



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday, 8th June 2022 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Thursday, 9th June 2022

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Monday, 20th June 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 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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Young People.

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

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

The decision records from the Cabinet Meeting held on 11th May, 2022 (previously circulated) were noted.

DECISION 1

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. St Leger Homes Performance Report 2021/22 Quarter 4.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet noted the St Leger Homes Doncaster (SLHD) performance outcomes and the contribution St Leger Homes Doncaster (SLHD) makes to supporting Doncaster Council (DC) strategic priorities.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Business, introduced a report which provided an update on St Leger Homes of Doncaster's Performance and Delivery for Quarter 4, for the 2021/22 financial year. Appendix A to the report sets out a summary of SLHD Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the quarter, including commentary covering the performance against all indicators which was detailed in paragraphs 8 to 9.5 of the report.

The report demonstrates a steadily improving picture with 7 of the 19 targets being met, 4 within agreed tolerances, and 5 measures off target.

The Deputy Mayor commented that it was disappointing to note that 5 indicators were off target, but the Council had set extremely challenging targets. Some indicators highlighted examples of excellent performance including the key target of reducing rent arrears, which achieved a 2.55 % outturn against a target of 3.00%. He highlighted that this was the best performance since 2016, and, in the current challenging economic climate, with the switch to universal credit requiring St Leger to collect an additional £7million direct from tenants, this represented excellent performance.

The Deputy Mayor outlined some of the key performance indicators that were off target:-

- KPI 2 Void rent loss. A challenging target of 0.5% had been set in this area and SLHD finished the year on 0.79%, which was an improvement on the previous year's performance of 1% arrears. Actions were being taken to ensure that void properties were kept to a minimum. A range of factors had impacted on this indicator, some of which were beyond the control of SLHD, such as material supply chain difficulties and external trades, but performance had improved and continued to improve.
- KPI 14 Number of residents undertaking training or education
Performance in this area was less than half of target, which was mainly due to less people coming forward for training and the buoyant employment market resulting in more opportunities to fill vacancies. This was reflected in KPI 15 'Number of residents supported into employment', where SLHD had been set a target to get 30 people into employment and had helped 51 people to secure a job.

To conclude, the Deputy Mayor advised that overall it was disappointing to see that

some indicators were off target, however it was an improving picture.

Councillor Rachael Blake made reference to the key performance indicators at paragraphs 8.5, 8.6 and 8.7 of the report, and welcomed SLHDs efforts and progress in moving on a number of households placed in bed and breakfast accommodation, and the interventions in place to alleviate homelessness. She recognised the large number of people who had been evicted from private rented accommodation, and the impact this had on SLHD in dealing with a huge demand for Council accommodation. Councillor Blake acknowledged the ongoing support for vulnerable families, particularly in light of the current cost of living crisis.

In referring to KPI 8.11, 'Days lost through sickness per SLHD Full Time Employee (FTE)', Councillor Mark Houlbrook noted that the highest cause of absence this financial year remained stress, depression and anxiety and hoped that the actions to address this would prove effective.

Councillor Phil Cole congratulated SLHD with regard to the excellent improvements being made in relation to customer complaints and in achieving a 100% customer success rate from tenants in relation to the Repairs Excellence pilot project. This initiative would help to reduce the problem of no access into properties and free up resources so that the repairs team could attend appointments and improve efficiency.

Councillor Mark Houlbrook was pleased to observe 100% of Council properties were now in receipt of a valid safety gas certificate, which would improve the health and safety for residents.

Whilst noting there were concerns in some areas, Councillor Joe Blackham was confident that improvements would be made, and commended SLHD staff for the work carried out in difficult circumstances.

Mayor Ros Jones, in noting the KPIs in relation to the average days to re-let properties and the number of void properties, which remained at a high level, underlined the need for improvements to be made in these areas. However, she acknowledged that overall, there was an improving picture and that most of the key performance targets had been met during challenging times.

Dave Richmond, Chief Executive of SLHD, acknowledged that voids and the re-letting of properties were below target. However, he provided assurances that improvements would be made over the coming year and would endeavour to ensure that targets were closely monitored.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

There were no other alternatives considered or rejected.

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. Ieger Homes of Doncaster.

DECISION 2

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. 2021-22 Quarter 4 Finance and Performance Improvement Report

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) approved the Quarter 4 Performance and Financial information, including the virements per the Financial Procedure Rules, as detailed in the Appendix B – Finance profile;
- (2) noted the allocations of block budgets in the Capital Programme, as detailed in the Appendix B – Finance profile, in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules (sections A & B);
- (3) noted the carry forwards approved by the Chief Financial Officer, as detailed in the Appendix B – Finance profile;
- (4) approved the allocation of £9.60m from General Fund underspends and release of earmarked reserves in 2022/23, as detailed in paragraph 166 of the report;
- (5) approved the use of £0.7m discretionary Council Tax rebate funding towards the additional £100 payment, as detailed in paragraph 165 of the report;
- (6) approved the delegation to the Director of Public Health and Director of Corporate Resources to determine how the £5.15m allocated from the underspend will be spent on leisure facilities;
- (7) approved the allocation of £0.50m Housing Revenue Account underspend in 2022/23 to deliver further stock condition surveys, as detailed in paragraph 168 of the report;
- (8) approved the delegation to the Director of Adults, Health & Wellbeing, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to determine how the £0.68m carried forward to support domestic abuse projects will be spent; and
- (9) approved the delegation to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to determine how the £1.20m carried forward to support Integrated Care Board transition and transformation including provider collaborative work will be spent.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report introduced by Councillor Phil Cole, Cabinet Member for Finance and Trading Services, which provided an update on the Quarter 4 budget monitoring and financial position for the 2021/22 financial year, including the General Fund Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant, and Treasury Management budgets.

The Covid pandemic had continued to provide significant volatility and ongoing financial challenges on the Council's 2021/22 budget, which included estimated cost increases as a result of COVID, and reduced income from Council Tax and Business Rates, balanced using a modest level of COVID reserves carried forward. During the year, the financial position had been carefully and regularly monitored on a monthly basis.

The Council had seen an improved financial position, resulting in an £8.9m underspend, which represented 1.6% of the Council's gross budget. This was an extremely positive year-end position given the financial pressures. However, it also highlighted the continued significant volatility shown in the sizeable swing from the break-even position reported to Cabinet at Quarter 3.

The report set out in detail explanations regarding the reasons for the changes and resulting underspends. Further analysis would be undertaken to fully understand the impact on the 2022/23 budget. The changes and resulting underspends in some circumstances related to lower activity in 2021/22 than anticipated, which was expected to have an ongoing recurrent impact in 2022/23, particularly relating to the underspend on homecare provision. Full details regarding the main variances were set out in paragraphs 139 to 160 of the report. The following issues were also highlighted:-

The Council continued to deliver services whilst operating in a challenging and uncertain environment.

The rising cost of living continues to impact, with inflation at its highest for over a decade, the April energy cap change, and the price of petrol is also at record highs. This continues to be a worry for many people and businesses. To help ease some of this worry for residents, it was agreed to make a £100 payment to eligible residents, funded through the Household Support Fund, and propose a further £100 from Council funds.

As the situation in Ukraine continues, the Homes for Ukraine scheme has been administered as quickly and safely as possible. People have already arrived and will continue to arrive into 2022/23. The Council's welcome and support arrangements are in place to ensure people get the support they need to settle in Doncaster.

As Doncaster Children's Services Trust and functions come back into the Council, this will be a feature of performance reporting in 2022-23 to oversee its transition and improvement.

The Council continues to monitor the situation with regard to Covid 19 closely, to ensure the Health and Care system can continue to respond and staff absence can

be managed in a safe way.

Councillor Cole was pleased to note the positive trajectory for many of the Council's service standards from the position reported in Quarter 3, including:-

- The target for removing fly tip waste, which continues to exceed the 65% target, with 92% of reported cases being closed within the target timeframe.
- 99.94% of household waste and recycling collections were undertaken during Quarter 4, showing a small increase from Quarter 3 (99.83%)
- Street Scene continue to work successfully on the parks in the Borough, with four of the five parks entered for Green Flag status continuing to be successful in retaining a Green Flag status.
- Homes England approved £1.32m of funding for Council House Build Programme Phase 1.
- The Council has invested £5m of additional funds into highways maintenance for 22/23

Through the public engagement processes, the Council is aware that these are the services which are important to the public, and the Council was working hard to maintain and improve its service delivery offer.

The underspend has provided more opportunities to support the most vulnerable residents by providing one off help with the cost of living crisis, with roughly £4million of extra support.

There is also over £5m for leisure facilities, which will be directed to the refurbishment and service improvements, bringing about health and well-being benefits.

Following the presentation of the report, the Mayor advised that in addition to her previous investments in the Borough's swimming pools and leisure centres at Thorne, Askern and Edlington, she announced that an additional £5m would go towards further investment in leisure centres:-

Renovation works to Thorne Leisure Centre will include:

- A new gym and exercise space
- Soft play area
- Cafe
- Refurbished changing rooms
- Changing places and pool pod entry system
- New mechanical systems
- Fabric refurbishment throughout including new roofs
- Carbon neutral energy systems
- a bowling alley on the first floor

She highlighted that all of these works were to encourage further customers, improve commercial viability, and ensure the leisure centre supports residents to live happier and healthier lives.

As part of the Levelling Up Fund Round 2, the Council would be submitting two

bids; one for Doncaster North and one for Don Valley. The Mayor emphasised that the city of Doncaster is a place of places and it was vital that the Council supported and encouraged the regeneration of its principle towns. She added that the Levelling Up Fund 2 bid for Doncaster North included investment in Mexborough, Moorends and Brodsworth Miner's Welfare. The Levelling up bid for Don Valley would focus on Edlington, with a new Leisure Centre, improvements to the main shopping area, and tackle some of the issues around the Royal Estate.

The Mayor reported that the MPs for Doncaster North and Don Valley were supportive of the bids for their respective constituencies, and that further information would be announced in due course, and encouraged the people of Doncaster to get involved with the consultation.

Councillor Blackham highlighted that the Council had also invested £1m to make improvements to the highways infrastructure and would be introducing 20mph schemes across the Borough.

Councillor Rachael Blake highlighted some of the good performance in relation to 'Skilled and Creative', in particular the overall percentage of Early Years Providers, rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted, and was higher than the national average. Childcare in day nurseries was above the national average, which provides families the opportunities to get support. A recent survey identified families accessing the Family Hubs had a positive experience. In relation to Stronger Families, for the tenth year, Doncaster had exceeded the targets with 141% achieved at year end.

Councillor Houlbrook, in referring to the Cleaner Greener theme, welcomed the work being undertaken to digitally plot the number of trees across the Borough on to the Council's 'Treewise' system, which he hoped would encourage residents to register trees where they lived.

Councillor Blake welcomed free childcare for those in the most deprived areas, which demonstrates the Council's commitment to improving the life chances for those in need.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

There were no other alternatives considered or rejected.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt.

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources.

DECISION 3

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

8. Doncaster Town Deal - Station Gateway Projects.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) approved the submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) of the Project Business Case Summary, Page 98 Documents (attached to Appendix A of this report) for Project A - Doncaster Gateway: Railway Square Extension (£4,149,000) and Project B - Doncaster Station Gateway: New Multi-Use Building and Associated Public Realm (£20,090,000), confirming the intention of Doncaster Council to secure a combined total of £24,239,000 Town Deals funding for key Doncaster heritage sites;
- (2) accepted the £24,239,000 Town Deal funding for use on Project A - Doncaster Gateway: Railway Square Extension (£4,149,000) and Project B - Doncaster Station Gateway: New Multi-Use Building and Associated Public Realm (£20,090,000), subject to satisfactory review of the Summary Business Cases (SBCs) by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and in accordance with the conditions and requirements of the funding, as set out in the report;
- (3) delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, to accept and agree the funding if there are any further Terms and Conditions, or associated funding agreements issued as part of the formal approval of funding;
- (4) noted the estimated funding gap on the scheme, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, and approved the use of the Council's Investment and Modernisation Fund, already approved within the Council's Capital Programme, to fund the gap;
- (5) gave approval to include the projects, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report in the relevant part of the Council's Capital Programme;
- (6) noted that the Section 151 Officer will confirm the project and expenditure, as per the Business Case, represents value for money in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder, and sign the Project Business Case Summary Documents for Project A - Doncaster Gateway: Railway Square Extension and Project B - Doncaster Station Gateway: New Multi-Use Building and Associated Public Realm;
- (7) delegated authority to the Director of Economy and Environment, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources and the relevant Portfolio Holder, to acquire, by agreement with landowners, the property and land required for the construction of the Station Gateway projects; and

- (8) delegated authority to the Director of Economy and Environment, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources and the relevant Portfolio Holder, to procure and award the Pre-Construction Services Contract and Main Works Contracts, in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's).

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report, introduced by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, which sought approval to:

submit the Business Cases for the Doncaster Town Deal Station Gateway Projects;

set out the requirement for the Council to have the ability to acquire key strategic properties to facilitate the delivery of the Doncaster Towns Deal projects; and

sought to delegate approval to the Director of Economy and Environment, and the Director of Corporate Resources, to award future contract appointments relating to the delivery of the projects.

In November 2021, the Government Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) released the Grant Offer Letter for the Doncaster Towns Deal, confirming £24.8m towards the Doncaster Towns Deal Gateway Projects. This included £4.149m for the proposed Railway Square Extension scheme, which will deliver a significant extension to the recently upgraded Railway Square to allow connection with the Station Gateway site, allowing greater walkability and space for new enterprise, and £20.09m for the New Multi-Use Building and Associated Public Realm, to promote and encourage further investment in the Doncaster Gateway site for the delivery of a 4-5 storey office/mixed-use building.

The project is of significance as the majority of spend is required on the build costs of a new mixed-use building, but with wider public realm, connectivity, active travel and regeneration elements. The building would be of the highest quality design and have the best green credentials, which was critical to achieving the project objectives, and to attract the highest quality of commercial tenant to the development.

The proposed site locations for the Railway Square Extension and the New Multi-Use Building and Associated Public Realm schemes were currently occupied by privately owned properties. The scheme would require the acquisition of some existing properties to facilitate the development of the proposed new commercial building and public realm schemes.

Negotiations to acquire the properties was on-going, and it was hoped that the Council would not need to use the CPO purchase powers. The project is expected to be fully completed by September 2025.

Paragraphs 5.8 to 5.38 of the report provided details of the external consultants and partners involved in the design and the development of the projects, the quality and design, environmental attributes and economic benefits of the buildings, main outputs of the multi-use building, and costs and property acquisitions associated with the projects.

Appendix A to the report set out the Summary Business Cases for the Doncaster Town Deal Station Gateway Projects, which included details in relation to the heads of terms, business case appraisals, the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) capital funding allocation, quantified benefit/cost ratio/value for money for the projects, deliverability and delivery plan, including details of project timescales and key milestones, partnerships, interdependencies and risks and mitigation measures associated with the projects.

Councillor Joe Blackham pointed out that the £24.8m Government funding was ring fenced, and could only be spent for the purposes of the projects, as specified in the report and the grant funding letter.

The Mayor commended the schemes coming forward as a means of enhancing the town centre and encouraging local businesses.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Summary Business Case Submission

- (i) Do not submit Project Summary Business Cases to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for Project A - Doncaster Gateway: Railway Square Extension and Project B - Doncaster Station Gateway: New Multi-Use Building and Associated Public Realm. The inclusion of Doncaster in the Towns Deal recipients list is an opportunity, not a directive. Whilst a decision not to proceed with the Business Case is an option, it would mean that Doncaster would miss a significant opportunity to kick start the regeneration of the Station Gateway area and the identified key social and economic benefits that the Towns Deal could deliver. This is not the recommended option.

Design and Construction Contract Appointments

- (ii) Do not proceed with the process of procuring and awarding Pre-Construction Services Contract and Construction Contract. This would mean the project design and delivery would not be able to progress, and the project would end. This is not the recommended option.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Appendix 1 to the report was not for publication because it contains exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 (*information relating to the 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