



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 20th August, 2019 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Wednesday, 21st August, 2019

The end of the call in period is 5.00 p.m. on Monday, 2nd September, 2019 and therefore, the decisions can be implemented on Tuesday, 3rd September, 2019

Present:-

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

Cabinet Member for:

Councillor Nigel Ball	Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure and Culture
Councillor Joe Blackham	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Street Scene and Trading Services
Councillor Rachael Blake	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board
Councillor Chris McGuinness	Portfolio Holder for Communities, Voluntary Sector and the Environment
Councillor Bill Mordue	Portfolio Holder for Business, Skills and Economic Development
Councillor Jane Nightingale	Portfolio Holder for Customer and Corporate Services.

Apologies:-

Apologies for absence were received from the Chair, Mayor Ros Jones and Councillor Nuala Fennelly.

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones read out a question submitted by Councillor Nick Allen:-

“There has been a lot of interest in the plan to close the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Doncaster. I believe the Imagination Library is an asset to Doncaster and will be missed by lots of young parents. The Quarter 1 Finance and Performance Improvement Report states there is a plan to promote bookstart and community libraries. I agree this might be a helpful way to withstand the loss of the DPIL, but I still feel this initiative will need investment from the Council. How much is this promotion going to cost?”

The following response was provided:-

“Dear Cllr Allen,

Thank you for your recent e-mail regarding the Imagination Library, expressing your concerns around the required funding to promote the alternatives to the scheme.

The background to this is that funding for the Imagination library came from an external School Forum Grant not Council funding, which covered a period of three years, and it is this funding that has now come to an end. As the ‘Quarter 1 Report’ indicates, we have explored a number of alternatives and there is a plan to promote the following as alternatives.

Doncaster Council, working with community groups, maintains 25 libraries across the Borough, despite ongoing cuts from Central Government and a £2m revenue budget cut to our library service since 2011-12.

There are four libraries; Central, Mexborough, Edlington and Thorne that are maintained by Doncaster Council. 510 volunteers maintain the rest of the network across 21 libraries with integrated support from the Council. All libraries are free to register for residents of all ages.

Doncaster Council remains part of the national Bookstart programme, which gifts children three different free reading packs at relevant stages before they start school, to help families read together with their children every day to inspire and develop a love of books and reading which has many benefits for children’s development.

There are also 12 Family Hubs across Doncaster, all of which host different sessions aimed at promoting early literacy. Families are welcome with children of all ages through childhood, and even older if a child has a special need. Sessions run include story time and sing and shake. More details can be found on the Council website.

We will continue to seek alternatives, and in the meantime, these are cost neutral ways for children to enjoy reading. As they already operate across Doncaster, there will be only limited costs to promote them as alternative options and they are part of the Council’s existing plans to promote literacy for all children.”

Decision records dated 9th July 2019 (previously circulated), were noted.

DECISION 1

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. 2019-20 Quarter 1 Finance and Performance Improvement Report and 'Delivering for Doncaster' Booklet.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet note the Quarter 1 performance and financial information, including:-

(1) changes to the Strategic Risks, as detailed in paragraphs 45 – 46 and Appendix C of the report; and

- (2) note the allocations of block budgets in the Capital Programme, detailed in Appendix A – Finance Profile, in accordance with the updated Financial Procedure Rules.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet was presented with the Quarter 1 Finance and Performance information, which indicated the Council's current position towards the 2019/20 budget, and performance against key Service Standards, and progress towards delivery of outcomes, as set out in the Mayor's 4 year plan 'Doncaster Growing Together'.

In presenting the report, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, advised that at Quarter 1, the Council was forecasting a year-end underspend of £1.1m. This was a positive position at this stage in the financial year and demonstrated the continued effort to manage the significant cost reductions in 2019/20. Planned savings for 2019/20 were largely on track with £17.7m expected to be delivered.

The Deputy Mayor made specific reference to the following important Key Performance Indicators:-

- A further 413 new homes were delivered in Quarter 1, against the Council's annual need of 920 homes per year;
- The percentage of fly-tipping incidents investigated and removed within seven days remains off target, but there had been a significant improvement on performance in Q4 (from 51% in Q4 to 70% in Q1). A planned targeted action week had taken place along with work to make the Council's response more effective and efficient. The Council have responded to over 3,000 incidents per quarter, and although the Council was not hitting its target for the speed of response, all fly-tipped waste was being removed;
- At 15.4%, persistent absence at secondary level improved faster than the national average, compared to the same point last year;
- The percentage of pupils accessing 'good or better' rated schools remained comparable to previous quarter at both Primary and Secondary level. The Council's Learning Standards and Effectiveness Service provided support to schools, particularly with regard to their preparation for the new Ofsted Inspection framework and to date had made good progress around improving the quality of leadership in schools; and
- Local authority spend with local businesses had increased to 73% against a 66% target, equating to approximately £32.4m being spent with local businesses.

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 Services.

DECISION 2

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

7. St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Ltd (SLHD) Performance and Delivery Update: 2019/20 - Quarter One (Q1).

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet note the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution SLHD makes to supporting Doncaster Council's strategic priorities.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, introduced a report which provided an update on St Leger Homes of Doncaster's (SLHD) performance for Quarter 1 2019/20.

A summary of SLHD's key performance indicators for Quarter 1 (April to June 2019), was set out at Appendix A to the report. Commentary covering the performance against all indicators was also provided at paragraphs 8.2 to 9.6 of the report.

It was noted that at the end of Quarter 1, 7 performance indicators were on target (green), 1 within tolerance level (amber) and 5 were below target (red).

The Deputy Mayor highlighted the following Key Performance Indicators:-

KPI 1 - % of current rent arrears against annual debit.

This indicator was on-track, however, the target also included an amount to reflect the 53rd Monday within this year, which was not covered by Universal Credit.

KPI 8 – Number of tenancies sustained post support

The investment in the Tenancy Sustainment Team, which SLHD funded through efficiencies, continued to pay dividends, and their work contributed positively to the continued good rent arrears performance and reducing evictions caused by arrears.

KPI 9 – Number of repairs first time visit

This is a new indicator and work is being undertaken to ensure that data is collected appropriately in line with the HouseMark definition, as not all works can

be completed in one visit, e.g. plastering and bricklaying.

KPI 14 – number of households placed in Bed and Breakfast

This continued to show Improved performance, despite the team working under increased pressure.

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

Paul Tanney, Chief Executive Officer, St. Leger Homes of Doncaster.

DECISION 3

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

8. Finance and Performance Report, Doncaster Children's Services Trust: Quarter 1 2019/20.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet note the progress of DCST performance outcomes and the contribution that the Trust makes in supporting the Council's strategic priorities.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered the DCST finance and performance report for Quarter 1, 2019/20, which was the first report under the new governance arrangements for the Trust since becoming an arm's length management organisation (wholly owned by DMBC) from 1st April 2019.

A summary of DCST's financial position as at June 2019, was set out at paragraph 26 of the report, together with details of key variances which were provided for in paragraph 28.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones made reference to the fact that 89% of the Trust's Key Performance Indicators and other measures covering demand and activity were either on-target or better.

Furthermore, for the majority of measures where a national or regional comparison was available, Doncaster's performance was favourable. This was particularly the case for adoption performance, where adoption rates and timeliness were much

better than the challenging national thresholds.

The Deputy Mayor referenced that demand outturn figures for the latest quarter had showed a reduction in overall rates of referrals, children in need, and looked after children compared to the previous quarter and the same period last year.

It was noted that the budget for 2019/20 was rebased; at this early stage in the year there was a forecast £680k underspend for 2019/20.

The Trust was working with the Council in developing and implementing the Future Placement Needs Strategy that was a main part of the Trust's strategy to reduce placements costs and, specifically, children placed Out of Area.

It was hoped that to have two further Independent Living homes, one opening in 2020 and one in 2021. It was also hoped to open four two-bedded children's homes, two in 2020 and two in 2021.

In observing the figures in the tables at Appendix 1 of the report, Members welcomed the clarity of the information provided in the figures presented.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

There were no 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

Paul Moffatt, Chief Executive Officer, Doncaster Children's Services Trust.

Signed..........Chair/Decision Maker