



# City of Doncaster Council

## EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decision was taken on Wednesday, 12th April, 2023 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Thursday, 13th April, 2023

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Monday 24th April, 2023. This decision 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 and Trading Services
Councillor Andrea Robinson	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

Apologies:-

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rachael Blake, Mark Houlbrook and Jane Nightingale.

## PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

### Public Questions and Statements

Questions had been received from Councillors Nick Allen, Jane Cox, Glenn Bluff and Steve Cox.

In the absence of Councillor Nick Allen, Mayor Ros Jones read out his question as follows:-

'My question is about part 21 of the report regarding South Yorkshire Airport City. What contingency is in place if expenditure exceeds the estimate? Would it be possible to

outline an associated value of the proposal to 'mitigate' external costs? If, due to unforeseen circumstances and external factors, costs exceed the estimate how will CDC be able to ensure value for money?'

The Mayor thanked Councillor Allen for his question and read out the following response. A copy of the response would be forwarded to Councillor Allen:-

'The report outlines how the Council has considered the tasks ahead, considered the resource, skills and capacity required and only secured advisers to plug the knowledge and capacity gaps.

The report also outlines how the Council will manage activity and budgets closely to mitigate the additional external cost.

Paragraph 45 of the report outlines the available contingency.

Value for money is determined at the point of any procurement decision and we have selected our advisers based on the skills, experience and market availability.'

Councillor Jane Cox was in attendance and read out the following question:-

'Please supply a breakdown of the £3.1M identified expenditure and of the additional estimated £3.15M totalling £6.25M sought from SYMCA and also supply a copy of the bid with enclosures made to SYMCA and dates when it was made. What contingencies are in place if the bid is turned down by SYMCA?'

The Mayor thanked Councillor Cox for her question and provided the following response:-

'The £3.1m breakdown is explained within the appendix to the report that you are free to inspect.

This meeting is in relation to the report presented, any further information in relation to the SYMCA bid can be picked up outside of the meeting through the appropriate channels.

If the bid is turned down by SYMCA then the alternate funding plan is detailed in paragraph 28.'

Councillor Cox had no supplementary question.

In the absence of Councillor Glenn Bluff, Mayor Ros Jones read out his question as follows:-

'Please advise what reports have been commissioned identifying which experts, their terms of reference, anticipated costs and timescale for completions with a copy of the letter(s) of instruction?'

The Mayor thanked Councillor Bluff for his question and read out the following response. A copy of the response would be forwarded to Councillor Bluff:-

'The Appendix to the report is available for inspection. In regard to letters of instruction, you would need to explain a legitimate reason to see them and then they can be viewed confidentially outside of this meeting.'

Councillor Steve Cox was in attendance and read out his question as follows:-

‘Given that £115M has been top-sliced from the Transport budget for SYMCA to enable Sheffield to have their Super Trams and of which Doncaster’s share would be £24m, can this be used in negotiation to strengthen the argument for the £6.25M funding back from SYMCA?’

Mayor Ros Jones thanked Councillor Steve Cox for his question and provided the following response:-

‘I’m assuming that this relates to the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. The conditions which you propose would not be allowable within the government funding criteria of CRSTS. It is important to remember that as part of the CRSTS funding it was stipulated by the Department for Transport that funding for Supertram must play a large part of any settlement. If it didn’t, then we would have been allocated considerably less money for Doncaster and the region.

DfT has ring-fenced the funding within CRSTS for tram renewal, treating it as a “retained scheme”, which means they directly control access to the funding, rather than devolving the funding to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.

In actual fact, Doncaster received more CRSTS than was expected, using a population based formula our share would be £94.6m, but we have actually secured £104m in our approved programme.

We must also remember that Northern Powerhouse Rail included plans for the Tram-Train extension to Doncaster, as part of the government Integrated Rail Plan, this was unfortunately scrapped by Boris Johnson before being promised to be delivered in full by Liz Truss and then scrapped again by Rishi Sunak and the current government.’

Councillor Cox asked a supplementary question asking whether it was possible to receive a copy of the reports which had been used to provide the response to his question. Mayor Jones stated that these would be provided outside of the meeting.

Decision records dated 29th March, 2023, be noted.

## **DECISION 1.**

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

6. South Yorkshire Airport City: Programme Update and Financial Approvals

### **2. DECISION TAKEN**

Cabinet:-

(1) noted the latest information provided in the report and would continue to recognise the significant benefits of SYAC across the wider South Yorkshire economy;

- (2) noted the request to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) at its June meeting for consideration of granting £6.25m Local Growth Fund to support the associated costs to acquire Doncaster Sheffield Airport;
- (3) approved the alternative funding plan detailed in paragraph 28, as a contingent measure, due to the need to incur spend prior to an SYMCA decision in June 2023 and in the event that SYMCA do not approve the funding;
- (4) delegated approval to accept the SYMCA grant funding, in accordance with the report, to the Assistant Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, subject to a SYMCA decision in June 2023; and
- (5) delegated authority to the Director of Corporate Resources, to procure and award Contracts, in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs), for spend items outlined in Appendix 1.

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

Cabinet received a report introduced by Mayor Ros Jones on the South Yorkshire Airport City programme update and financial approvals.

She reported that Doncaster Sheffield Airport was an important infrastructure asset for Doncaster, South Yorkshire and the north.

Following its opening in 2005, DSA grew substantially, even though it faced the significant impacts of the 2008 recession and more recently the COVID19 pandemic. In just five years from 2014 to 2019, DSA doubled its traffic to over 1.4m passengers per year and in 2021 the airport moved almost 24,000 tonnes of freight.

She stated that the airport had faced some unprecedented external challenges in its short period as an operational airport. Despite this, by the time of its closure the airport already:-

- supported an estimated 2,700 jobs in the local economy
- contributed an annual net GVA of £108.4 million, and
- created an annual welfare gain of approximately £49.5 million.

This success was supported by more than £78m of funding in grants and loans, including contributions to new road infrastructure, public transport connections and business facilities.

Despite extensive engagement with Peel during their strategic review last year, sadly the award-winning airport has now closed.

Mayor Jones reported that the Council believe that DSA has the core attributes needed to be a successful airport and play a vital role in levelling-up ambitions and are determined that it should re-open. This objective has wide-ranging support from people and businesses across the region.

The re-opening of DSA could be achieved by agreement between Peel and a third party or with the involvement of the Council.

She went on to state that the Council's preferred outcome was to reach agreement on the acquisition of the airport through meaningful negotiations, but if necessary, the Council will seek to compulsorily purchase the airport site. It was advised that the Council were preparing for that eventuality, should it be required.

It was noted that the acquisition process will take time and it will not be cheap. However, Mayor Jones reported that the airport had the potential to be the jewel in the crown of the Doncaster and South Yorkshire economy and an investment in the future of the city and region.

The report presented to Cabinet sets out the latest position and asks for the support to progress the Council's endeavours for the site's future.

In conclusion, Mayor Jones stated that she hoped a negotiated sale can be achieved. However, if not, the Council had to plan for other ways to secure the airport for the aviation industry, residents, communities and the economy.

Cabinet were afforded the opportunity to ask questions. Councillor Phil Cole asked what role the Government had played in efforts to secure the future of Doncaster Sheffield Airport.

Mayor Jones reported that since Peel announced the strategic review in July 2022 there had been a number of changes within central government leadership. During the changes, the position with regard to the support for the airport had altered and the current position was that the Council remained in dialogue with Department for Transport officials.

The decision on any future Compulsory Purchase Order would ultimately be made by the Government. However, she stressed that the Council must be mindful that any CPO decision was likely to be 18 to 24 months away and that the next General Election could impact on any decisions made and the timetable.

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

Do nothing – The City of Doncaster Council could determine to do nothing and not pursue the proposed acquisition and CPO action as described; this is clearly not acceptable based on rationale contained within the report.

Negotiate with Peel for preferred purchase – The option of negotiating with Peel on a purchase price prior to incurring significant costs for both parties continues to be explored.

Negotiate with Peel for a preferred lease – Discussions are taking place with Peel regarding this option to explore whether a long term lease could provide a basis upon which to achieve the Council's objectives.

CPO process – To prepare for a potential CPO in the event that negotiations with Peel are unsuccessful.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were no declarations.

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

Appendix 1 to the report is exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)).

**7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources.

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker