to help shape services going forward. He highlighted that whilst it was beneficial to have the research, it should not be seen as a panacea.

The Mayor was delighted that the research programme would focus on health and inequalities and inclusion across the Borough and hoped that in future this would be reduced.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not to accept the grant funding.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt.

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Rupert Suckling, Director of Public Health.

DECISION 4

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

9. Acceptance of Sheffield City Region (SCR) Brownfield Housing Fund - Grant for Council House Build Programme (CHBP) Phases 1 and 2.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) endorsed the approach taken with the Brownfield Housing Fund Grant bids to support the Council House Build Programme and the 5 Year Housing Delivery Plan;
- (2) agreed that Delegated authority be given to the Director of Economy and Environment, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Business; to accept the funding and agree terms and conditions for any Brownfield Housing Fund Grant funding awards for Council House Build Programme schemes in Phases 1 and 2;
- (3) agreed that the funding be utilised to maximise the delivery of new homes across Phases 1 and 2 of the Council House Build Programme; and
- (4) supported the identification of further opportunities across the Borough that are eligible for Sheffield City Region Brownfield Housing Fund Grant and submit initial Gateway (Expressions of Interest) applications.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report introduced by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, which sought approval to accept Brownfield Housing Fund grant offers from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority for the delivery of affordable housing schemes in Phases 1 and 2 of the Council House Build programme.

As part of the Government's 'A New Deal for Britain' Strategy to rebuild Britain following Covid 19 and fuel economic recovery across the UK, funding had been allocated by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to a number of combined authorities, including £40m funding to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, to support housing developments through a Brownfield Housing Fund which demonstrated a financial viability gap.

The Council had submitted a series of Gateway applications in September 2020 for 3 schemes made up of 7 grouped sites in Phase 2 of the Council House Build Programme. The Council was subsequently awarded a Revenue grant facility of £130,000 to support the appointment of consultants to undertake site technical surveys and reports ahead of submission of 'Outline Business Case' (OBC) bids. Those OBC bids were submitted to SCR on 2nd August 2021. A further Full

Business Case (FBC) bid is due for submission in November 2021, after which final grant awards will be notified in February 2022. These three schemes across the 7 grouped sites must then meet the funding criteria for start on site by March 2022.

In addition the BHF incorporates a simplified and continuous bidding Business Justification Case (BJC) process for grant funding requirements under £500,000. This has been utilised to bid for £495,000 for the Council House Build Programme Phase 1 sites. The award notification is anticipated in September 2021. The schemes for which this funding is sought had been fully approved in the Doncaster's Affordable Homes Programme Report approved by Cabinet on 3rd December 2019, which contracted Willmott Dixon with a programmed start on site date for enabling works of 20th September 2021.

Cabinet members welcomed the proposal, praising the contribution to sustainability initiatives, use of brownfield sites, meeting the Mayor's new homes pledge and the contribution to construction jobs in the local economy.

The Mayor was pleased to see the schemes coming forward which would utilise the land available for the benefit of Doncaster residents and bring forward more affordable homes.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1: Do not bid - Excluding the Council from this funding opportunity limits the potential for the Council to take its fair share of available funding for Doncaster residents. This could have reputational implications for the Council.

Option 2: Reduce the scheme costs by the grant value. To do this could also result in fewer homes built and those which are delivered would potentially be built to a lower environmental and energy efficiency standards.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Appendix B to the report is Not for Publication because it contains exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 (information relating to 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

Dan Swaine, Director of Economy and Environment.

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker