



City of Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday, 13th September, 2023 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Friday, 15th September, 2023

End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 26th September, 2023. 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 Early Help, Education, Skills and Young People
Councillor Nigel Ball	Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Communities, Leisure and Culture
Councillor Rachael Blake	Portfolio Holder for Children's Social Care and Equalities
Councillor Phil Cole	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Traded Services and Planning
Councillor Mark Houlbrook	Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and Waste
Councillor Jane Nightingale	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources
Councillor Sarah Smith	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

Apologies:-

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Joe Blackham.

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

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

However, the Mayor stated that she had allowed Councillor Leanne Hempshall to make a statement on an item being presented at the meeting.

Decision Records dated 16th August, 2023, be noted.

DECISION 1.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. Doncaster Play Parks Infrastructure Policy.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet adopted the Parks Play Infrastructure Policy that will set out our strategic approach of how we best use future investment for the provision of play and its associated equipment within our parks. Ensuring that the approach has positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received a report introduced by Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities, Leisure and Culture stating that the City of Doncaster Council recognises the importance of play to the health, well-being and development of our children and young people.

It is also recognised that 31.3% of children in Doncaster are inactive, which is higher than the national average, and that the Council's green spaces and play parks are a crucial part of the fabric of play, providing facilities that offer the opportunity for children and young people to be active through play.

Councillor Ball advised that across the borough there are 286 facilities, including:-

- 151 Play parks
- 56 Multi Use Games Facilities
- 22 basketball and tennis courts
- 19 Skate parks
- 20 Teen Shelters

It was noted that these are managed and owned by various organisations, including Parish and Town Councils, St leger Homes, Charities, and private sites, along with Doncaster Council being the main provider, having ownership of 189 of the sites.

Councillor Ball reported that prior to the commissioning of this Play Parks Infrastructure Policy the Council's knowledge of all facilities was disjointed and missing in some circumstances. The Council for the first time now has a complete overview of play parks within the borough, the extent and type of the current provision, ownership, management, and access across the area.

This has enabled the Council to establish a policy to guide the approach to the provision of play parks within the borough, informed by extensive consultation with communities across Doncaster, including young people, residents, elected members and council officers.

He stated that through the work of this policy, it enables the Council to set out an overarching vision supported by key principles for design and delivery of play

parks; setting out what a good play park should aim to offer.

In conclusion, Councillor Ball stated that the strategy sets out the ambition of the council for the future, ensuring Play Park facilities meet the current and future needs, enabling children and young people to lead active and healthy lives through play, whilst also recognising the diversity of children and young people and ensuring that all of them, irrespective of their needs, have equitable access to play park provision to assist them with their emotional, social and physical development and to provide quality facilities where all children in Doncaster can experience fun, adventure and enjoyment.

Prior to offering the report out for Cabinet Members' comments, the Mayor invited Councillor Leanne Hempshall to present her statement.

Councillor Hempshall made a statement thanking officers for their time spent discussing the policy with members. However, she expressed concern that the 8 paragraphs on inclusion within the policy do not show how the Council ensures sites going forward are accessible and inclusive to all.

She acknowledged that officers would like to provide inclusive equipment but are held back by a lack of funds. However, the Council were still not promising to replace broken equipment with inclusive equipment when the chance arises. She stated that the strategy showed no commitment to children and young people with special educational needs.

Councillor Hempshall urged that a commitment be made by the Council to Children and Young People with Special Educational needs that we are working towards all Doncaster's Parks being inclusive".

In response, Councillor Ball thanked Councillor Hempshall for her comments. He reported that the Policy presented was aspirational and was a step in the right direction moving forward. The Policy offers a commitment to create new facilities and to improve on existing equipment and facilities, whilst also showing commitment to the Equalities Act. He stated that consultation had been good and moving forward sees the Policy as a model document. He accepted that existing Play Parks required improvements, and these would be carried out once funding is available.

Officers advised that the Council are required to abide by the Equalities Act when new parks are being built. The Policy provides a framework to work with communities to ensure the Council provides what is best for that community within the resources it has. It was noted where possible the Council would replace broken equipment with equipment that is inclusive.

Councillor Rachael Blake welcomed the Policy and the commitment to inclusivity for all. However, she asked that the principles set out also recognised the need to cater for women and girls. She stated that it was important for discussion to take place on what the next steps are to ensure people's expectations are brought to fruition should the Council be fortunate to receive funding. She stated that the policy needs to be ambitious and the Council work with organisations to create facilities for all people with disabilities and would be happy to work with Ward

Members going forward.

Cabinet also recognised that the policy showed a commitment for the improvement of the borough's green spaces, which was seen as a step forward in terms of access to the natural environment for all residents.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not to adopt the Play Parks Infrastructure Policy, resulting in the status quo being maintained and potential continued decline in the offer available to the citizens of Doncaster.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

6. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt

7. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Rachael Leslie, Deputy Director of Public Health

DECISION 2.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. Doncaster City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order Review.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) considered the outcome from the public consultation exercise on the future of the Doncaster City Centre PSPO; and.
- (2) approved the revised Public Spaces Protection Order attached at Appendix 2.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

In the absence of Councillor Joe Blackham, Mayor Ros Jones introduced the report providing Cabinet with the outcome from a consultation on the review of the PSPO for Doncaster City Centre. The report also sought approval to renew the PSPO for a further three years. The consultation initially proposed that all prohibitions remain, except for the current prohibition 7, which is for tampering with parking equipment, and a minor amendment to prohibition 2 for loitering.

The Mayor stated that overall, there was extremely strong support (over 90%) for the renewal of the PSPO and the retention of all 7 prohibitions.

It was advised that the consultation had generated a far higher response than previous years from the public and a range of stakeholders. In total there were 2,396 responses, with 58 from businesses, compared to 1,000 responses in 2020. The consultation showed that the public are focused on wanting to see the city centre thrive, and enjoy the shopping facilities and wider facilities on offer. However, certain behaviours have a negative impact on their view of the city centre and desire to access these facilities.

Mayor Jones reported that whilst people want to see these issues and behaviours addressed, there is a wish that those affected by homelessness, addiction and other associated issues are effectively supported to lead healthier and safer lifestyles.

There were 1,156 reported breaches and 86 fixed penalty notices (FPN's) issued between December 2020 and March 2023.

The main themes from the survey responses covered;

- Safety in the City Centre
- Homelessness and support for vulnerable people
- Presenting a positive image is important for the City Centre
- Enforcement, including stronger and more visible Police resources

Mayor Jones stated that it is proposed that the initial stages of implementation will include raising awareness of the revised PSPO. A communications plan would support implementation, including notifying businesses, members of the public and stakeholders of the decision to implement a varied PSPO and further promotion of the services available to people who require such support.

It was advised that a key element of implementation will be to continue the existing approach of assertive outreach work engaging and assisting vulnerable individuals to access services. This approach is embedded in the work of the Complex Lives Alliance team. The clear brief to all partners will be to work together with people with complex needs to break the cycles they can be locked into.

It was noted that where formal enforcement is required for breaches of the PSPO, this will be undertaken by South Yorkshire Police and designated Council officers with specific training and experience in enforcement work.

Cabinet welcomed the report and were greatly encouraged by the response of the consultation and the support for the renewal of the PSPO by the public. Officers assured Cabinet that enforcement measures would be carried out when required by the Council working in partnership with South Yorkshire Police.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option Two: Extend the PSPO as it stands, changing only the parts required to change by law/guidance.

Option Three: Let the current PSPO expire without renewal.

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 Place.

DECISION 3.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

8. 2023-24 Quarter 1 Finance and Performance Improvement Report.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet commented and approved the Performance and Finance information including:-

- (1) approval of the virements per the Financial Procedure Rules, detailed in Appendix A – Finance Profile; and
- (2) noted the allocations of block budgets in the Capital Programme, detailed in Appendix A – Finance Profile, in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received the report introduced by Councillor Phil Cole, Cabinet Member for Finance, Traded Services and Planning, stating that the Council continues to be impacted by inflationary and service pressures and this is reflected in the estimated £4.16m overspend position forecast at quarter 1 on the revenue budget. The key pressures include overspends on both adults and children’s social care costs significantly exceeding budgets.

He reported that the Council will continue to review and update the projections, alongside actively seeking mitigations to reduce the pressures or identify offsetting underspends to reduce the forecast year-end overspend. In the longer term the Council are looking at the extent to which pressures on budgets continue into 2024/25, to feed into the budget setting process.

Councillor Cole reported that performance for quarter 1 remained predominately positive and the Council has or will have achieved the following:

- continue to sustain a very high standard in relation to the successful collections of household waste and recycling, maintaining a figure close to 100%.
- In the first quarter over 29% of the annual total business rates debit has

- been collected.
- continue strong performance focus on reducing assessment waiting times in Adult Social Care across all Teams.
- maintain a consistent performance regarding the number of people who have received an annual review of their care and support arrangements.
- extended further the number of Veterans supported within the Communities Service.
- The number of victims who have experienced ongoing or multiple instances of anti-social behaviour has decreased.
- Safeguarding Service continues its programme of improvement with repeat safeguarding referrals remaining stable at 34.3%.

He went on to state that the Council continues to review activity to improve challenging areas of performance, including:

- The level of inward investment being below the target set for this quarter.
- The % of Mothers who quit smoking has seen a decline.
- An increase in the number of incidents attended by the Neighbourhood Response Team.
- An increase in the average number of rough sleepers seen each month, from 24 in quarter 4 to 36 this quarter.
- The proportion of Early Help Audits that are reported as 'Good' or above has decreased by 7.68% this quarter.

Councillor Cole stated that the Council continues to operate in really challenging circumstances, but it has delivered on and seen improvement on many of the service standard measures. This delivery is a credit to the hard working and committed workforce and for that he took the opportunity to pass his and Cabinet's thanks on for that ongoing support.

In conclusion, he advised Cabinet of an amendment to page 46 of the report referring to the strategic risk table around safeguarding children which should be rated red and have a profile of 20. It was noted that the strategic risk register was undergoing a review, and this will be reflected in the quarter 2 report.

Cabinet welcomed the report and undertook to highlight some of the excellent work being carried out within their portfolios, including:-

- Absenteeism had decreased.
- Increased engagement with young people who are NEETS.
- Young Families Team was now embedded within communities, and whilst this had created more demand, the team are able to meet those demands.
- Further investment in Family Hubs.
- Social Care referrals are performing above target.
- The number of children in care is reducing. However, the cost of placements continues to remain high, and it remained a priority for the Council to bring children back into the borough from out of authority placements.
- Acknowledgement of the innovative work carried out within Adults, Wellbeing and Culture in creating capacity to reduce occupational waiting lists.

- Continued improvements with the work carried out with Veterans within the borough.

Councillor Cole thanked Cabinet and echoed the comments made by members.

Mayor Ros Jones stated that it was noted that steps were being undertaken to mitigate and reduce overspends. However, the Council would remain vigilant, and specific actions would be highlighted if required. She concluded by acknowledging the good work carried out to ensure the Council remained a well-run Council.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable.

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 4.

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

9. St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited (SLHD) performance and delivery update Quarter 1 ended 30 June 2023 (2023/24).

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet noted the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution SLHD makes to supporting City of Doncaster Council's (CDC) strategic priorities.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet received the report introduced by Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Business. Prior to the start of his introduction, he explained that this year the Government had introduced the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, some of which were contained in the report as alternatives to similar performance targets set previously. Some of the performances were being measured cumulatively throughout the year, meaning that, as this was a Quarter 1 report, some of the trend data can be difficult to compare to the last report which was the full year outcome report.

Councillor Jones stated that there were fourteen indicators that were measured at the end of Quarter one. Only 5 were within target or tolerance. In those five areas there were some good elements of performance, particularly in respect of rent

collected, repairs completed on time and complaints handled within the time scale.

He advised that in some instances, it is known that targets haven't been met because the targets themselves are really challenging. He explained that these were in areas where the Council want to stretch St Leger Homes to be more ambitious. He stated that in respect of KPIs 2 and 3, which relate to void rent loss and the turnaround time for reletting properties, St Leger's performance was steadily improving, and it is known that St Leger Homes are performing within the top quartile of landlords. However, the Council want to push performance further as having all its properties let is a critical factor in the Council's approach to addressing homelessness.

Councillor Jones reported that in terms of homelessness in KPI 4, there was considerable pressure on homelessness services at a national level, not only in Doncaster. It was noted that approaches to homelessness services were at an all-time high and it was extremely disappointing to see that in Doncaster St Leger have been left with no alternative but to temporarily place people in hotels. However, he advised that concerted action is being taken to reduce the need to use hotels.

Cabinet were advised that the complaints figures mentioned in KPI 6 were far too high. Councillor Jones stated that he wants to see these reduced and St Leger Homes have assured him that they are taking action to address the root causes of complaints. Progress was also expected to continue with the Repairs Excellence programme.

Councillor Jones stated that Cabinet was committed to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour. It was noted that the ASB numbers reported to St Leger were too high. However, this was not purely a St Leger issue and has been seen nationally. He stated that he was pleased that St Leger Homes had set up a new dedicated team to address serious ASB and would be monitoring progress.

In conclusion, he advised that in relation to Doncaster College and the figure of 9 for Quarter 1, this related purely to people that found work and it is anticipated that as courses commence this performance will improve.

Cabinet welcomed the report and were keen to monitor the success of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team. ASB was clearly a challenge within the borough. However, Cabinet saw that the creation of this team would have a positive effect and hoped that St Leger would be working in partnership with the Council and South Yorkshire Police to ensure a holistic picture. Officers assured Cabinet that this was the approach being undertaken and progress would be monitored by the Portfolio Holder.

Discussion took place regarding the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and homelessness within the borough and the contributing factors adding to the increased presentations, such as an increase in domestic violence and the housing of asylum seekers. In terms of asylum seekers, whilst St Leger do not have a legal duty, it goes above and beyond to provide temporary accommodation.

Cabinet commended the ongoing improvements in repairs completed and the continued success of the tenancies sustained team detailed within KPI8. It was noted that this was a very small team who have continued to offer support and guidance to tenants.

In conclusion, the Mayor was delighted to see the improvements made regarding void properties. However, during the current financial difficulties faced by residents, the Council needs to continue to do all it can to assist people in these uncertain times.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable

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.

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker