



Doncaster Council

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday, 12th January, 2021 by Cabinet.

Date notified to all Members: Friday, 15th January, 2021.

The End of the call-in period is 5.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 26th January, 2021. The 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 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 Rachael Blake	Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care
Councillor Joe Blackham	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Street Scene and Trading Services.
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

No public questions or statements were submitted for the meeting.

Decision Records dated 1st December 2020 (previously circulated), were noted.

DECISION 1

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

6. Calculation and Approval of the Council Tax Base for 2021/2022.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) approved the calculation of Doncaster Council's Tax Base for the 2021/2022 year as 82,810 band D equivalent dwellings, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (2) approved the calculation of Doncaster Council's Tax Base for the 2021/2022 year for each part of its area at Parish level, as detailed at Appendix 2 of the report.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Cabinet considered a report which set out the proposed Council Tax Base for Doncaster for 2021/2022, as required by Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended, and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, which sets out the determination of the Council Tax Base, and the regulations prescribed how this calculation should be carried out.

Mayor Ros Jones, in introducing the report, highlighted that the Council Tax Base was used to determine the level of Council Tax for individual properties. It represented the number of properties that would be subject to Council Tax and which were expressed in terms of their Band D equivalents using a prescribed formula, after allowing for the effect of exemptions, discounts, premiums and reliefs.

The proposed Council Tax Base for Doncaster for 2021/2022 was 82,810 band D equivalent dwellings.

This figure represented a decrease of 1,331 band D equivalent dwellings compared to the 2020/21 Tax Base of 84,141.

The report also sets out the Council's Tax Base for each part of the Doncaster Borough at Parish level.

To conclude, the Mayor explained that this Base would be used as part of the Annual budget in order to calculate projected Council Tax income.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, prescribed how the calculation of the Council Tax Base must be carried out. No other options were considered.

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. Environment and Sustainability Strategy.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved the Environment and Sustainability Strategy for endorsement by full Council on 21st January 2021.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Councillor Chris McGuinness, Cabinet Member for Communities, Voluntary Sector and the Environment, introduced a report which sought Cabinet approval of the Council's Environment and Sustainability Strategy, which had been developed in response to the climate change and biodiversity emergency declaration made by Full Council in 2019.

In presenting this item, Councillor McGuinness emphasised the importance of the Strategy and pointed out that the climate and biodiversity crisis could not be tackled by any single organisation, any single group or any sector alone, so the partners in 'Team Doncaster' recognised that a partnership approach was essential.

It was noted that the Strategy had been developed by multiple organisations, and was based on the latest data and local resident opinion, which had been derived directly from numerous 'Doncaster Talks' exercises, and indirectly via elected representative workshops involving Ward Members, Parish Councils and MPs.

Consultation had taken place alongside the work of the Climate and Biodiversity Commission, which had been established following Full Council's Climate Change Emergency declaration. The report and recommendations, emanating from the consultation, had been published just before Christmas.

Councillor McGuinness highlighted that at the heart of the Strategy was an ambition to reduce Doncaster's contribution to climate change, protect and improve biodiversity in Doncaster, and become carbon neutral by 2040. He explained that this was consistent with the recommendations of the Climate and Biodiversity Commission, and sat alongside a number of key objectives and actions under each topic within the Strategy, which were set out in detail in the report.

Councillor McGuinness outlined that the Strategy also recognised the inter-dependencies between these topics, as well as the links with other strategies such as Health and Wellbeing, economic growth, and the forthcoming Borough Strategy. He added that the response to these priorities did not start in 2021. Multiple partners had been working to reduce carbon emissions, and help protect and enhance biodiversity for a number of years, and whilst some progress had been made, there was a significant way yet to go. He stated that whether that would be further investment in electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, continued improvement of housing and building energy efficiency, increased tree planting, or renewable energy, all partners needed to work collectively to ensure these interventions and impacts were achievable across all sectors, and all localities, so that the sustainability and wellbeing goals identified were realised by everyone.

Councillor McGuinness continued to highlight that there were numerous supporting strategies and plans that sat beneath the partnership Strategy, and which provided detail on specific activities in specific areas, such as Active Travel plans, or a public and private sector tree planting. Councillor McGuinness pointed out that some of these supporting strategies were already in existence, but there were others that needed to be developed further, all of which were identified in the section within the Strategy as associated strategies and plans.

Given the level of partner, resident and member engagement, Councillor McGuinness highlighted that it would be of no surprise that the Strategy had been endorsed by the Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel, and the Team Doncaster Partnership Board.

To conclude, Councillor McGuinness emphasised that the Strategy was a key and critical piece of work going forward, and would continue for some years to come. He added that he had no doubt that the Council would be revisiting this area in many ways in the future, through many workshops, meetings, discussions and updates as the Council moved forward.

It was noted that the Environment and Sustainability Strategy would be submitted to Full Council on 21st January, 2021.

The Mayor spoke in support of the Strategy coming forward, highlighting that the consultation undertaken had been extensive, and explained that the Strategy was not just what the Council had signed up to, but also 'Team Doncaster' and many of its partners, businesses, communities and residents. She spoke of how climate change impacted on everyone, and that everyone had a part to play to make Doncaster carbon neutral by 2040. The Mayor advised that the Council had already commenced the process and had acquired electric vehicles, and had changed its street lighting. Furthermore, the Council was looking to be more carbon neutral and environmentally friendly as the Council acquired new social housing, and would continue to do so because the Council believed that it was its responsibility to act now for the people of the Borough, so that they had a better future for its children and their children's children.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 2: Do not approve the Strategy.

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 Economy and Enterprise.

DECISION 3

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

8. Housing Strategy Update 2020 – 2025.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) approved the draft updated Housing Strategy 2020 to 2025; and
- (2) that a strategy communication and launch plan be developed, including graphics and design of a publication version of the strategy and executive summary.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

Consideration was given to a report, introduced by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Equalities, which sought Cabinet approval of the draft updated Housing Strategy for 2020 to 2025.

In presenting the report, the Deputy Mayor outlined that the report provided an update following a mid-term review of the Housing Strategy agreed in 2015, which has allowed the Council to:-

- Assess the progress made over the last five years;
- Take account of the changes and issues that had come to prominence since 2015; and
- Refocus the Council's efforts and resources for the next five years.

The Deputy Mayor stated that people's homes had a powerful influence on their health and wellbeing. He highlighted that this has become even more apparent during 2020, when many people spent much more time in their homes than they normally would, and many of Doncaster's residents were still dealing with the aftermath of the devastating floods in November 2019.

Furthermore, he pointed out that people needed homes that met their needs, now and as they got older. The Deputy Mayor spoke of how he wanted the people of

Doncaster to have homes that were safe, secure and warm.

The Deputy Mayor added that the Strategy's aims and vision were set out in detail in the report, and outlined some of the key proposed actions including:-

- The development of the Five Year Housing Delivery Plan and accelerated £100m+ Council House Build Programme;
- Continue to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, and provide a wrap-around package of support to those who need it;
- Planning a long term Housing Retrofit Programme to raise energy efficiency standards for all homes, reducing the Council's carbon emissions and saving tenants money on energy bills;
- Responding to new responsibilities on Building and Fire Safety;
- Implementing the housing recommendations from Doncaster's Environment and Sustainability Strategy;
- Working to deliver new homes in key economic growth locations, and in town centres to support the local economy, and the high-streets; and
- Working in partnership with residents and other agencies to help tackle climate change, and support independent living, mobilising the Council's shared skills and capacity to improve homes and lives for the future.

The Deputy Mayor continued to highlight that Councils working alone could not meet the challenges the Council faced from climate change and an ageing population. He explained that by working with its residents, community organisations, partners and both regional and national government, the Council could help the people of Doncaster to protect their independence and wellbeing, and ensure that the Council protected and enhanced both its natural and built environment for generations to come.

The Deputy Mayor concluded by seeking Cabinet's approval of the recommendations set out in the report, and approve the updated Housing Strategy 2020-2025.

Councillor Rachael Blake was pleased to observe that the Council's general housing stock was to be as accessible and flexible as possible, and provide supported housing places. She spoke of the importance of the Council continuing to build on the engagement that had already taken place, and that the Council was to consult with a wide range of people so that the Council could plan for people's life course in terms of housing. She added that accessible housing was crucial for people's wellbeing and looked forward to seeing how the engagement consultation would be developed.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 1: Continue delivery of existing actions and projects to fulfil the Housing Strategy 2015-25 vision and objectives.

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 Economy and Enterprise.

DECISION 4

1. AGENDA ITEM NUMBER AND TITLE

9. Doncaster's Housing Delivery Programme 2020 – 2025.

2. DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet:-

- (1) endorsed the proposed approach to meeting housing need and demand, as set out in the 5 Year Housing Delivery Plan 2020-25;
- (2) agreed the accelerated pace and aspirational design standards set out for the Council House Build Programme to 2025;
- (3) agreed the seven sites identified in Paragraph 32 of the report, as Phase 2 for the Council House Build Programme, subject to consultation with local Elected Members and communities, and further reports be submitted to Cabinet for each scheme;
- (4) agreed the proposal to identify suitable innovative options for meeting housing need across the Borough, and introducing mixed tenure development into the Council House Build Programme for Phase 3 onwards, subject to a further report to Cabinet; and
- (5) agreed to utilise resources already earmarked within the Housing Revenue Account, to expand capacity to deliver the accelerated Council House Build Programme and note that acceleration of the programme from 10 years to 5 years may also require external expert support and additional capacity to achieve.

3. REASON FOR DECISION

The Deputy Mayor introduced a report which sought approval of the Council's 5 Year Housing Delivery Plan for 2020 - 2025, which had been developed in conjunction with the updated Housing Strategy 2020 - 2025 and in line with the emerging Borough Strategy.

The Plan set out how the Council's priorities for new affordable homes across the Borough would be delivered over the next 5 years to support the wellbeing of residents and meet the needs for housing identified in the 2019 Housing Needs Study.

The Deputy Mayor emphasised that the Housing Delivery Programme was key to

delivering the aims of the updated Housing Strategy which would:-

- Provide a range of new homes for all members of the community; and
- Accelerate and ensure the delivery of affordable homes, responding to the 2019 Housing Needs Study.

He continued by outlining the four key components of the programme:-

“1. Council House Build Programme

- *Around 534 new homes over the next 5 years, possibly increasing to over 600 dependant on investment from Homes England.*
- *To be built to very high energy efficiency standards in response to carbon reduction targets and to keep heating costs affordable.*
- *To approve the 7 sites identified for Phase 2 of the programme, subject to further detailed consultation and reports.*

2. Housing Association Development Programme

- *Around 467 new affordable homes built through investment by Housing Associations on Council and Housing Association land.*
- *This would deliver housing for older people and address specialist housing needs.*

3. Section 106 Planning Agreements and other contributions for affordable housing

- *Estimated 457 new affordable homes by provided Housing Associations through S106 Agreements with private housing developers and by direct purchases.*

4. Engagement with private developers

- *To maximise the choice of new homes for sale.”*

The Deputy Mayor, in commending the report, highlighted a number of recommendations from the report which he hoped Cabinet would agree to:-

“1. Endorsement of the overall Housing Delivery Plan.

2. Agreement of the 5 Year timescale and aspirational design standards for the Council House Build Programme.

3. Agreement of the 7 sites for Phase 2 of the Council House Build Programme (approx. 160 new homes), subject to further consultation and individual reports (as set out at Paragraph 32 of the report).

4. That further work be undertaken to identify suitable innovative options for meeting housing need and mixed tenure developments, for consideration before Phase 3 of the Council House Build Programme begins.

5. Agree to the use of Housing Revenue Account resources already approved, but also to note that the acceleration of the programme delivery (from 10 to 5 years) which may also require external expert support and additional

capacity to achieve.”

The Deputy Mayor continued by explaining that to help develop much needed specialist affordable housing, the Council would also be looking to maximise:-

- Grant funding from Homes England; and
- Investment by the Council’s Housing Association partners.

Councillor Blackham, Cabinet Member for Highways, Street Scene and Trading Services, in supporting the recommendations observed that in relation to gathering data on housing need across the Borough, some communities had been combined with other communities, and he held the view that each sustainable settlement in the Borough should be assessed in its own right.

The Mayor, in supporting the Strategy, highlighted that it addressed the various needs of communities within the Borough, including the elderly and those who required extra care, with high quality environmentally friendly accommodation. She acknowledged that there remained a large number of people on the Council’s housing lists, and the Council and delivery of the Strategy would help to address this.

Damian Allen, Chief Executive, stated that despite current challenges, the Housing Delivery Programme, Housing Strategy and Environment and Sustainability Strategy, collectively, demonstrated the Council’s and Team Doncaster’s commitment to ensure that the Council looked to the future. He added that it was uncommon to find a Council that had aligned its responses so rapidly, both in terms of the Environment and Sustainability Strategy and the Housing Delivery Plan, and the Council’s ambition to do so within the next 5 years.

4. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Option 2: Do nothing

This was not an option. The Borough needed to have a clear, evidence-led Housing Delivery Plan to enable the Council to prioritise investment to meet the housing needs of its residents.

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 Economy and Enterprise.

Signed.....Chair/Decision Maker