



# Doncaster Council

## EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday, 30th March, 2022 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Thursday 31st March. 2022

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on 11th April, 2022. These decisions will not be implemented until after this date and time.

Present:

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

### Cabinet Member for:

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 Jane Nightingale	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources
Councillor Andrea Robinson	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

Apologies:-

Apologies were received from Mayor Ros Jones, Councillor Lani-Mae Ball and Councillor Mark Houlbrook

## PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

### Public Questions and Statements

There were no public questions or statements at the meeting.

The Decision Records from the Meeting held on 16th March, 2022 were noted.

## **DECISION 1.**

### **1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE**

6. Doncaster's Locality Plans 2022-2023.

### **2. DECISION TAKEN**

Cabinet approve the Locality Plans, noting:-

- 1) The strong degree of engagement carried out with local communities enabling a “you said, we did” focus;
- 2) The joining up of a range of existing plans and strategies, and the focus within Locality Plans on better delivering these alongside local people and businesses;
- 3) The priorities identified within each Plan that will be worked on in partnership within each area; and
- 4) The plans to continually improve local engagement, data analysis and partnership working year on year so that annually refreshed Locality Plans support increasing ambition and better results for Doncaster’s communities throughout the lifetime of the Borough Strategy.

### **3. REASON FOR DECISION**

Cabinet considered a report which described how the Locality Plans had drawn upon the views of local people and sought to harness strong collaborations in each Locality to both build on community strengths and to address identified challenges.

Doncaster is England’s largest metropolitan borough council by geographical size and the borough is too large and diverse to do everything in a one-size-fits-all way.

Wards are much more local and are essential in developing accountable relationships with Doncaster people. However, they are small and can feel isolated and initiatives are needed to find a way of magnifying their local focus.

Localities can do this by bringing together a number of wards within an area to manage the balance between being nimble and being influential. Doncaster has four Localities, each containing between 5 and 6 wards.

Empowering and engaging local people, businesses and communities provides the foundation and Locality Plans are built on strong engagement with many Doncaster communities to understand the strengths local people want to build on and the gaps they want to address. The success of the plans will be built on harnessing strong leadership that already exists from Doncaster’s voluntary and community organisations and key representative bodies such as Town and Parish Councils, as well as partner organisations.

Members welcomed this report, and commended the work undertaken to bring the plans together and the communities who contributed to their development. The Locality Plans were representative of local areas and were a great piece of work for local residents as it gave them the opportunity to work alongside the Council, Parish Councils and Elected Members to bring about positive change and improvement in their local areas. Members recognised that the plans provided the intelligence to understand which wards needed support and development and an insight into how this would be undertaken. Members were mindful that this was a live and fluid document and it was important that the Plans were kept up to date to drive the improvements and move forward. These would be further checked and if necessary updated before circulation. Members acknowledged the plans would give deprived communities across the Borough renewed focus and allow residents to play a huge part in achieving change.

**4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

The Council could have chosen to continue as now, and not develop a Locality focus.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were no declarations.

**6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION**

Not Exempt

**7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Phil Holmes, Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing.

**DECISION 2.**

**1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE**

7. Rule 15 Urgent Decision - To serve notice to the Doncaster Children's Trust Arms-Length Management Company

**REASON FOR URGENCY**

This decision is being taken in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rule 15 (General Exception) as it has not been practical to provide the 28 days' notice normally required for a key decision and due to the timescales to start consultation in April 2022. The timescales are ambitious and expedience is key. If the urgency provisions for decision making were not applied, there is a risk to delivering the rapid performance improvement plan and increasing financial pressures.

## **2. DECISION TAKEN**

Cabinet Agree:-

- 1) To serve notice on DCST to end the contract for the delivery of specified children's social care services functions by mutual consent by end of September 2022;
- 2) To align services and then transfer employees within all services of DCST to Doncaster Council under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations;
- 3) To agree to the Director of Children's Services undertaking the Chief Executive Officer role of DCST from the 1st of April to oversee the smooth transitioning of the Trust into the Council, accountable to the Chair of the Trust Board; and
- (4) To implement an improvement proposition, which builds on the improved relationship between DCST and the Council by streamlining strategic oversight and management. Operational functions to transfer as 'ring fenced' DCST entity to ensure focus on practice improvement with minimal or no disruption. This will enable the development of a robust plan for a shared set of values based on a learning culture that will drive improvement and lead to a stable and efficient workforce. There will be a focus on the availability of accessible and accurate performance data for management oversight of demand and an assurance function that highlights drift and delay at the earliest possible stage, ensures quality throughout the services, drives efficiencies and is able to evidence measurable improved outcomes for children and young people

## **3. REASON FOR DECISION**

The past 2 years has placed significant pressure on the children's social care system in terms of demand and complexity and the system continues to adapt to a post COVID-19 context. Currently, the Doncaster Children's Services Trust continues to deliver services to the most vulnerable children in Doncaster, supported by workers who are committed to do the best for Doncaster children, young people and their families.

The report sought approval to serve notice (by mutual agreement between the Council and the Trust) on the contract with Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) an Arm's Length Management Company (ALMO) wholly owned by Doncaster Council for the delivery of specified Children's Social Care services functions. All parties believe that this was the logical next step in the journey of Children's Services in Doncaster.

There is a mutual agreement between the Trust and the Council that transferring the provision of social care services to Doncaster Council would present the opportunity to achieve better outcomes for children and young people in the delivery of integrated services that accelerate the pace of improvement. Collectively, it is believed that the organisational and financial resilience that can be provided within the Council, coupled with strong collective leadership and oversight

in recent months, will accelerate the trajectory of improving services to children, young people and families. Additionally, by transferring services to the Council, it would help simplify processes and align service delivery to the wider council services and wider partnership.

The transition by DCST into Doncaster Council will be driven by an improvement proposition that builds upon a shared ambition via a set of core values and a learning culture. The plan has clearly defined actions to drive change with tangible milestones over the next 3 years.

There is confidence that with the wider support of Doncaster Council the social care services that have been delivered through DCST can improve at pace resulting in better outcomes for children and young people. The realignment of the services will deliver lower overheads to ensure spend is directed to front line delivery.

Tony Hunter, Chair of the DCST was in attendance at the meeting and gave his support to the proposal. He felt that whilst he would be sad to see this change, now was the correct time to make this move, and it would enable Doncaster Council to build on the good work of the Trust and the improvements made, whilst streamlining leadership and services.

Riana Nelson, Director of Learning, Opportunities, Skills and Culture (DCS) echoed the comments made and was confident that staff would continue the great work already undertaken, and ensure that there was further impact on the improvement of outcomes for children and young people with the delivery of more efficient and effective services.

Members welcomed the move, and commented that it would promote a keener focus moving forward, less bureaucracy and reduction of silo working and more efficient services delivered by staff committed to keeping Doncaster children and young people safe.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

Three options were considered:

Option 1: Do nothing, this will not provide the required rapid improvement and prevent escalating financial pressures.

Option 2: Continue to be more rigorous in contract management arrangements. History tells us the governance arrangement is not conducive to drive performance at pace and financially the governance model is not sustainable.

Option 3: Serve notice on the contract through mutual agreement and enable the transition at pace.

Option 3 is the preferred option. Services will transition as soon as practicable. A tentative timeline of 6 months has been produced and will involve extensive staff consultation and engagement, stakeholder management, novation of contracts and the wrapping up of the contract and the company.

**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)

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker