



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday, 2nd February, 2022 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Thursday, 3rd February, 2022

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Monday 14th February, 2022. 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 Rachael Blake	Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care, Communities and Equalities
Councillor Phil Cole	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Trading Services
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

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

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

Decision records dated 19th January, 2022, be noted.

DECISION 1.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. School Admissions Arrangements for 2023/24 Academic Year.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved the following admission arrangements for the 2023/2024 school year:

- Community School Admission Arrangements (paragraphs 13 to 14).
- Community School Nursery Admission Arrangements (paragraphs 13 to 14).
- Primary Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements (paragraphs 15 to 17 of the report).
- Secondary Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements (paragraphs 15 to 17 of the report); and
- Notification of parents of the arrangements for admission including those to the Doncaster University Technology College (paragraph 18 of the report)

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report introduced by Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Young People detailing the requirements for the adoption of schemes for Co-ordinating the Admissions arrangements for Primary and Secondary Schools and the approval of the Admission Arrangements for Community Schools in the 2023-2024 School Year.

Cllr Ball reported that the co-ordinated admission arrangements for the year of entry to all types of mainstream schools including academies and free schools were a statutory responsibility of the Council and must be determined annually.

She stated that co-ordinating entry admissions was achieved through an online application and paper based system and 99% of applications were received online.

Cabinet were advised that outcomes for applicants in Doncaster were very positive and had improved when compared to the previous year. For Secondary admissions in 2021, over 88% of children were offered their first preference and this was even higher at 97% in primary schools. These improve further when looking at children receiving a place at one of their preferred schools to over 97% in secondary and 99% in primary.

Councillor Ball commented that the arrangements reflect the requirements to give first priority to children in care and are followed by catchment area children. In recognising the importance of keeping families together the Council then prioritise children with siblings attending the same school.

In conclusion, she stated that it was crucial to offer support for parents throughout the admission process to minimise any disruption to a child's time in education and to make the process as simple as possible for parents and carers.

Cabinet welcomed the report and applauded the high rate of pupil placement within their preferred school. It was also noted that whilst 99% of applications were completed on-line, it was pleasing to see that the paper format continued to be available along with advice and support to ensure that the process was fair and equal.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Options considered were contained within paragraphs 21 and 26 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

DECISION 2.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. Education and Skills 2030 Strategy

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) noted the actions taken since the adoption of the Education and Skills Strategy 2030;
- (2) approved the allocation of £784k one-off funding to support the delivery programme for the Strategy as detailed in paragraphs 68-75 of the report; and
- (3) noted the commitment to return to Cabinet with a follow-up report in December 2022 to outline:-
 - (a) How the funding has been used to build capacity in the system, and transitioned to 'business as usual'; and

- (b) What additional resources and funding will be required to support the action plans, and where the funding will be sought from.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received a report presented by Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Cabinet member for Education Skills and Young People stating that the report served to outline the actions and progress made since the Education and Skills 2030 Strategy was agreed by Cabinet, and the resources that have been allocated to enable this. It presents a timeline for next steps, and identifies the need for additional funding and resources to achieve them.

Councillor Ball reported that the significance of the 2030 Strategy could not be over-stated. Educational outcomes have a profound influence on residents lives, not just in terms of enabling them to access quality employment, but in terms of being one of the most effective ways to improve wellbeing; boosting self-confidence, self-esteem, and providing opportunities to connect with others.

The 2030 Strategy commits the borough to a broader, more holistic view of education, one that sees learning as extending beyond the bounds of the classroom, that values much more than what is assessed by formal academic testing, and that is open to people of all ages and abilities.

Cabinet were advised that despite the significant pressures felt as a result of the pandemic, the report noted the significant steps that had already been taken in relation to:-

- Governance Structure – with representation from professionals, business, and key community leads.
- Support for residents in foundational knowledge and skills (All age reading, writing and maths).
- Developing a technical education offer; and
- Hosting the Global Education Leaders Partnership.

Councillor Ball commented that funding had been secured from external sources to support these activities, with a bid for Government Community Renewal Funds having secured £2.2m to support a skills escalator model, and stated that an additional bid had been made to the Connected Futures Fund to support young people who are furthest from the labour market.

She reported that an ambitious delivery programme was required and Post-pandemic, it was more crucial that the Council offer a range of opportunities for residents to retrain and reskill at any age and stage of life, to support people to access the jobs of the future, fulfil their aspirations, and to develop the full remit of skills needed to live well.

Cabinet welcomed the report stating that it was pleasing to see that the Strategy recognised the importance of lifelong learning and included new pathways specifically for adults to enable them to access employment and training through the Employment Hub. Cabinet also recognised that there was a need to keep an eye on school attendance to ensure there was a continued appetite for learning.

In conclusion, Mayor Ros Jones wished to state that the Strategy builds into the longer term Borough Strategy which was reflected in paragraph 5 of the report.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1: Create and implement the Education and Skills 2030 action plan with no additional funding or resources

Option 3: Create and implement the action plan, but with additional funding sought from elsewhere.

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

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker