

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 2022

A MEETING of the COUNCIL was held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICE, WATERDALE, DONCASTER DN1 3BU, on THURSDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 2022, at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Ian Pearson
Vice-Chair - Councillor Duncan Anderson
Mayor - Ros Jones
Deputy Mayor - Councillor Glyn Jones

Councillors Nick Allen, Bob Anderson, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Joe Blackham, Glenn Bluff, Laura Bluff, Nigel Cannings, James Church, Phil Cole, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Yetunde Elebuibon, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Debbie Hutchinson, Jake Kearsley, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Sue Knowles, Tracey Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlins, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Thomas Noon, Andy Pickering, Cynthia Ransome, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith, Gary Stapleton and Austen White.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lani-Mae Ball, Rachael Blake, Bev Chapman, Gemma Cobby, Linda Curran, Martin Greenhalgh, Barry Johnson, Richard A Jones, Sophie Liu, Jane Nightingale and Dave Shaw.

33 Declarations of Interest, if any

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

34 Minute's Silence to mark the recent death of former Councillor, Beryl Roberts

Prior to the commencement of formal business, Elected Members, Officers and members of the public, observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect and remembrance in relation to the recent death of former Councillor, Beryl Roberts.

35 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14th July, 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14th July, 2022, be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair of Council.

36 To receive any announcements from the Chair of Council, the Mayor, Members of the Cabinet or the Head of Paid Service

The Chair of Council, Councillor Ian Pearson, reminded Members that there was an Extraordinary meeting of Council which would commence immediately after the conclusion of this meeting.

Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Enforcement, made the following announcement:-

“This Festive Season, Doncaster Council will once again be supporting City Centre Businesses and our residents by offering free Town Centre parking after 2pm from Friday 2nd December to Friday 6th January, 2023 at the popular Markets Car Park, St Georges Car Park and Colonnades underground car park.

We are also offering every Saturday in December, free all day parking at Chappell Drive Car Park.

Just a reminder that Council run car parks and on-street pay and display areas continue to be free on Sundays.”

The Chief Executive, Damian Allen, made the following announcement:-

“As Members may have seen from its circulation earlier this week, the Scheme of Delegations for Executive Functions has recently been updated by Mayor Ros Jones. Under the Council’s Constitution, I am required to report these changes to Full Council.

The main amendment to the Scheme relates to the functions listed under the Director of Children, Young People and Families, and under the portfolios of Councillor Rachael Blake, Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Communities and Equalities and Councillor Lane-Mae Ball, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Young People.

These listings have now been updated to reflect the transferring back of the functions that were previously delivered by the Doncaster Children’s Services Trust to the Council.

The other minor changes to the Scheme include moving Inward Investment from the Deputy Mayor’s to the Mayor’s Portfolio and including the Events Team’s functions within the Portfolio of Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning.

The updated Scheme of Delegations can be viewed alongside all other parts of the Council’s Constitution on the Council’s website. Thank you.”

37 Questions from the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13

(a) Question from Mr Patrick Cawkwell to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

“Does the Mayor agree that during a cost of living crisis it is unthinkable for the Government to plan the removal of 200 of their own staff from Doncaster City Centre? The high skill economy the Government wants has every right to be in Doncaster as it does anywhere else; the 200 people the Government want to move contribute circa £500,000 p/a to the City Centre economy. Is it unthinkable or don’t the Government know the true impact on the economy of this disastrous decision?”

The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, gave the following reply:-

“Thank you for your question Mr Cawkwell, I stand by what I have said previously on this matter. To take 200 jobs out of Doncaster does nothing to support the levelling up agenda, it also puts a major strain on those 200 members of staff, who would potentially face up to a 3 hour round commute to the relocated office in Sheffield. This is simply wrong and unthinkable, especially during a cost of living crisis.

If anything I would have thought Government would want to move more Civil Servants and staff jobs out of London, and into the communities they serve. This would support real levelling up.

The 200 jobs are more than just about the money they bring in to the Doncaster economy, they are people, most of whom live in Doncaster, have their lives and family here, with kids in our local schools and reside in our communities.

I hope that the new Secretary of State will look again at this decision, to ensure these vital services remain in Doncaster and those 200 people are not uprooted from their jobs and lives here in Doncaster.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.10, Mr Cawkwell asked the following supplementary question:-

“Thank you for your kind words and your support. Would the Council agree to make an offer to Ministers for alternative accommodation which would be a solution to save the jobs in Doncaster and improve the footfall into the City Centre which would support local businesses by the revenue it would bring in. We do not want to work outside this fantastic City, and allowing staff to work in Council buildings or other accommodation, would be an agreeable solution. Could this solution be put directly to the Minister for decision?”

The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“We are keen to keep everyone here in Doncaster to improve our economy as we go through this economic crisis. I will ask Business Doncaster and our Assets team to see what assistance we can give if you can get the Secretary of State’s approval.”

38 Doncaster Sheffield Airport

The Council considered a report, which was introduced by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which related to the announcement by the Board of Doncaster Sheffield Airport Limited (DSAL) on 13th July, 2022 of a review of strategic options for Doncaster Sheffield Airport (DSA), after concluding that aviation activity on the site may no longer be commercially viable and provided an update on the legal options available to potentially secure the future of DSA as an operational Airport.

It was reported that since the strategic review announcement, Doncaster Council, the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) and other local partners had made extensive efforts to keep the Airport open and there had been considerable cross-party and public support for retaining an Airport in South Yorkshire. Subsequently, the Council and SYMCA had identified significant investor interest in

DSA and made a financial offer to enable the Airport to continue operating for a bridging period whilst a potential sale was progressed. However, The Peel Group chose to decline this offer of financial support and the opportunity to keep the Airport running, and that on 26th September, The Peel Group announced that the Strategic Review had ended and that it would begin winding down the provision of aviation services at DSA during week commencing Monday, 31st October, 2022.

Members were informed of the significant consequences of DSA closing which would result in a large number of job losses and have a major impact on local businesses during a cost of living crisis, and in the face of a looming national recession. Therefore, since the closure announcement, further investor interest in DSA had been identified by Doncaster Council resulting in a number of interested parties engaging with Peel and the submission of two financially credible offers to purchase the Airport leasehold in October and November, 2022. Despite obvious and demonstrable market interest in the acquisition of DSA, it had become clear through negotiations that The Peel Group was a reluctant seller and was unwilling to dispose of the Airport at a reasonable market value.

In conclusion, Members noted that if The Peel Group continued with its plans to close the Airport, but retain the site, legal intervention could be the only course of action available to local partners to secure aviation operations at DSA. On 2nd November, the Council filed legal proceedings seeking a Judicial Review of the decision to close the Airport and the process followed by Peel in reaching that decision, and although a successful Judicial Review would not prevent the closure of the Airport, it was hoped to ensure that the critical infrastructure at the Airport would remain in place and provide further time for a potential sale to be concluded. If The Peel Group remained unwilling sellers and were determined to close the Airport, the Council had the option of seeking a Compulsory Purchase Order for the site.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 21.4, a recorded vote was taken on the recommendations contained within the report, which was declared as follows:-

For - 45

The Chair of Council, Councillor Ian Pearson, the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Duncan Anderson, the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, and Councillors Nick Allen, Bob Anderson, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Joe Blackham, Laura Bluff, Glenn Bluff, Nigel Cannings, James Church, Phil Cole, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Yetunde Elebuibon, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Debbie Hutchinson, Jake Kearsley, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Sue Knowles, Tracy Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlings, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Thomas Noon, Andy Pickering, Cynthia Ransome, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith, Gary Stapleton and Austen White.

Against - 0

Abstain - 0

On being put to the meeting, the recommendations contained within the report were declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report and the significant benefits delivered by Doncaster Sheffield Airport and the actions taken to date (Judicial Review), be noted; and
- (2) all appropriate legal remedies be explored to secure aviation operations at Doncaster Sheffield Airport (Compulsory Purchase Order).

39 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 - Proposed Revision to the Membership of the Parish Councils' Joint Consultative Committee

The Council considered a report which proposed a revision to the membership of the Parish Councils' Joint Consultative Committee to change the Labour Group representation on the Joint Consultative Committee to appoint Councillor Rachael Blake to replace Councillor Mark Houlbrook.

RESOLVED that the appointment of Councillor Rachael Blake to replace Councillor Mark Houlbrook on the Parish Councils' Joint Consultative Committee, be noted.

40 To consider the following Motion, written notice of which has been given by Councillor Leanne Hempshall and Seconded by Councillor Jake Kearsley, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1, a Motion was submitted by Councillor Leanne Hempshall and Seconded by Councillor Jake Kearsley:-

"Traditionally, annual bonfires and firework displays are used to celebrate November the 5th, New Year's Eve, Diwali, and Chinese New Year amongst other celebratory occasions.

We now see a considerably larger use of fireworks throughout the year, causing distress to Veterans suffering from PTSD, vulnerable people, children with learning difficulties, working dogs and guide dogs, farm animals and family pets. We also see Anti-Social behaviour within our communities with people setting off fireworks in a dangerous manner and sometimes using them as weapons.

This Council resolves from 2023:-

- To ensure all firework displays on Council land organised by Doncaster Council or its partners, utilise low noise or silent fireworks as a positive alternative.
- To encourage people to attend professional organised displays, where fireworks are set off in the safest possible way and fully insured.
- To encourage early advertisement of planned firework displays to enable communities to allow individuals and groups to take precautions in respect of vulnerable people, veterans, animals and pets.

- To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare, veterans and vulnerable people, including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risk.
- To write to the UK Government insisting that they introduce legislation to promote the sale of low noise or silent fireworks and enter into a major public awareness campaign around the effects of fireworks and noise on people and animals.
- To support and encourage the use and sale of noiseless and silent fireworks within Doncaster City.
- To encourage Town and Parish Councils in the Doncaster City to consider using low noise or silent fireworks as a positive alternative.
- To encourage local suppliers of fireworks in Doncaster to stock and sell low noise or silent fireworks as a positive alternative.”

The Chair afforded all Members in the Chamber the opportunity to speak on the Motion.

A vote was taken on the Motion proposed by Councillor Leanne Hempshall, which was declared as follows:-

For - 43

Against - 0

Abstain - 1

On being put to the meeting, the Motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that Council notes that:-

- Traditionally, annual bonfires and firework displays are used to celebrate November the 5th, New Year’s Eve, Diwali, and Chinese New Year amongst other celebratory occasions.
- We now see a considerably larger use of fireworks throughout the year, causing distress to Veterans suffering from PTSD, vulnerable people, children with learning difficulties, working dogs and guide dogs, farm animals and family pets. We also see Anti-Social behaviour within our communities with people setting off fireworks in a dangerous manner and sometimes using them as weapons.

From 2023, Doncaster Council resolves to:-

- Ensure all firework displays on Council land organised by Doncaster Council or its partners, utilise low noise or silent fireworks as a positive alternative.

- Encourage people to attend professional organised displays, where fireworks are set off in the safest possible way and fully insured.
- Encourage early advertisement of planned firework displays to enable communities to allow individuals and groups to take precautions in respect of vulnerable people, veterans, animals and pets.
- Actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare, veterans and vulnerable people, including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risk.
- Write to the UK Government insisting that they introduce legislation to promote the sale of low noise or silent fireworks and enter into a major public awareness campaign around the effects of fireworks and noise on people and animals.
- Support and encourage the use and sale of noiseless and silent fireworks within Doncaster City.
- Encourage Town and Parish Councils in the Doncaster City to consider using low noise or silent fireworks as a positive alternative.
- Encourage local suppliers of fireworks in Doncaster to stock and sell low noise or silent fireworks as a positive alternative.

41 Questions by Elected Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 15.2 and 15.3

A. Questions on Notice

No questions on Notice from Elected Members had been received for this meeting

B. Questions Without Notice

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.2, the Chair of Council sought questions from Elected Members during Question Time.

A. Questions to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones.

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the following question:-

“Mayor Jones, firstly I would like to pass on my thanks to you and all the staff involved in the excellent organisation of the King’s visit. It was splendid.

My apologies, I was unable to attend last night’s briefing, but would the Mayor support the call for a Public Enquiry if the Airport was closed?”

A. The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“Thank you, but it was our Officers who did all the work and the back office staff who picked up their work. It is greatly appreciated by all concerned, especially our residents and local businesses. I will ensure it is recorded and passed on to those concerned.

In terms of the enquiry, I am very keen to progress all the instruments we have at our disposal to retain a working Airport. The Judicial Review will delay the closure and ensure that Peel have done due diligence, and undertaken the proper consultation. I will support all we can within our remit to enhance Doncaster and the wider economy to retain an aviation hub which can expand our economy.”

Q. Councillor Thomas Noon asked the following question:-

“I am led to believe that we have been given a total of 25 new Police Officers out of 707 Borough-wide. Doncaster’s crime rate is 149/1000 compared to Sheffield of 91/1000. Will you be lobbying the Police and Crime Commissioner for our fair share of Police Officers?”

A. The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“The increase has been brought about by lobbying the Police and Crime Commissioner, but I will continue to lobby for more Police Officers to tackle organised crime within our Borough.”

Q. Councillor Nick Allen asked the following question:-

“I have been contacted by residents in my Ward with regard to illegal fishing going on at Lakeside. This is an ongoing problem and the Council has taken Enforcement Action, but we need a more regular approach to Enforcement. It could be the jewel in the crown for central Doncaster, but it is not. We have ongoing issues with fishing as well as litter, so can we have more Enforcement Action around the Lakeside and Retail Park?”

A. The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, gave the following response:-

“You have put your question to the wrong person as Enforcement is in Councillor Joe Blackham’s Portfolio. We have a certain number of Enforcement Officers and what you have mentioned will be passed to them. We will look at everything available to us including CCTV, but I cannot create more Enforcement Officers when I know we will be faced with difficult decisions regarding the amount of money the Council will need to save over the next few years. I cannot single out one specific area. For me, the jewel in the crown is our Mansion House.”

Q. Councillor Steve Cox asked the following question:-

“I would like to raise a question regarding footfall in the City Centre. Will the Mayor be welcoming staff back into the Civic Office because it has had an effect on the shops in the City Centre?”

A. The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones gave the following response:-

“I welcome all staff when I see them. The arrangements of how the staff are organised falls under the remit of the Chief Executive. He knows that I support Council staff coming into the building. However, consultation is taking place with our staff and I am sure the Chief Executive has noted what you have said.”

B. Questions to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Business

There were no questions put to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Business.

C. Questions to Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Young People

In the absence of Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Young People, Members were asked to submit their questions in writing to the Executive Office and a written response would be provided.

D. Questions to Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the following question:-

“In June of this year, Sprotbrough Parish Council organised and financed the lighting of a beacon at Cusworth which was well attended. Can we have assurances that Cusworth Hall will be used more for events and the opening times increased?”

A. Councillor Nigel Ball gave the following response:-

“I can assure you that Cusworth Hall is going down that avenue to be more commercialised. As you are aware, Heritage and Cultural Services have gone through a restructure and I assure you that there is an action plan for Cusworth Hall and we are looking to open it up for weddings, events and other occasions in twin with the Mansion House.”

E. Questions to Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Enforcement

Q. Councillor Thomas Noon asked the following question:-

“My Ward has loads of tractors as it is rural and the roads are suffering with pot holes. I have noticed that this Council has a small Team who undertake the repairs, but we give a lot of work to private companies. This work does not get checked and the pot holes are falling out after two weeks. The edges are not being sealed and we are wasting money. Can we look at bringing more of this work in-house or get photographic evidence of the work undertaken to check that the work is up to standard?”

A. Councillor Joe Blackham gave the following response:-

“We have already had a conversation about this topic and I have copied you into emails where I have told the Highway Department to improve the way they treat pot holes. Potholes are an increasing problem. The mechanisms for dealing with them are not the best. They are repaired manually and in an ideal world, we would not have as many as we do. We would cut them out and fill them properly, and get 5-10 years out of each repair. It is not the best solution to the problem. I have informed the Highway Department that the quality needs to be improved.”

F. Questions to Councillor Rachael Blake, Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Communities and Equalities

In the absence of Councillor Rachael Blake, Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Communities and Equalities, Members were asked to submit their questions in writing to the Executive Office and a written response would be provided.

G. Questions to Councillor Phil Cole, Cabinet Member for Finance and Trading Services

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the following question:-

“Councillor, I would like to ask a question in relation to the financial impact and cost relating to the transfer of Doncaster Children’s Services Trust in-house. We were told that there would be no cost for this to us as a Council, but then we hear it will cost us £4.6 million?”

A. Councillor Phil Cole gave the following reply:-

“I will confer with Councillor Lani-Mae Ball on this issue and provide you with a written reply.”

H. Questions to Councillor Mark Houlbrook, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Waste

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the following question:-

“I would like to ask some information with regard to the Public Consultation on waste and recycling centres.”

A. Councillor Mark Houlbrook gave the following reply:-

“I don’t have that information to hand so I will provide you with a written reply.”

I. Questions to Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources

In the absence of Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources, Members were asked to submit their questions in writing to the Executive Office and a written response would be provided.

J. Questions to Councillor Andrea Robinson, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

There were no questions put to Councillor Andrea Robinson, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.

K. Questions to Councillor Austen White, Chair of the Audit Committee

There were no questions put to Councillor Austen White, Chair of the Audit Committee.

L. Questions to Councillor Julie Grace, Chair of the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee

There were no questions put to Councillor Julie Grace, Chair of the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee.

M. Questions to Councillor Rachael Blake, Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board

In the absence of Councillor Rachael Blake, Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, Members were asked to submit their questions in writing to the Executive Office and a written response would be provided.

N. Questions to Councillor Jane Kidd, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

There were no questions put to Councillor Jane Kidd, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

42 To receive the minutes of the following Joint Authorities

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following Joint Authorities meetings be noted:-

- A. South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Board held on 25th July and 18th October, 2022.
- B. South Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board held on 7th July and 8th September, 2022.
- C. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority held on 20th June (Annual) 20th June (Ordinary) 25th July and 12th September, 2022.
- D. South Yorkshire Pensions Authority held on 9th June, 2022.
- E. South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel held on 6th June and 10th October, 2022.

CHAIR:_____

DATE:_____