

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14TH JULY, 2016

A MEETING of the COUNCIL was held at the CIVIC OFFICE on THURSDAY, 14TH JULY, 2016, at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor David Nevett
Vice-Chair - Councillor George Derx
Mayor - Ros Jones
Deputy Mayor - Councillor Glyn Jones

Councillors Nick Allen, Nigel Ball, Iris Beech, Rachael Blake, Phil Cole, John Cooke, Tony Corden, Jane Cox, Steve Cox, Jessie Credland, Linda Curran, Nuala Fennelly, Neil Gethin, Pat Haith, James Hart, John Healy, Rachel Hodson, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Glyn Jones, Richard A Jones, Ros Jones, Kenneth Keegan, Majid Khan, Jane Kidd, Ted Kitchen, Pat Knight, Chris McGuinness, Sue McGuinness, John McHale, Bill Mordue, Jane Nightingale, Andy Pickering, Cynthia Ransome, Andrea Robinson, Kevin Rodgers, Craig Sahman, Dave Shaw, Alan Smith, Clive Stone, Austen White, Sue Wilkinson and Paul Wray.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joe Blackham, Elsie Butler, Bev Chapman, Susan Durant, Sean Gibbons, Eva Hughes, Alan Jones, Sue Knowles, John Mounsey and Jonathan Wood.

19 RECENT DEATHS OF JO COX, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR BATLEY AND SPEN, FORMER COUNCILLOR GARTH OXBY AND AN OFFICER OF THE COUNCIL, MR COLIN JOY, TOURISM MANAGER

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 deaths of Jo Cox, Member of Parliament for Batley and Spen on 16th June, 2016, former Councillor Garth Oxby and an Officer of the Council, Mr Colin Joy, Tourism Manager, who had recently passed away.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

21 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13TH MAY, 2016

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 13th May, 2016, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22 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 David Nevett, made the following announcements:-

“John Ellis, a freeman of the Borough, has been awarded the Knight Commanders Medal of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his efforts to improve employment and training opportunities for young people through his work with the Doncaster Youth Jazz Orchestra and Counterparts in Herten, Germany. This is a very well deserved honour for John and I would like to record our congratulations to him.”

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

“I was shocked and surprised to learn of the significant changes to the HS2 project which were announced last week. The new proposals would save the Government £1billion but my position is clear; people in Doncaster and South Yorkshire must not suffer as a result of this eleventh hour cost-saving exercise.

I have already spoken to the Secretary of State to express our deep concerns and I will be continuing that dialogue with the Government.

I cannot support any proposal which reduces job creation and economic growth forecasts unless alternative growth mechanisms are in place, and I will certainly not back any proposal where people in communities like Mexborough take a hit on jobs, housing, quality of life and future growth without very significant benefits in return.

First in my mind are the people whose homes and communities will be directly affected. I have been speaking to residents and I am working together with local Councillors and MPs, to support them and fight on their behalf.

People have also asked for my views on the overall proposed changes to HS2 in South Yorkshire. In my experience, it is always best to fully understand a proposal and its implications before rushing to welcome it. In terms of the wider issue of regional job creation and economic growth, it is important that we analyse the details. That is what we are now doing. However, some of the initial information does raise concern. For example, under the previous proposal, getting HS2 from London to Meadowhall would have taken 68 minutes and there could have been up to five or six trains per hour. HS2 estimated that travelling on to the city centre, if that is where you wanted to go, would take a total of 78 minutes. The new spur into Sheffield Midland, on slower tracks, will take 83 minutes, including stopping at Chesterfield, and carry ‘up to two trains per hour’. In fact, using HS2 services, you could get from London to Leeds quicker than London to Sheffield.

The report is also unclear when it comes to a number of other important issues. The proposals do not commit to a northern link back onto the main HS2 line to Leeds. Similarly, there is no commitment to a parkway station in South Yorkshire. The level of connectivity to Birmingham is unclear. It appears that we may now be getting a service which is less frequent, slower, with no guaranteed connection to Leeds and perhaps even Birmingham. On the face of it, that doesn’t sound like a good deal.

It also isn’t what anyone in South Yorkshire actually campaigned for. Instead, I fear that the future economic prospects of our area may be being compromised in order to save £1billion. I understand the financial challenges facing the project, but saving money must not be achieved at our expense. I will therefore ensure that these

proposals are properly scrutinised and that we hold the Government to account if the evidence suggests that is what is happening.”

Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, made the following announcement:-

“I was at the House of Lords on Monday 11th July with a young lady from Hayfield Academy to collect her prize for winning the England Trading Standards Award for ‘Design a Toy for a Child’ competition. The School has won this prize 3 times over the past few years. I would like to congratulate both the young lady and the School on their success. The School won £1000 and the young lady won £100.”

Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Housing, made the following announcement:-

“St Leger Homes this week won a prestigious national award at the Business in the Community 2016 Responsible Business Awards, for their ground-breaking work with championing older people in the workplace.

The awards celebrate inspiring examples of businesses. The awards scheme saw 297 companies enter this year, with 103 shortlisted and just 52 firms named finalists; to win is a wonderful achievement.

St. Leger Homes was recognised for its New Directions recruitment and retention programme, which offers retraining and redeployment opportunities, flexible working and retirement to support those aged 50 and over who may need to consider their career options. The aim is to ensure St Leger Homes can retain the skills and experience of its diverse workforce for the benefit of its customers and the local economy, whilst supporting the wellbeing of staff. Older staff members also help upskill new employees via mentoring programmes; it is committed to ensuring it maintains an age diverse workforce.”

23 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13

There were no questions from the public received for this meeting.

24 CORPORATE PLAN 2016/17 REFRESH AND MONITORING (MINUTE NO. 27 - 30TH JULY, 2015)

Further to the above Minute, the Council considered a report, presented by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, which sought Members approval of the refreshed Corporate Plan.

It was reported that the Corporate Plan was an important document which set out the Council’s priorities to ensure that it contributed effectively to the Council’s success as a Borough.

Members noted that Full Council had already approved a three year Corporate Plan at its meeting held in June, 2014 and that this was the third and final year of this approved plan. This was a light touch refresh which aimed to ensure that the plan was up to date and remained focussed on the Council’s key objectives.

The Mayor pointed out that the plan had been considered by Overview and Scrutiny and that she expressed her gratitude to Elected Members for their input, and she was pleased to act on their recommendations. There had been no major changes to the plan and the minor amendments proposed were outlined in the report.

The Mayor reported that there had been some significant successes as the Council sought to:-

- Build a thriving economy;
- Improve skills development and opportunities for local people;
- Develop new housing;
- Reshape and improve local services; and
- Ensure that the Council was an efficient and effective local Council.

In conclusion, the Mayor stated that the Council would continue to closely monitor and report on progress through the quarterly performance reports.

Following the presentation of the report, Members were afforded the opportunity to comment on the plan.

RESOLVED that the refreshed Corporate Plan, be approved.

25 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

The Council considered the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report presented by Councillor Charlie Hogarth, Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC), which highlighted the progress of Doncaster Council's Overview and Scrutiny function during 2015/16. The report also provided a short summary of some of the work carried out by OSMC and its four Standing Panels during 2015/16 and also highlighted some of the key achievements and the impacts that Overview and Scrutiny had made over the past year, and identified priorities for 2016/17.

Councillor Hogarth initially placed on record his appreciation to Members, the Executive, Officers, Partners, Stakeholders and the public, who had attended meetings and contributed to the Overview and Scrutiny process. Councillor Hogarth hoped that this report reflected the value that an effective Overview and Scrutiny function could bring to the organisation. He also looked forward as to how Overview and Scrutiny could positively contribute to improving the delivery of services such as health and adult social care, environment, children's issues, regeneration, housing and within communities, in delivering the Corporate Plan whilst the Council continued to effectively manage its finances.

Councillor Hogarth drew Members attention to the key impacts and achievements which had arisen from the work of Overview and Scrutiny which included all aspects of the Overview and Scrutiny process, policy review and development, reviewing performance, the work of partners, and providing a critical friend role and appropriate challenge.

Following the presentation of the report, Members were afforded the opportunity to

comment on the report.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16, be noted.

26 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTION, WRITTEN NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR JANE KIDD 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 Jane Kidd and Seconded by Councillor Rachael Blake:-

“The Prime Minister and leaders from across the political spectrum have joined together to condemn the reported increase in xenophobic abuse and racist incidents that have recently taken place across the country.

Doncaster Council supports those who repudiate these despicable acts and unequivocally condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes.”

An amendment to the Motion was Moved by Councillor Nick Allen and Seconded by Councillor R. Allan Jones, in that the Motion be amended to read as follows:-

“The Prime Minister and leaders from across the political spectrum have joined together to condemn the reported increase in xenophobic abuse and racist incidents that have recently taken place across the country.

Doncaster Council supports those who repudiate these despicable acts and unequivocally condemns anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and hate crimes.”

A vote was taken on the amendment proposed by Councillor Nick Allen, which was declared as follows:-

For - 44

Against - 1

Abstain - 0

On being put to the meeting, the amendment to the Motion proposed by Councillor Nick Allen was declared CARRIED.

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

A vote was taken on the Substantive Motion which was declared as follows:-

For - 45

Against - 0

Abstentions - 0

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

RESOLVED that the Prime Minister and leaders from across the political spectrum have joined together to condemn the reported increase in xenophobic abuse and racist incidents that have recently taken place across the country.

Doncaster Council supports those who repudiate these despicable acts and unequivocally condemns anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and hate crimes.

27 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTION, WRITTEN NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR PAUL WRAY AND SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR GEORGE DERX, IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 16.1

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.1, a Motion was submitted by Councillor Paul Wray and Seconded by Councillor George Derx:-

“This Council supports the Royal British Legion’s ‘Count Them In’ campaign to better recognise, understand and support the Armed Forces community through changes to the national census. By adding new questions to the 2021 census we can improve our understanding of this unique community both locally and nationally, in order to fully meet the needs of our serving personnel, veterans and their families.”

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 Paul Wray, which was declared as follows:-

For - 43

Against - 0

Abstain - 0

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

RESOLVED that this Council supports the Royal British Legion’s ‘Count Them In’ campaign to better recognise, understand and support the Armed Forces community through changes to the national census. By adding new questions to the 2021 census we can improve our understanding of this unique community both locally and nationally, in order to fully meet the needs of our serving personnel, veterans and their families.

28 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 accepted the following questions from Elected Members during Question Time:-

A. Questions to Ros Jones, Mayor of Doncaster

Q. Councillor Andy Pickering asked the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

“Firstly, may I thank the Mayor for visiting our Shimmer Estate to express her concerns concerning the shattering news that more than 200 homes will be lost in Mexborough to HS2.

We, the Elected Members, have just met for discussions with HS2 Ltd. It transpired that this route option is the least favoured of the four considered, but it was impossible to reach agreement on the favoured Meadowhall route with Sheffield City Region representatives.

The only favourable aspect of this option is that it saves money and gives Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council a station en-route, but it fails to bring anything other than destruction to Doncaster MBC. 2% plus of Mexborough’s housing stock will be lost. We oppose that.

HS2 said that the next decision by the Secretary of State in the Autumn is to open consultations that may last 9 months. HS2 Ltd told us today that changes could be made including detailed changes to the route itself.

Can the Mayor assure residents that DMBC will use those months of consultation to press for a solution that saves the homes of our residents?”

A. The Mayor gave the following response:-

“I don’t think you actually heard what I said in my announcement. First in my mind are the people, not only on the Shimmer Estate, but in other areas as well, whose homes and communities will be directly affected. I went out to the Shimmer Estate to visit and I will continue to communicate. As I have said before, we will work together and this is ‘Apolitical’ in order to achieve the best outcome we can and that’s with ourselves and Members of Parliament, and we will fight on everyones behalf.

Just to add, there is no certainty, so Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council is not forced to gain out of this as I have read the report. I understand that they will undertake a study to see whether a further station can be added, so there is no definite plus on their side, so to quote that Barnsley will be better off; they do not know.

We believe and I categorically state that Meadowhall will benefit the wider communities of the Borough.”

Q. Councillor James Hart asked the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

“Would the Mayor comment on a recent Free Press article or it may have been The Star, in which Councillor John Mounsey commented on the state of litter in Doncaster. He is quoted saying ‘this is an absolute disgrace;

somebody needs to sort things out, something must be done rapidly'. I personally would have thought that as senior Labour Councillor in this Borough, even the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, might have the contacts to do that. I don't know what your views are?"

A. The Mayor gave the following response:-

"All Councillors were made aware that there is a backlog because we are introducing a new 7 day working pattern. Every new system takes some time to get it implemented. All Councillors were told it would take possibly 6 weeks, but we are on track to deliver that. Introducing a 7 day a week system will actually benefit the Borough. Therefore, I think as Councillor Mounsey has made that statement, he needs to look back and look at his emails to see what was put out there to all Councillors.

You need to be aware that I put in these new systems because it's about us saving money and improving systems. 45 new members of staff have been recruited; 96% of the posts have now been filled. We need to go through all the processes and comply with Health and Safety. This is about us saying we will spend capital money in order to deliver what is needed. The answer has got to be that we need to give them the chance to bring it back. This was brought about by contractors not delivering what they should. We took steps immediately; got rid of those contractors and have brought in new contractors to cover the rural roads."

Q. Councillor Nick Allen asked the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

"What stage are we at with regard to the compensation we received from SUEZ; I think it was £50,000. Is it going to be divided up into small funding pots per Ward which can be spent on environmental projects, and how are we getting on with that?"

A. The Mayor gave the following response:-

"I will pass you over to Councillor Chris McGuinness who has more detail on this, but I can inform you that we have received the money."

A. Councillor Chris McGuinness gave the following response:-

"We did report that there would be a fund for environmental projects. All of the money will be spent equally across the Wards. It is not a great deal, about £2500 per Ward. The Commercial Team is looking at the criteria; obviously its environmental, it could be tree planting, litter picking, clean ups, whatever. That should be ready by September and the money will probably have to be spent by next September. It will be led by Members in their Ward. Members will have to take care of those schemes and look after them. There will be a year to spend the money, so there is no rush, but we will need to report back to SUEZ on what we have done with the money in due course. So, you will be getting some more information about the criteria."

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

“Thank you for your swift attention in contacting the Members that were affected by HS2. Regarding the Sheffield City Region, where do they stand in supporting the proposals?”

A. The Mayor gave the following response:-

“This has not been debated further at Sheffield City Region. This is a new proposal which has been put forward by HS2 Ltd not Sheffield City Region and therefore, I cannot answer for them, but what I will reiterate again is that we will analyse all the information that has been put forward and ensure that we seek to fight our corner on behalf of the residents of Doncaster and the wider South Yorkshire area.”

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones:-

“Regarding the Fire Authority, considering the three embarrassments currently under review; the overtime payments to Officers, Wirral Cladding and the payment of £600 for the past Chair to attend the Labour Party Conference, all occurring under Barnsley’s leadership, why did the four Leaders decide that a Member from Barnsley be Chair again?”

A. The Mayor gave the following response:-

“Doncaster still Chairs the Transport Authority at this moment in time and I am sure over time it will be subsumed into other areas, and the Fire Authority is one aspect. It is up to Members there to actually pursue it further.”

B. Questions to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Equalities

No questions were put to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Equalities.

C. Questions to Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transportation

In the absence of Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transportation, the Chair of Council informed Members that any questions for Councillor Blackham should be submitted in writing to the Executive Office after this meeting and that the Cabinet Member would respond accordingly.

D. Questions to Councillor Tony Corden, Cabinet Member for Customer, Corporate and Trading Services

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the following question:-

“I have received a large number of complaints relating to difficulty getting through to our 736000 telephone number. Last night, I attended a Parish Council meeting, admittedly it was mainly dominated by HS2, but one of the comments that came forward was that they tried to get through and one lady was complaining that she was 105 in the queue. Since reading in the

paper that there has been 20,000 complaints regarding littering, is this going to improve?"

A. Councillor Tony Corden gave the following response:-

"I should hope it would. I don't know of the incident you are referring to about the lady in the queue, but I will check on it. I have not heard of the figure of 105 in a queue, but hopefully we can get 736000 working better and as it should. As you know we are working on a new App for Councillors as a new way of recording and reporting things, so I will check on it and get back to you on what the problems were."

Q. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.7, Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked the following supplementary question:-

"The question I would like to ask is I appreciate the fact about the App; that is commendable. However, it does not suit everyone and I think that wherever we are asking people to complain, I think we should make it as easy as possible for them, but I would like to say at no point, there has never been any question that staff are not ultra-polite when they do answer, it's just the time limit on how long it takes?"

A. Councillor Tony Corden gave the following response:-

"I understand what you are saying; I will check. As well as 736000, there are alternative ways by way of the internet and the web-site to make complaints and we are trying to encourage people more and more to use those systems, but we will look at the issue you have raised and will get back to you."

E. Questions to Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools

No questions were put to Councillor Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools.

F. Questions to Councillor Pat Knight, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

No questions were put to Councillor Pat Knight, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing.

G. Questions to Councillor Chris McGuinness, Cabinet Member for Communities, the Voluntary Sector and Environment

Q. Councillor Cynthia Ransome asked Councillor Chris McGuinness:-

"Why spend thousands of pounds on an advertisement in the local paper, page two and the back page, advertising that we have invested in new machinery to clean the streets. It is on a par with a hairdresser advertising that she has got a new hair dryer and that the local butcher has got a new bacon slicer. The customers want to see the end product; that is what they are interested in. We are expected to do the job. The customers want to

see cleaner streets, litter free and the grass cut, which unfortunately is not happening at the moment?”

As the subject of the question fell within the remit of Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transportation, and in the absence of Councillor Blackham who was not in attendance at the meeting, Councillor Chris McGuinness informed Councillor Cynthia Ransome that he would refer her question to the Executive Office after this meeting and that the Cabinet Member would respond accordingly.

H. Questions to Councillor Bill Mordue, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills, Tourism and Culture

No questions were put to Councillor Bill Mordue, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills, Tourism and Culture.

I. Questions to Councillor Jane Nightingale, Cabinet Member for Housing

Q. Councillor Neil Gethin asked the following question:-

“We seem to be enjoying talking about newspapers; there’s a wonderful photograph of one of our Councillors.

I would like to ask about the fencing which has been done by St. Leger Homes. Would Councillor Nightingale agree with me and a fellow Councillor, Majid Khan, who fully support the plan, whether or not she agrees with another Councillor that one of the best ways to tackle anti-social behaviour is to punish perpetrators, but to fence victims off might be preventative, but it does not tackle the root cause of the problem?”

A. Councillor Jane Nightingale gave the following response:-

“St Leger Homes have 39 Environmental Fencing Schemes identified to be delivered this financial year of which 8 already have been delivered. These schemes are in an allocated budget of £1 million.

This year, we will have seen 12 people employed who are St Leger Homes tenants through the ‘World of Work’ programme on 8 month contracts to deliver. Towards the end of the contracts, the candidates are supported to apply for permanent positions either with SLHD or other external companies.

I believe that the scheme within your Ward at Craven Close was proposed after complaints were received from residents of persons walking over the open grassed facility at these properties. Also reported are episodes occurring of Anti-Social Behaviour.

We need to ensure that our elderly and vulnerable are secure and safe, and not having to encounter these unnecessary disturbances in their later years. This scheme, I believe, is a start in assisting in this process.”

J. Questions to Councillor John Mounsey, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

In the absence of Councillor John Mounsey, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, no questions were put to the Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, Councillor Charlie Hogarth.

29 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING JOINT AUTHORITIES

In response to a query from Councillor John Cooke with regard to dates of future Joint Authority Meetings, the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, Scott Fawcus, advised Councillor Cooke that all future meeting dates were detailed on the Joint Authority Websites, and undertook to forward the appropriate web links to Elected Members.

RESOLVED that the Minutes and Briefing Notes of the following Joint Authorities, be noted:-

- A. South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel held on 27th January, 2016.
- B. Sheffield City Region Combined Authority held on 14th and 31st March, 2016.
- C. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority held on 15th February and 11th April, 2016 and Section 41 Briefing Note for March, 2016.
- D. South Yorkshire Pensions Authority held on 11th February and 17th March, 2016.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____