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CITY OF DONCASTER COUNCIL

COUNCIL

MONDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 2023

A MEETING of the COUNCIL was held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICE, WATERDALE, DONCASTER DN1 3BU, on MONDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 2023, at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors Bob Anderson, Iris Beech, Laura Bluff, Nigel Cannings, James Church, Gemma Cobby, Phil Cole, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Linda Curran, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, Martin Greenhalgh, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Debbie Hutchinson, Barry Johnson, Jake Kearsley, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Sue Knowles, Tracey Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlins, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Jane Nightingale, Thomas Noon, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Dave Shaw, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith, Gary Stapleton and Austen White.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nick Allen, Lani-Mae Ball, Nigel Ball, Joe Blackham, Rachael Blake, Glenn Bluff, Bev Chapman, Yetunde Elebuion, Richard A Jones, Sophie Liu, Andy Pickering and Cynthia Ransome.

57 Declarations of Interest, if any

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillors Bob Anderson, Steve Cox, Linda Curran, Susan Durant, Sue Farmer, Charlie Hogarth, Aimee Dickson, Mark Houlbrook, Jake Kearsley, Jane Nightingale and Sarah Smith, declared a non-disclosable interest in Agenda Item 11, the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2023/24 to 2026/27 report.

58 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19th January, 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19th January, 2023, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair of Council.

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

The Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, made the following announcement:-

"It is now one year since President Putin launched his barbaric and illegal invasion of Ukraine.

My sympathy goes out to the people of Ukraine who are fighting for their freedom and facing difficult odds. It is vital that Ukraine win this war, if not then Putin has made his views quite clear that he does not acknowledge the borders of the now independent and sovereign states of the former USSR.

Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania or even Poland, would be at risk if Ukraine were to fall to Putin, and let's not hide from the fact that if he were to invade any NATO country then the United Kingdom and the rest of NATO, would be obliged to join the conflict.

The actions of Russia under Putin, reminds us that we must stand up to misinformation, conspiracy theories and bully boy tactics whether this be at home or abroad.

I trust that Western allies can find ways and means of freeing the people of Ukraine from this oppression, and that the people of Ukraine can once again enjoy the freedom that they deserve, away from tyranny and terror.

Doncaster stands with Ukraine during this difficult time, it makes anything that we think is difficult in this country pale into insignificance when we see what the people of Ukraine are having to endure.

The thoughts and prayers of everyone here in Doncaster, are with the Ukrainian people.”

Councillor Rachael Blake, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Communities and Equalities, made the following announcement:-

“Doncaster has recently been successful in being awarded over £3.5m as part of the 'Best Start to Life' programme; this will build on our already successful Family Hubs across Doncaster.

Doncaster is recognised by Government as a model for how Family Hubs across the country should operate and our Family Hub provision is widely seen as best practice, as we focus on the work around the 'First 1001 Days' and integrated working with communities and GPs.

This new funding will run up to the end of March 2025, and we have already started to allocate the funding by investing in capacity that will ensure a better connection between the universal and targeted offer. We have also introduced capacity that will make it easier for the partnership to engage with families and communities.

Our Family Hubs evolved from what was our Sure Start Centres and this Labour Council has continued to focus on the vital services Sure Start provided. It is rather ironic that the Government is now coming round to our way of thinking and wanting to see our Family Hub model rolled out across the country. Maybe, if they had not cut Sure Start services in the first place, Early Years services across the country would not be in the state they currently are.

Doncaster Family Hubs are the 'place to go'. We work with other providers to offer a range of activities, services and information for our residents and their family. Think of any service you may need from Day Care and Early Learning to Schools and

Education, midwives to health visitors and mental health, advice on parenting to family support and adult learning to employment opportunities.

Our Family Hubs are a key part of our communities and I am proud that this Labour Council continues to fund them. This additional funding and acknowledgement from Government is proof that we are delivering for our families across Doncaster.”

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

(a) Question from Miss Kanisha Snape to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

“As care experienced young people in Doncaster, we should be able to thrive, grow and reach our full potential without the fear of prejudice. In order to tackle the stigma and discrimination that care experienced people face every day, would you as the Mayor and Lead Member of the Local Authority who are our Corporate Parents, support the national campaign in making care experience a protected characteristic here in Doncaster?”

Mayor Ros Jones gave the following response:-

“Thank you Kanisha for your question and for coming to this meeting of Full Council.

You represent a key part of the Doncaster population and it is simply not fair that you or anyone in care or from care, should have to tackle stigma or discrimination. You are a resident of Doncaster just like anyone else.

We have a Motion before us today, that will make care experience a protected characteristic. I will be supporting this Motion and I hope all Councillors will do the same.

This Motion helps demonstrate our commitment and I will be bringing forward a formal decision on 29th March to Cabinet as part of our Review of the Early Development Institute Framework and Protected Characteristics.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.10, Miss Snape asked the following supplementary question:-

“Thank you for your answer. I do have a further question, but I would like to give a little context to why we feel it is important for care experience to become a protected characteristic. Today, even in 2023, being in care carries a massive stigma. In our Hear Me Out Group, a voice group for young people with care experience, we discussed this after the Josh McAlister Care Review came out and we all feel really strongly that this will be beneficial to us, and that it needs to change. We have all experienced stigma and discrimination throughout our lives, which will impact us for the rest of our lives.

We have all been told many times over, that being in care is not something we should be ashamed of, that it is not our fault or anything that we did. The mistakes that were made were not our mistakes. Yet, we are judged, discriminated against and feel punished because of it.

Could I ask, would the inclusion of care experience as a protected characteristic mean that the thoughts, experiences and views of care experience young people, be sought as the Council develops its policies, procedures and plans?”

Mayor Ros Jones gave the following response:-

“We will ensure all your requirements are met and will be included in the report that will come back to Cabinet. Thank you for being brave enough to come and point out what we need to do.”

61 Corporate Plan 2023/24

The Council considered a report, presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which sought approval of a revised Corporate Plan for 2023/24, which set out the Council's contributions to the Team Doncaster Borough Strategy (Doncaster Delivering Together, DDT), and its central mission; Thriving People, Places and Planet, and summarised the DDT wellbeing goals and Great 8 priorities, and identified the Council key priorities/actions under each of the DDT Great 8 Priorities, and priorities needed to become a 'Regenerative Council'.

The Mayor reflected on some of the Council's key achievements over the last year as follows:-

- Support for residents and businesses in the recovery from the Covid pandemic and during the current cost of living crisis which had included £27m of financial support to residents;
- Published Doncaster's first set of Locality Plans, developed alongside local residents and businesses, to help address the things they were most concerned about;
- Continued the new Council House Build Programme and our decarbonisation of Council homes, buildings and vehicles;
- Flood mitigation work had also continued and a number of additional parks had received Green Flag status;
- Undertaken Town Centre regeneration works, marketing and business liaison and support, contributing to increased footfall and economic activity;
- The successful transition of the Children's Trust back into the Council, and the provision and coordination of support for Ukrainian families fleeing the war in their own country; and
- This activity and more had helped Doncaster achieve City Status along with hosting His Majesty King Charles the third and the Queen Consort, during their conferment visit.

Members noted that the Corporate Plan was not a full delivery plan for the whole of the Borough Strategy as the Council was one of many Team Doncaster partners that would contribute to delivering the Borough Strategy.

RESOLVED that the 2023/24 Corporate Plan, be approved.

62 Capital Strategy and Capital Budget 2023/24 - 2026/27

Prior to Council's consideration of the report, the Chair of Council, Councillor Ian Pearson, reminded Members of the legal requirement to include in the minutes, details of how each Elected Member had voted on decisions relating to the budget and level of Council Tax. Therefore, items 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, would all be subject to a recorded vote and voting preferences would be documented in the minutes of this meeting.

Subsequently, the Council considered a report which was presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which outlined the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme Budget proposals for the next four years, 2023/24 to 2026/27.

The Mayor stated that the Council continued to invest in the future of the Borough despite the tough economic climate with £493m of capital investment planned over the next four years, which would continue to stimulate growth and prosperity, with £195m of investment planned for 2023/24. The Council was investing in projects to further improve core services such as education, housing, infrastructure, leisure and culture, as well as attracting investors and visitors to the Borough. This included £220.6m investment in the Council's social housing stock over the next four years, covering maintenance, adaptations and the new build programme, and £11.5m being invested over the next four years on flood alleviation measures to provide greater protection to 738 residential properties which suffered from internal flooding during the November 2019 flood.

Members noted that in respect of Council housing, across the 4 year programme, £32.5m had been allocated to acquire more Council house properties which would accelerate the delivery of 232 homes at a time when need was greatest, and the homelessness system needed a much needed boost in order to alleviate some of the current cost of living challenges facing residents. In addition, £22.7m over the four year programme, would be spent on investment in energy efficiency works across the housing stock, to reduce energy consumption and respond to climate change.

It was reported that the Council would continue to invest in its Leisure Centres with the Dome and Thorne in line for key improvements this year. In respect of Edlington Leisure Centre, following the lack of Government funding through the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2, the Council hoped to resubmit for LUF3, but at this stage, it did not know when this would be announced or the criteria.

The Capital Budget also included £46.2m investment in the Towns Fund Programme which included £20.6m for works in Stainforth, including the restoration and lighting of the colliery headstocks, a new community hub and improved station access being among a number of planned projects in the area, and Doncaster City Centre would benefit from £25.6m of investment in the Station Gateway improvements.

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 - 37

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 Bob Anderson, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, James Church, Gemma Cobby, Phil Cole, Linda Curran, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Barry Johnson, Jake Kearsley, Jane Kidd, Majid Khan, Sue Knowles, Tracy Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlings, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Jane Nightingale, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Dave Shaw, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith and Austen White.

Against - 0

Abstain - 7

Councillors Laura Bluff, Nigel Cannings, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Martin Greenhalgh, Thomas Noon and Gary Stapleton.

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

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Capital Strategy, as detailed within paragraphs 34 to 74 of the report, be approved;
- (2) the Capital Programme for 2023/24 to 2026/27, as detailed within paragraphs 12 to 33 of the report, be approved; and
- (3) Directors, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, take responsibility for allocating the block budgets to specific schemes in the Capital Programme, which were identified within Appendix 1, and included the Retained Buildings Programme, School Condition Programme and Integrated Transport Block.

63 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 - 2026/27

The Council considered a report, presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which sought approval of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023/24 to 2026/27, which provided details of the strategy for the management of the Council's finances, and provided a framework for the operation of the Treasury Management Strategy function within the Council. Treasury Management sought to optimise the Council's cash flow and secure the most effective arrangements to support the long-term funding requirement. The Key Prudential Indicators relating to borrowing limits, were detailed in the report.

It was reported that there had been a number of changes to the report this year, as a result of the Treasury Management Code of Practice being revised, which were summarised as follows:-

- The Council was now required to produce a full mid-year report and a detailed outturn report showing performance against the key indicators;

- Training for all Members with responsibility for Treasury Management, was now required;
- The introduction of a new indicator, the 'Debt liability benchmark', which showed the Council's optimum borrowing level and where its current borrowing sat against that; and
- The inclusion of Environmental, Social & Governance considerations in the investment strategy.

Members noted that the key issue to take from the report was that the Council remained under borrowed and was using its internal resources to reduce the need to borrow whilst interest rates were high.

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 - 37

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 Bob Anderson, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, James Church, Gemma Cobby, Phil Cole, Linda Curran, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Barry Johnson, Jake Kearsley, Jane Kidd, Majid Khan, Sue Knowles, Tracy Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlings, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Jane Nightingale, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Dave Shaw, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith and Austen White.

Against - 0

Abstain - 7

Councillors Laura Bluff, Nigel Cannings, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Martin Greenhalgh, Thomas Noon and Gary Stapleton.

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

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 to 2026/27 report and the Prudential Indicators included, be approved; and
- (2) the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, as detailed within paragraphs 41 to 42 and Appendix B of the report, be approved.

64 Revenue Budget 2023/24 - 2025/26

The Council considered a report, presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which sought approval of the Revenue Budget proposals for 2023/24 to 2025/26.

The Mayor reported that despite the significant financial challenges and ongoing uncertainty around Government funding, the proposals set a balanced budget whilst maintaining investment in the Borough and protecting the most vulnerable in the communities. The Council now had 27% less to spend on services in real terms than it did in 2010/11, which created challenges and represented a £340 reduction per resident. This budget provided sufficient resources to enable front line services to continue to deliver at their current service levels, despite increased service pressures and rising inflation. An additional £7.5m had been allocated for the Fair Cost of Care to help address market sustainability, and an additional £6m to recognise the additional costs of children's social care.

The Mayor pointed out that some difficult decisions had been made to balance the budget and meet an overall recurrent budget gap of £10.2 million in 2023/24. The savings which had been necessary, minimised the impact on service delivery and would be delivered through close management of budgets and achieving efficiencies through improved working practices, and better use of technology where possible. Overall, these budget proposals met the £22.3m budget gap over the 3 years. Subsequently, due to the pressures and future risks, a Council Tax increase of 1.99% was being proposed alongside a further 2% increase for Adult Social Care, which resulted in a total Council Tax rise of 3.99%, as opposed to the 5% maximum which was suggested by Government. This was unlike the majority of other Councils across the Country that were increasing Council Tax by the full 5%, and meant that Doncaster would continue to have the lowest Council Tax in South Yorkshire, and one of the lowest in the Country for a comparable Council.

Members were informed that to offset the impact of this and to help support those residents who were struggling, the new Council Tax Support Fund grant of £0.6m would be used to provide a £25 reduction to the Council Tax liabilities of working age and pension age Council Taxpayers who were in receipt of benefits. This was estimated to cost £0.2m. The balance of the funding would be used to boost the Local Assistance Scheme Budget at a time when it was needed to support people dealing with cost of living increases. From 2024/25, £0.3m would be added to the Local Assistance Scheme on a permanent basis.

The Mayor also stated that in order to support City Centre businesses and residents, she was proposing to freeze the parking charges at Council operated car parks; she wished to offer completely free car parking, but unfortunately with the current state of Local Government funding, this was simply not affordable. With still no certainty from Government about funding beyond the next year, it was hard to plan ahead, but the Council was financially well managed and she would do whatever she could to mitigate the impacts of uncertainty.

In conclusion, the Mayor thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for its response to the draft budget proposals, which she had fully considered and responded to.

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 - 37

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 Bob Anderson, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, James Church, Gemma Cobby, Phil Cole, Linda Curran, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Barry Johnson, Jake Kearsley, Jane Kidd, Majid Khan, Sue Knowles, Tracy Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlings, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Jane Nightingale, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Dave Shaw, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith and Austen White.

Against - 0

Abstain - 7

Councillors Laura Bluff, Nigel Cannings, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Martin Greenhalgh, Thomas Noon and Gary Stapleton.

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

RESOLVED that the Revenue Budget for 2023/24 to 2025/26, as detailed within the report, be approved including:-

- (1) the Medium-term Financial Strategy including all proposals in the report, as detailed within Appendix A of the report;
- (2) a Gross Revenue Expenditure Budget of £585.8m and a net Revenue Expenditure Budget of £255.8m, as detailed within Appendix A;
- (3) Council Tax increasing by 3.99% to £1,571.32 for a Band D property (£1,047.55 for a Band A) for 2023/24. This includes:-
 - (i) 1.99% Council Tax increase, equating to an increase of £30.07 for a Band D property per annum, 58p per week (£20.05 for a Band A per annum, 38p per week); and
 - (ii) 2% Government Adult Social Care precept, equating to an increase of £30.22 for Band D property per annum, 58p per week (£20.15 for a Band A per annum, 39p per week).
- (4) the Revenue Budget proposals for 2023/24, as detailed within Appendix B (pressures £17.2m) and Appendices C and D (savings £10.9m) of the report;
- (5) the 2023/24 Grants to 3rd Sector Organisations, as detailed within paragraph 54 and Appendix F of the report;
- (6) the fees and charges proposed for 2023/24 at Appendix G of the report; and
- (7) the Chief Financial Officer's positive assurance statements be noted, as detailed within paragraphs 62 to 78 of the report.

The Council considered a report, presented by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Housing and Equalities, which detailed the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget proposals for the 2023/24 financial year, and the medium-term financial forecast for the next three years, which had a balanced budget.

The Deputy Mayor reported that the Council was proposing that housing rents increase by 5% plus a further 2% to go towards the acquisition of roughly 230 additional properties over a four year period, to help address housing demand issues in the City. This would be a total rent increase of 7% for 2023/24 which is in line with Government policy, and that the average rent in Doncaster would continue to be the lowest of all South Yorkshire Councils and in the lowest 10 for the whole Country at £81.51 per week.

The Deputy Mayor stated that the Council had carefully considered this recommendation due to the current tough times, but approximately 72% of tenants would have their housing benefit or universal credit payment increased to cover the impact of this change. He pointed out that the average private rent in Doncaster was roughly £650 per month, whereas Council rents were on average £353 per month.

Members noted that there were nearly 8,000 people on the housing register and that the Council House New Build Programme would help to alleviate this in the medium-term, but the Right to Buy Scheme continued to erode the housing stock. The demand on services and the need for investment in Council properties, continued to rise and all of this was paid for from tenants' rents.

The Deputy Mayor emphasised that he wanted Council tenants to be able to sustain their tenancies and that Council staff were available to assist with this, and also with maximising their income and reducing outgoings. Poverty and especially fuel poverty, was a concern to the Council, which had been and would continue to invest heavily in energy efficiency improvements across all of its housing stock. The Council was on track to achieve EPC level C for all of its properties by 2030; almost 50% of the planned Housing Capital Investment Programme for next year would be on investment, which would improve the energy efficiency of its properties. Over 3,500 properties had received some investment in energy efficiency works in the last two years, and a further 3,500 would receive energy efficiency investment in the next two years.

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 - 37

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 Bob Anderson, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, James Church, Gemma Cobby, Phil Cole, Linda Curran, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Barry Johnson, Jake Kearsley, Jane Kidd, Majid Khan, Sue Knowles, Tracy Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlings, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Jane Nightingale, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Dave Shaw, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith and Austen White.

Against - 0

Abstain - 7

Councillors Laura Bluff, Nigel Cannings, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Martin Greenhalgh, Thomas Noon and Gary Stapleton.

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

RESOLVED that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget proposals, as detailed within the report, be approved including:-

- (1) rents be increased from 3rd April, 2023 by 7%, as detailed within paragraphs 8 to 12 of the report in line with Government policy. This will increase average weekly rent by £5.33, resulting in an average rent of approximately £81.51 per week. Rents will be charged every week of the year;
- (2) the budget proposals for the HRA for 2023/24, which are contained within Appendix A to the report; these proposals set a balanced budget for the HRA and maintain a reserve of £3.8m; and
- (3) fees and charges, as detailed within paragraph 16 of the report.

66 Council Tax Setting and Statutory Resolutions 2023/24

The Council considered a report, presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which set out how the Council Tax was calculated and sought approval regarding Doncaster Council's Council Tax requirement for 2023/24.

The Mayor stated that the report set the Council Tax across the Borough based on the Revenue Budget report which had been considered and agreed at the meeting today. It was proposed that Doncaster Council's element of the Band D Council Tax charge be increased by 3.99% for 2023/24 to £1,571.32. The proposals included an increase in the core Council Tax of 1.99%, as set out in the 2023/24 Revenue Budget report, and an increase in the Adult Social Care precept of 2.0%.

It was reported that over 87% of domestic properties in Doncaster fell into Bands A, B and C with almost 58% falling in Band A. The proposals equated to a charge of £1,047.55 for a Band A property, which was an increase of 77p per week.

Members were also informed that the report included increases in Council Taxes of the Joint Authorities (South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Fire) which represented an overall increase of 4.43% for Doncaster residents.

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 - 37

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 Bob Anderson, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, James Church, Gemma Cobby, Phil Cole, Linda Curran, Aimee Dickson, Susan Durant, Sue Farmer, Sean Gibbons, Julie Grace, John Healy, Leanne Hempshall, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Barry Johnson, Jake Kearsley, Jane Kidd, Majid Khan, Sue Knowles, Tracy Moran, John Mounsey, Emma Muddiman-Rawlings, Tim Needham, David Nevett, Jane Nightingale, Rob Reid, Andrea Robinson, Dave Shaw, Glynis Smith, Sarah Smith and Austen White.

Against - 0

Abstain - 7

Councillors Laura Bluff, Nigel Cannings, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Martin Greenhalgh, Thomas Noon and Gary Stapleton.

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

RESOLVED that Council approved a Band D Council Tax for 2023/24 of £1,571.32 for the City of Doncaster Council services and passed the appropriate Statutory Resolutions, as detailed and recommended within Appendix B of the report, which incorporated the Council Taxes of the Joint Authorities, subject to final ratification, and which, taken together with Doncaster's 3.99% increase, represented a 4.43% increase from the 2022/23 Council Tax for Doncaster residents.

67 Annual Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

The Council considered a report on the Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24, which was presented by Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources, which set out the Council's policy for the pay of the workforce, particularly senior staff, and detailed the ratios between the highest, lowest and average paid employees in the organisation.

Councillor Nightingale stated that the Policy Statement was a public document and was published on the Council's website each year, and demonstrated clear public accountability, transparency and fairness in setting pay. It also included information about where more detailed salary information was published as part of the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts.

It was proposed that the same format be used this year as in previous years with the following observations:-

- (i) There had been some significant changes to the ratios this year due to the 2022/23 national pay award being agreed and implemented;
- (ii) The ratio between the highest paid employee salary of the Chief Executive, £173,211 and the lowest employee salary of £20,285 had positively reduced from 9.46 to 8.55 to 1 this year;

- (iii) The ratio between the highest employee salary and average employee salary has slightly reduced from 6.13 to 5.64 to 1, although the average salary had increased by £3,188 per annum;
- (iv) All pay ratios remained well within the threshold considered by the Hutton Review that should be no greater than 20 to 1; and
- (v) The Council remained committed to reduce the pay difference and increase low pay.

RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24, be approved.

68 Request to change the name of the Parish of Barnburgh with Harlington

The Council considered a report which outlined a request which had been received from Barnburgh with Harlington Parish Council to change the name of the Parish area to Barnburgh and Harlington.

It was reported that Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1972 allowed Principal Councils, at the request of a Parish Council within the area, to change the name of a Parish. Subsequently, a request had been received from Barnburgh with Harlington Parish Council seeking the City of Doncaster Council's approval as the Principal Authority, for a change of name of Barnburgh with Harlington Parish. It was agreed at the Parish Council's meeting held on 18th January, that it become Barnburgh and Harlington on the basis that Barnburgh and Harlington was the name that the Parish was more generally known by. It had been used locally for a significant length of time and was used on all title deeds.

Members noted that under Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, requests of this nature were determined by Full Council, following a recommendation by the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee, and accordingly, at its meeting held on 7th February 2023, the Committee agreed to recommend to Council that the request to change the Parish name of Barnburgh with Harlington be approved.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Barnburgh with Harlington Parish be renamed Barnburgh and Harlington Parish; and
- (2) a notice be published and circulated in accordance with the statutory requirements, as detailed within paragraph 14 of the report.

69 To consider the following Motion, written notice of which has been given by Councillor Lani-Mae Ball and Seconded by Councillor Rachael Blake, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1, a Motion was submitted by Councillor Lani-Mae Ball and Seconded by Councillor Rachael Blake. In the absence of Councillor Lani-Mae Ball, Councillor Rachael Blake Moved the Motion which was Seconded by Councillor Glynis Smith:-

“The City of Doncaster Council notes the campaign to make care experienced a protected characteristic and that Cumberland, Westmorland and Furness, Redcar and Cleveland, Ashfield, Wigan, Manchester, Edinburgh, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Sefton and Lambeth Councils have already done this.

The City of Doncaster Council notes that Cara, Rebecca, Kanisha, Courtney, Chelsea and Fay from the Doncaster ‘Hear me out’ Group, have championed this Motion in Doncaster and they have asked us as their corporate parents, to back them in creating a better future for all care experienced people, no matter where they are from.

The City of Doncaster Council believes that Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives:-

- Despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account;
- Care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system;
- Care experienced people often face a postcode lottery of support;
- As corporate parents, Councillors have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us as an Authority;
- All corporate parents should commit to acting as mentors, hearing the voices of looked after children and young people, and to consider their needs in any aspect of Council work;
- Councillors should be champions of our looked after children and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society; and
- The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as Councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.

The City of Doncaster Council therefore resolves:-

1. When making any decisions in relation to its policies or formulating its Council Plan, that it recognises that care experienced people are a vulnerable group who face discrimination;
2. That it recognises that Councils have a duty to put the needs of vulnerable people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration;
3. That in the delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council includes care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who share a Protected Characteristic in services and employment;

4. That this Council will treat care experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic so that future services and policies made, and adopted by the Council, should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a Protected Characteristic;
5. To formally call upon all other bodies including 'Team Doncaster', to treat care experience as a Protected Characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation;
6. To formally call upon all other bodies including 'Team Doncaster', to adopt corporate parenting for children in care and care experienced people, until such time as it may be introduced by legislation; and
7. For the Council to proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies based on their views."

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 Rachael Blake, which was declared as follows:-

For - 44

Against - 0

Abstain - 0

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

RESOLVED that

The City of Doncaster Council notes the campaign to make care experienced a protected characteristic and that Cumberland, Westmorland and Furness, Redcar and Cleveland, Ashfield, Wigan, Manchester, Edinburgh, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Sefton and Lambeth Councils have already done this.

The City of Doncaster Council notes that Cara, Rebecca, Kanisha, Courtney, Chelsea and Fay from the Doncaster 'Hear me out' Group, have championed this Motion in Doncaster and they have asked us as their corporate parents, to back them in creating a better future for all care experienced people, no matter where they are from.

The City of Doncaster Council believes that Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives:-

- Despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account;

- Care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system;
- Care experienced people often face a postcode lottery of support;
- As corporate parents, Councillors have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us as an Authority;
- All corporate parents should commit to acting as mentors, hearing the voices of looked after children and young people, and to consider their needs in any aspect of Council work;
- Councillors should be champions of our looked after children and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society; and
- The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as Councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.

The City of Doncaster Council therefore resolves:-

1. When making any decisions in relation to its policies or formulating its Council Plan, that it recognises that care experienced people are a vulnerable group who face discrimination;
2. That it recognises that Councils have a duty to put the needs of vulnerable people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration;
3. That in the delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council includes care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who share a Protected Characteristic in services and employment;
4. That this Council will treat care experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic so that future services and policies made, and adopted by the Council, should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a Protected Characteristic;
5. To formally call upon all other bodies including 'Team Doncaster', to treat care experience as a Protected Characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation;
6. To formally call upon all other bodies including 'Team Doncaster', to adopt corporate parenting for children in care and care experienced people, until such time as it may be introduced by legislation; and
7. For the Council to proactively seek out and listen to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies based on their views.

70 To consider the following Motion, written notice of which has been given by Councillor Gemma Cobby and Seconded by Councillor Emma Muddiman-Rawlins, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1:-

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1, a Motion was submitted by Councillor Gemma Cobby and Seconded by Councillor Emma Muddiman-Rawlins:-

“Full Council notes that:-

1. The pressure on organisations to pay their fair share of tax has never been stronger;
2. Polling from the Institute for Business Ethics finds that ‘corporate tax avoidance’ has, since 2013, been the clear number one concern of the British public when it comes to business conduct;
3. Two thirds of people (66%) believe the Government and Local Councils should at least consider a company’s ethics and how they pay their tax, as well as value for money and quality of service provided, when awarding contracts to companies;
4. Around 17.5% of public contracts in the UK have been won by companies with links to tax havens;
5. It has been conservatively estimated that losses from multinational profit-shifting (just one form of tax avoidance) could be costing the UK some £17bn per annum in lost Corporation Tax revenues; and
6. The Fair Tax Mark offers a means for business to demonstrate good tax conduct, and has been secured by a wide range of businesses across the UK, including FTSE-listed PLCs, co-operatives, social enterprises and large private businesses.

Full Council believes that:-

1. Paying tax is often presented as a burden, but it shouldn’t be;
2. Tax enables us to provide services from education, health and social care, to flood defence, roads, policing and defence. It also helps to counter financial inequalities and rebalance distorted economies;
3. As recipients of significant public funding, Local Authorities should take the lead in the promotion of exemplary tax conduct; be that by ensuring contractors are paying their proper share of tax, or by refusing to go along with offshore tax dodging when buying land and property;
4. Where councils hold substantive stakes in private enterprises, influence should be wielded to ensure that such businesses are exemplars of tax transparency and tax avoidance is shunned;
5. More action is needed, however, as current and proposed new UK procurement law significantly restricts Councils’ ability to either penalise

poor tax conduct (as exclusion grounds are rarely triggered) or reward good tax conduct, when buying goods or services; and

6. UK Cities, Counties and Towns can and should stand up for responsible tax conduct; doing what they can within existing frameworks and pledging to do more given the opportunity, as active supporters of international tax justice.

Full Council resolves to:-

1. Approve the Councils for Fair Tax Declaration;
2. Lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct, right across our activities;
3. Ensure IR35 is implemented robustly and contract workers pay a fair share of employment taxes;
4. Not use offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty;
5. Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately by suppliers as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates;
6. Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers UK and overseas, and their consolidated profit and loss position, given lack of clarity could be strong indicators of poor financial probity and weak financial standing;
7. Promote Fair Tax Mark certification, especially for any business in which we have a significant stake and where Corporation Tax is due;
8. Support Fair Tax Week events in the area, and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses who are proud to promote responsible tax conduct and pay their fair share of corporation tax; and
9. Support calls for urgent reform of UK procurement law to enable Local Authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct through their procurement policies.”

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 Gemma Cobby, which was declared as follows:-

For - 39

Against - 0

Abstain - 1

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

RESOLVED that

Full Council notes that:-

1. The pressure on organisations to pay their fair share of tax has never been stronger;
2. Polling from the Institute for Business Ethics finds that 'corporate tax avoidance' has, since 2013, been the clear number one concern of the British public when it comes to business conduct;
3. Two thirds of people (66%) believe the Government and Local Councils should at least consider a company's ethics and how they pay their tax, as well as value for money and quality of service provided, when awarding contracts to companies;
4. Around 17.5% of public contracts in the UK have been won by companies with links to tax havens;
5. It has been conservatively estimated that losses from multinational profit-shifting (just one form of tax avoidance) could be costing the UK some £17bn per annum in lost Corporation Tax revenues; and
6. The Fair Tax Mark offers a means for business to demonstrate good tax conduct, and has been secured by a wide range of businesses across the UK, including FTSE-listed PLCs, co-operatives, social enterprises and large private businesses.

Full Council believes that:-

1. Paying tax is often presented as a burden, but it shouldn't be;
2. Tax enables us to provide services from education, health and social care, to flood defence, roads, policing and defence. It also helps to counter financial inequalities and rebalance distorted economies;
3. As recipients of significant public funding, Local Authorities should take the lead in the promotion of exemplary tax conduct; be that by ensuring contractors are paying their proper share of tax, or by refusing to go along with offshore tax dodging when buying land and property;
4. Where councils hold substantive stakes in private enterprises, influence should be wielded to ensure that such businesses are exemplars of tax transparency and tax avoidance is shunned;
5. More action is needed, however, as current and proposed new UK procurement law significantly restricts Councils' ability to either penalise poor tax conduct (as exclusion grounds are rarely triggered) or reward good tax conduct, when buying goods or services; and

6. UK Cities, Counties and Towns can and should stand up for responsible tax conduct; doing what they can within existing frameworks and pledging to do more given the opportunity, as active supporters of international tax justice.

Full Council resolves to:-

1. Approve the Councils for Fair Tax Declaration;
2. Lead by example and demonstrate good practice in our tax conduct, right across our activities;
3. Ensure IR35 is implemented robustly and contract workers pay a fair share of employment taxes;
4. Not use offshore vehicles for the purchase of land and property, especially where this leads to reduced payments of stamp duty;
5. Undertake due diligence to ensure that not-for-profit structures are not being used inappropriately by suppliers as an artificial device to reduce the payment of tax and business rates;
6. Demand clarity on the ultimate beneficial ownership of suppliers UK and overseas, and their consolidated profit and loss position, given lack of clarity could be strong indicators of poor financial probity and weak financial standing;
7. Promote Fair Tax Mark certification, especially for any business in which we have a significant stake and where Corporation Tax is due;
8. Support Fair Tax Week events in the area, and celebrate the tax contribution made by responsible businesses who are proud to promote responsible tax conduct and pay their fair share of corporation tax; and
9. Support calls for urgent reform of UK procurement law to enable Local Authorities to better penalise poor tax conduct and reward good tax conduct through their procurement policies.

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

A. Questions on Notice

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.2, the Chair accepted the following questions from Elected Members during "Question Time":-

(a) From Councillor Nick Allen to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

- Q. "Thirteen months ago, I asked you to provide an update regarding the sale of land near Rose Hill in Bessacarr. As you know, this is an extremely controversial subject, the planning proposal has provoked a significant backlash as residents do not want to lose access to much needed green space. Could you explain why the proposal has not gone

before the Planning Committee yet. What has caused the delay and does the Council stand to benefit from the sale? If so, how much money is the town going to make?"

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

"I am informed that the scheme design has been remodelled by the developer to more fully meet this Council's aspirations in its Environmental Strategy in tackling climate change, to include the retention of more existing trees and the creation of additional greenspace. This pause has created a delay, but one which will ultimately see an improved and more sustainable development scheme on site for residents and the local community. Once remaining consultations on the revised application have been received it is expected that the scheme will be considered by Planning Committee shortly. As a Council owned site, the sale proceeds will form part of the funding for the City's Capital Strategy. The planning process identifies S106 sums that support open space provision, new space for local schools and the Government's requirement for biodiversity net gain from development. As this process is underway, a final sale price is not yet established."

(b) From Councillor Thomas Noon to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones:-

Q. "Over the last 10 years, we have seen a decrease in our social housing levels, but an increase in the size of the waiting list, currently at 7,741, yet during this time, we have only built 476 Council Houses; why is this?"

A. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, gave the following response:-

"Over the last 10 years, we have seen an increase of 521 Council led housing stock, with a mixture of Council new build, direct purchase and conversions.

We have also seen 1,470 Housing Association led property additions in the same timeframe, again a mixture of new build, direct purchase and conversions.

There are 3 reasons for lack of Council Housing and loss in numbers. The first is the Right to Buy Scheme which allows residents to purchase their Council House at a significant discount. This means you cannot simply buy or build another property with the income from the sale. As an example, for every 10 Council properties sold through Right to Buy, we can afford to build 1 replacement property; that is 1 property to replace 10. This is the main reason Council Housing stock is being lost throughout the country. Right to Buy provides a significant discount up to a maximum of 70% of the property value to a maximum of £87,200. Plus, a significant amount has to be given to Government, meaning that we only keep roughly 50% of the money after the discount price.

Just to put this all into perspective, in 2021/22, we sold 85 properties under Right to Buy. The gross value, before discount, was £7.8m. We sold them for £4.1m and the average discount was 47% and we got to

keep £2.2m. That £2.2m works out as just under £26,000 for each property sold.

Over the last 12 months, we have seen roughly 130 properties lost through Right to Buy and over the last ten years, we have seen 1,052 properties sold through the Right to Buy scheme.

The second reason is the year on year cut in rent that Government enforced for 4 years from 2016/17 to 2019/20. This saw rent fall by 1% per year during this period. This led to a significant fall in income, and alongside rising costs, this meant cuts across St Leger, including the numbers of properties they could purchase. It was estimated in 2019, that this fall in rental income and subsequent fall in property purchase means the HRA has roughly £457m less resources available over a 30 year business plan. So, less resources to build new properties and manage what we already have.

The third reason was the strict borrowing limits that limited the amount that could be borrowed against the Housing Revenue Account. This was abolished in 2018 and this has enabled us to bring about the Council House Build Programme that should see over 500 properties added to Council House stock over the course of the programme.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.7, Councillor Thomas Noon asked the following supplementary question:-

Q. “Why have we built more houses in the last 13 years during austerity, than we did in the previous 13 years? We did not build a single Council House from 1997 to 2010. I do not know if this is a lack of planning or no planning at all.”

A. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, gave the following response:-

“As far as I’m aware, we did build Council Houses. You are right, if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. This administration has certainly planned and I think we have not failed.”

(c) From Councillor Jane Cox to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

Q. “The budget in 2020/21 and again in 2022/23, referenced the drop in customers since Doncaster Council staff working from home as a pressure. Is the Mayor going to ensure Council employee’s come back to work in the office 100% of the time. Not only will this help the economy, it will ensure the smooth running of the Council departments. Will she also ensure that senior officials do not spend 20% of their time working from home?”

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

“The terms and conditions of Council Officers fall under the remit of the Head of Paid Service and I will ask him to respond to you in writing. However, in the current employment market, retaining as much flexibility around working environments assists in remaining both competitive and

an employer of choice. In addition, it has provided opportunities for closer working with partners, sharing services and physical assets. In this building, we are joined by partners including St Leger Homes, South Yorkshire Police, NHS and Citizens Advice, thus bringing more into the City Centre.

Given the Council's overall workforce, less than one third work in a hybrid way due to the significant number of front-line roles, although working flexibility is an option offered particularly in working part-time to support better work life balance for employees. In addition, a number of staff work directly in locality areas and that will in itself be contributing to that part of the local economy, as well as contributing to the green agenda by reducing unnecessary journey times to a central location. Our staff are also suffering at the hands of the cost-of-living crisis, with many more Officers choosing to bring their own lunch in order to save money.

In terms of customer engagement, this Council is now dealing with an additional 90,000 enquiries against 2019/20 levels, with the same level of resources. This is despite the challenges presented by COVID and additional burdens placed on the Council during this time."

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.7, Councillor Jane Cox asked the following supplementary question:-

Q. "In terms of the additional 90,000 enquiries, what do they look like?"

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

"I can simply list these enquiries. In 2019/20, we had a total 218,878 customer service telephone enquiries. We had 185,711 online enquiries and a footfall of 64,524 into the One Stop Shop for face to face enquiries making a total of 469,113.

In 2022/23 so far, and we are not at the end of this financial year yet, we have had 209,128 customer service telephone enquiries. Online, there have been 280,031 enquiries and into the One Stop Shop there have been 71,491 face to face enquiries making a total of 560,650 enquiries."

(d) From Councillor Laura Bluff to Councillor Rachael Blake:-

Q. "On 9th September 2021, the law changed prohibiting Local Authorities from placing a child under the age of sixteen in an unregulated placement (The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021). In the response to my question on those in unregulated placements, I have been told that four children under the age of sixteen, are in unregulated placements. As this is illegal, on what date was Ofsted informed?"

A. Councillor Rachael Blake gave the following response:-

"We currently have one child aged 15 in an unregulated placement made under the inherent jurisdiction on the 23rd December, 2022 and Ofsted were notified on the same day.

On the 9th September 2021, the placement of under 16s in unregulated settings was deemed unlawful. Since that time, there have been a number of cases considered by the Courts which have considered the placement of under 16s in such placements.

A placement is deemed unregulated if it has not been approved as a regulated placement by either Ofsted or the CQC.

Where a placement is not regulated, the case law since September 2021, has provided guidance to Local Authorities and the courts as to how such placements should be managed safely, and what steps must be taken by the Local Authority to ensure there is judicial oversight of those placements. The case law now also provides best practice guidance to providers, Ofsted and Local Authorities, so as to ensure that if a placement can become regulated, what steps should be taken to support the placement becoming regulated.

It is now settled law that in the absence of a placement being regulated, the Local Authority must apply under the Inherent Jurisdiction for a Deprivation of Liberty Order, so that the court can review the care arrangements for the young person and approve the care plan.

The current best practice in summary is:-

- The Local Authority must provide evidence of the registered/unregistered status;
- Provide to the court and detail as to why any application for registration is delayed;
- How that (unregistered) placement can meet the child's needs;
- The Local Authority to assure that the (unregistered) placement is suitable to the child;
- The court should order for the provider to make an application for registration within 7 working days of the court exercising its inherent jurisdiction;
- The court should be advised within 10 working days of the status of the registration application. If the court is not appraised, then the court should list a further hearing;
- If approved, the court will then review the unregistered placement at 12 weekly intervals; and
- If registration is refused, or the provider has withdrawn their application for registration, the Local Authority must notify the court as soon as possible.

In addition, in Doncaster, the following actions are taken:-

1. Prior to making the placement, the Assistant Director will be notified and will scrutinise the plan;
2. A briefing note is prepared setting out the circumstances that have led to the decision to make the placement and the actions planned to address these. This is shared with Ofsted by the Strategic Lead for Children in Care and Achieving Permanence. Should Ofsted have any queries after this, they liaise with the Strategic Lead;
3. When the placement is made, increased visits from the Social Worker to the young person will have been put in place by the Team Manager; and
4. A Looked after review, chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer, will take place within 20 days.

Social care staff including the IRO Service and Contract and Commissioning Teams, are aware of the above provisions and their duty to flag any regulatory issues as soon as they become known, so that the necessary remedial action can be taken. Regular deprivation of liberty training is also delivered by Legal Services, which is rolled out to teams annually.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.7, Councillor Laura Bluff asked the following supplementary question:-

Q “I applaud the Team who got three children out of unregulated placements in a 14 day period. Can I ask, what is the timescale for getting the fourth remaining child back to a regulated placement?”

A. Councillor Rachael Blake gave the following response:-

“As soon as possible, but I will look into this and provide you with a written response.”

(e) From Councillor Steve Cox to Councillor Joe Blackham:-

Q. “Owing to the situation with the ongoing sales of land and assets in Doncaster, including sites such as Rose Hill, do you now feel Councillors should have a direct role in the disposal of assets within their Wards? I have long advocated for an accountable Assets Board, one which would function like an OSMC. Is this something you could support and how can it be achieved?”

A. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, gave the following response on behalf of Councillor Joe Blackham, who had submitted his apologies for the meeting:-

“The sale of land and property assets is governed by the Council’s Financial Procedure Rules and Standing Orders, and all decisions are made within this framework. Ward Member and Portfolio holder consultation already takes place as part of the approval for the disposal of

an asset, and this process is enshrined within the Council's recently approved Asset Management Strategy.

(f) From Councillor Glenn Bluff to Councillor Joe Blackham:-

Q. "The M1 corridor along the A635 in Barnsley, has been upgraded to accommodate new distribution centres. The A635 on the Doncaster side, is not a dual carriage way like the Barnsley side, but is a rural single carriageway running through small villages like Yorkshire's most polluted village, Hickleton. Now Barnsley are expanding the distribution centres with a 75 acre site at Goldthorpe at the expense of Doncaster citizens and their health. What options do we have along the Doncaster portion of the A635 from Hickleton to the A1M, to counter the impact of Barnsley's growth and the increase in HGVs?"

A. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, gave the following response on behalf of Councillor Joe Blackham, who had submitted his apologies for the meeting:-

"There have been a number of meetings between Officers from Barnsley and Doncaster Council over recent weeks to discuss the imminent planning application. Barnsley Council is very aware of our concerns over the impact of the development and the issues at Hickleton and Marr.

Personally, I would like to see a bypass for Hickleton and Marr, but in 2019, this was estimated at roughly £100m.

I was hoping to submit the scheme into the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, but unfortunately, it was not possible due to the Government funding being restricted to schemes that support a modal shift from cars to public transport or active travel.

Government policy continues to be focussed on modal shift OR schemes that allow significant economic growth through development and Hickleton/Marr is virtually all in the green belt."

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.

There were no questions put to the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones.

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

In the absence of Councillor Nigel Ball, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure, Culture and Planning, Members were asked to submit their questions in writing to the Executive Office and a written response would be provided.

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

In the absence of Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Enforcement, Members were asked to submit their questions in writing to the Executive Office and a written response would be provided.

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

There were no questions put to Councillor Rachael Blake, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Communities and Equalities.

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

There were no questions put to Councillor Phil Cole, Cabinet Member for Finance and Trading Services.

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

Q. Councillor Martin Greenhalgh asked the following question:-

“At my recent Parish Council meeting, we were doing a Budgetary Review. We have 4 parks in our Parish and we bought the bins from the Council. They are emptied on a weekly basis and the cost would go from £10,500 to £11,500 per year. The clerk obtained a couple of alternative quotations, and we accepted one for £4,750 plus VAT per year. Why is there a vast difference between a private contractor and the Council?”

A. Councillor Mark Houlbrook gave the following reply:-

“I will provide you with a written response.”

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

There were no questions put to Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources.

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

Q. Councillor Thomas Noon asked the following question:-

“Thank you for the response to my question I asked at the last Council meeting. When are we likely to see the change in policy at Full Council? It seems a more common sense approach than the current policy which is in place at the moment with regard to Occupational Therapy and medical assessments.”

A. Councillor Andrea Robinson gave the following reply:-

“I will provide you with a written response.”

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

There were no questions put to Councillor Rachael Blake, Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

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.

72 Annual Report on Executive Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency (Rule 16) Provisions

The Council received the Annual Report on Executive Decisions taken under Special Urgency provisions for the past 12 months. The Council's Constitution required that all these decisions be reported to Full Council on an annual basis, in order to demonstrate openness and transparency.

It was noted that there had been 14 urgent decisions which fell into this category, that had been taken within the period, all of which were detailed in brief within the report with information given as to who took the decision and when, and what the reasons for urgency were in not following the standard decision making procedures.

Following consideration of the report, Members were afforded the opportunity to speak on issues on which they sought further clarity. Councillor Steve Cox enquired whether the financial implications of each decision could be outlined within future reports presented to Council for greater clarity. Officers acknowledged that some thought could be given to this, but Council was reminded that these decisions had been published and circulated to all Members previously when taken, and were available to view on-line via the links in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report outlining the decisions taken in accordance with Special Urgency provisions of the Access to Information Procedure Rules, be noted; and
- (2) Councillor Steve Cox be provided with the specific amount of the Central Government grant funding received in relation to each Special Urgency decision.

73 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 16th January, 2023.
- B. South Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board held on 12th January, 2023.
- C. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority held on 21st November, 2022.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____

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