



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decision was taken on Tuesday, 28th July, 2020 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Friday, 31st July, 2020.

The end of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 11th August, 2020. The 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 Framework)

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

	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
Councillor Nuala Fennelly	Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools.
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

PUBLIC MEETING – SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS

Public Questions and Statements

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

Decision Records from the meeting held on 30th June, 2020, (previously circulated) were noted.

DECISION 1

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. Restart, Recovery and Renewal Plan (*Rule 15, General Exception Urgent Decision*).

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved the Restart, Recovery and Renewal Plan, as set out in full in Annex A of the report.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report which proposed a plan to help support local people, local businesses and local voluntary groups, and to mitigate the impact Covid-19 has had on the Borough's local economy. The three phased plan, 'Restart, Recovery and Renewal', also took into account the local floods in November 2019, and the recent wild fire at Hatfield Moors.

The key focus of the three-phased plan was set out at paragraph 15 of the report and the more detailed plan attached to the report as Annex A.

The Plan, if approved, would be taken forward within a new longer term Borough Strategy and Corporate Plan for 2021-22.

Mayor Ros Jones, in introducing the report, made the following statement:-

"The last 8 months have stretched Doncaster's resolve, resources and resilience like never before.

The Covid-19 pandemic arrived as we were dealing with the devastation caused by the floods of last winter. A wildfire on Hatfield Moor in May, has also required a huge multi-agency response.

Doncaster Council and our partners across Doncaster and South Yorkshire, have deployed their collective resources, networks and expertise in response to the Covid-19 crisis.

This includes:-

- The delivery of my 10-point plan and fight back fund which I announced in March;
- Opening the Community Hub to provide food parcels and to support the most vulnerable;
- Providing a three month Council Tax and council housing rent holiday for people struggling financially; and
- Boosting funding for voluntary groups, 20% of which went to Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups, to help tackle inequalities.

Throughout it all, the focus has been on the health and well-being of our residents.

This sense of humility, despite the relentless strain on key workers, has been truly inspirational.

It is still a volatile situation and we must manage any further outbreaks.

We also need to build upon our achievements and start to look to horizons and opportunities beyond the immediate crisis.

The next nine months will start the transition towards building a better Borough.

Work needs to progress in earnest to 'build-back better' for the longer term towards a cleaner, greener, more resilient, prosperous and inclusive Borough for all.

This work is already underway through the work on the South Yorkshire Recovery and Resilience Strategy. We are also working with Sheffield City Region on an Economic Recovery Plan.

I would like to bring this work together into a single Doncaster Plan, a plan with three sections:-

1. Restart - getting services back up and running and safely opening up our economy;
2. Recovery - what can we collectively put in place to help families and businesses recover; and
3. Renewal - the actions we can take now to improve well-being in the future.

Each of these sections have specific actions, as set out in the Annex to the report.

Collectively, they address a wide range of well-being challenges, including health, housing, employment, skills, the environment, resilience and inequalities.

We can hit the ground running with many of the actions, given the progress 'Team Doncaster' has already made, for example:-

As part of 'Restart' we have:-

- Started to open up town centres and stood council services up; and
- Put an Outbreak Engagement Board in place

As part of 'Recovery' we have:-

- Started to develop a jobs and skills programme

As part of 'Renewal' we have:-

- Secured £7m from the Government for 'shovel-ready' capital projects;
- Secured an extra £1.5m for Town Deals; and
- Received the interim statement from Climate Change Commission

The Plan will cover the financial period 2020-21.

It will provide the bridge to a new Borough Strategy.

Many of the actions will extend beyond March 2021, and will be taken forward within a new longer term Borough Strategy and Corporate Plan for 2021-22.

We need the resources and flexibility to match the scale of the task ahead.

The agreement of the South Yorkshire devolution will pave the way for new powers and funding for Doncaster and South Yorkshire.

However, the Covid-19 crisis has exacerbated the acute financial challenges in the public sector.

The Government has provided grant funding to support the Council's response to the pandemic. However, it is currently estimated that this still leaves a shortfall. Further funding is anticipated, but should that not be the case, the Council will look to identify funding or savings to meet the shortfall.

A retrenchment back to basic service delivery would be a disaster for the Borough.

Indeed, 'Team Doncaster's' place shaping role has never been more important.

I believe the Restart, Recovery and Renewal Plan has the actions that will make a real difference to our residents, communities and businesses.

I request the support of my Cabinet colleagues to take this Plan forward and set the Borough on a course for a step-change improvement in well-being across all our communities."

Cabinet welcomed the plan, in particular, noting that the Council will work with Doncaster partners, communities and people to support residents' emotional health and wellbeing going forward, and to address inequalities in terms of accessing Council services.

Members placed on record their thanks to Council staff and partner organisations, for their work over the past 8 months during the current emergency circumstances. Staff had worked under significant pressure and in difficult circumstances, in responding to the floods, the Coronavirus pandemic and the wild fire at Hatfield Moors in May. Tribute was also paid to all communities and voluntary organisations who had each supported each other, and had worked with the Council and its partners.

Cabinet heard that the three-phase plan had been developed in conjunction with 'Team Doncaster' and representatives from both the voluntary and community sectors within the Borough.

In response to Members' questions regarding the financial impact on the Council's finances, it was noted that whilst the plan was considered essential to move the Borough forward, it was reported that it was not possible at this point in time to

determine the financial impact of implementing the plan. It was reported that currently, there was a funding gap in the Council's budget, but the exact position would not be known until the Council received its funding allocation from the Government later in the year, as part of the autumn statement. The Council has already experienced significant cuts in Government funding, but despite these significant cuts, the Council had been resilient and had managed its finances prudently. However, the Council in future would have to take some difficult financial decisions.

Following further questions from Members on how residents and community groups can get involved in the delivery of the plan, it was noted that implementation of the Plan would be monitored by 'Team Doncaster'. The Council would be conducting further engagement to seek feedback from communities. The Council was taking an intelligence led approach, which will mean that the Council will be better able to meet the need at the point of need, and represent the full community of Doncaster.

Members observed that the Council had developed a Covid-19 Management Plan and local Outbreak Engagement Board which will support and manage the outbreak, and test and trace. The Director of Public Health gave assurances that the infection rate for Doncaster at the end of last week, had continued to fall and that cases were at their lowest level since going in to lockdown in March. However, vigilance was still required and the Council was working hard to monitor the situation and will act quickly if required to do so.

4. REASON FOR URGENCY

It is essential that the Council quickly sets out its strategic direction to provide clarity and certainty to local people, businesses and voluntary groups, on how it will seek to respond and recover from the recent events, and in particular, the Covid-19 pandemic. As the Council and its partners have had to respond and develop plans quickly during a period of uncertainty, it has not been possible to provide the full 28 days' notice of this decision on the Forward Plan.

5. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Continue to deliver using the pre-existing strategic plans, for example, the Council's Corporate Plan 2020/21.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations.

7. IF EXEMPT, REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Not Exempt.

8. DIRECTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources.



Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker