

Doncaster City Centre Board Terms of Reference

Approved 26/03/2024

Background

1. Doncaster City Centre Board (DCCB), the Board, is a partnership arrangement, assembled to develop and oversee the delivery of a new strategy for Doncaster City Centre and associated Government programmes.
2. Doncaster has an existing Urban Centre Masterplan (2016) and Town Investment Plan (2021), which are being delivered along with a range of other plans, services and projects relating to the City Centre. Doncaster is a participant in new government programmes including the Levelling-Up Fund, Levelling-Up Partnerships and the Long-Term Plan for Towns, which all have a significant focus on Town / City Centres.
3. Given Doncaster's participation in these new programmes, its recently awarded City status, the time that has passed since development of the Urban Centre Masterplan, and changing trends which are impacting the City Centre, a new City Centre Strategy is proposed. This strategy will incorporate a review, consolidation and update of existing spatial plans for the built environment, and, for the first time, encompass wider service delivery priorities and projects.
4. The City Centre Board will take on a direct role in the development of some of these plans and programmes, while also fulfilling a broader role in ensuring that there is a clear and coherent approach to investment and intervention in the City Centre.
5. The Terms of Reference set out:
 - The purpose and role of the Board
 - Board membership
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - A basis for how the decisions of the Board will be made; and
 - The relationship with City of Doncaster Council (CDC)

Purpose

6. The overall purpose of the Board is to strategically lead the development of Doncaster City Centre, maintain oversight of the operational management of the City Centre, promote investment in the City, and lead relevant regeneration programmes in accordance with government guidance.

The role of the Board

7. The City Centre Board is responsible for:

- The development and monitoring of a new City Centre Strategy for Doncaster, which sets out a vision for the City Centre, its future role, and an associated investment and development programme, including the relationship between the City Centre and Doncaster's other towns and communities.
- Developing Doncaster's Long-Term Plan in accordance with the government's Long-Term Plan for Towns programme
- Overseeing the continued delivery of the Doncaster Town Deal
- Contributing to the Levelling-Up Partnership for Doncaster and other associated programmes and project delivery opportunities, where they are relevant to the City Centre, the City Centre Strategy, and the work of the Board.
- Oversight of relevant City Centre work programmes and their alignment with the City Centre strategy; and
- Supporting the promotion of Doncaster as a place to invest, visit and do business.

8. In fulfilling these roles, the Board will:

- Uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life as set out at Appendix 1 (the Nolan Principles)
- Coordinate resources and engage with stakeholders
- Ensure communities' voices are involved in design and decision-making
- Ensure diversity in its engagement with local communities and businesses
- Comply with duties on public authorities including under the Equalities Act, in particular, and the public sector equality duty.

Board Relationship with the City of Doncaster Council

9. The Board is not an incorporated body. It will fulfil an advisory role and the council will act as the accountable body for relevant funding programmes and executing plans.
10. The Mayor and Cabinet are responsible for taking Executive Decisions which fall within the remit of the Local Authority, including approval of the City Centre Strategy and other relevant plans.
11. The Doncaster City Centre Board may make recommendations to CDC's Cabinet from time to time and prior to the submission of relevant plans and business cases.

Membership

12. In line with government guidance, the Board will comprise of:

- An independent Chair
- At least two local Elected Members
- The Member of Parliament for Doncaster Central
- A senior representative from the Police
- Other members at the discretion of the chair from areas such as: Community partners; Local businesses and social enterprises; Cultural, Arts, Heritage and sporting organisations; Public agencies and Anchor Institutions

13. Board Members will be appointed for an initial period of one year from the date of the first Board meeting and membership will be reviewed on an annual basis.
14. The Chair will be appointed by City of Doncaster Council on an annual basis. The Board will appoint a Vice-Chair, to support the work of the Board and deputise at Board Meetings in the absence of the Chair.
15. New appointments to the Board, and re-appointments, will be proposed by the Chair in consultation with the City of Doncaster Council.
16. The Vice-Chair of the Board will be appointed on an annual basis by a vote of Board Members, with the Chair exercising a casting vote if required.
17. A Board Member shall cease to be a member of the DCCB in the following circumstances:
 - Such Board Member gives written notice of their resignation to the Chair
 - Their removal/replacement by the appointing authority/organisation/relevant nominated body.
 - After one year of being a member, unless proposed for re-appointment by the Chair.
 - Such Board Member's bankruptcy making of any arrangement or composition with their creditors, or liquidation, or in the case of an organisation, winding up, liquidation, dissolution or administration or anything analogous to any of the foregoing occurring in relation to a Member in any jurisdiction;
 - Such Board Member is removed from membership by a resolution of the Board that it is in the best interests of the Board that the membership is terminated.
 - Such Board Member misses three consecutive meetings, at which point their membership on the Board will be reviewed by the Chair.

Roles and Responsibilities

18. The Council will fulfil the role of secretariat and:
 - Convene and provide support to the Doncaster City Centre Board, aligning with the governance standards and policies of the local authority including around whistle blowing, conflicts of interest, and complaints.
 - Publish the City Centre Board's governance structure and ways of working.
19. The role of the Chair is to lead the Board in shaping the vision for the City Centre as well as defining the strategy and steps that need to be taken to achieve that vision. The key responsibilities of the post are to:
 - Provide strategic and dynamic leadership for the Board.
 - Lead the Board in overseeing the development of the City Centre Strategy, Long-Term Plan and associated investment plans, and business cases where appropriate.
 - Ensure that all sectors on the Board are actively engaged.
 - Run meetings effectively and fairly ensuring the Board adheres to high standards of ethics and governance at all times.
 - Exert a casting vote in Board Decisions if circumstances so require.

- Review individual Board Member involvement should a member miss three consecutive meetings.
 - Where required, countersign the relevant Summary Business Cases, alongside the accountable body Section 151 Officer.
20. The role of the Board Members is to support the Chair in shaping the vision of the town and ensuring the correct steps are taken to make that vision a reality. The responsibility of Board Members includes:
- Attending Board meetings.
 - Reflecting the agreed view of the Board in discussions with partners and stakeholders.
 - Taking account of views of other stakeholders and being mindful of different views and requirements.
 - Oversee the development of the City Centre Strategy, Long-Term Plan and associated investment plans, and business cases where appropriate.
 - Formally representing the Board in meetings with other bodies and partner organisations.

Conflicts of Interest

21. Any conflicts of interest should be declared to the Lead Council Officer before officially joining the Board. City of Doncaster Council will maintain a register of Board Member interests that will be reviewed annually to ensure it is up to date. The following provisions shall apply to all Board Members should they be faced with conflicts of interest.
22. Should a Board Member be faced with a conflict of interest the person shall immediately declare the nature of the conflict/potential conflict and may be asked to withdraw from any business where the conflict would be relevant.
23. Whenever a person has an interest in a matter to be discussed at a meeting the person may not be:
- Entitled to remain present at the meeting during discussions of the matter.
 - Counted in the quorum in relation to the matter.
 - Entitled to vote on the matter.
24. The Board may, at any time authorise a person to remain in the meeting whilst a matter in which they have or may have a conflict of interest is discussed, provided that the conflict of interest is declared and the person subject to the conflict of interest shall not be entitled to vote on the matter.

Board Member Conduct

25. All members of the Doncaster Town Deal Board shall observe the “Seven Principles of Public Life” and will be bound by their own authority’s/organisations code of conduct in their work on the City Centre Board.

Quorum and Decision Making

26. The council's Lead Officer will consult the Chair and Vice-Chair from time to time on the progress of works required to be undertaken on individual interventions and the wider work programme.
27. The Chair may convene informal meetings of all or some of the Board Members to progress individual interventions and the work programme, where required. The Chair may meet third parties and attend events on any matter pertaining to the City Centre Strategy and interventions to progress activity and outcomes. Informal meetings and engagement with third parties will be reported back to the DCCB.
28. In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair at a formal meeting of the DCCB, the Board will vote and appoint a Chair for that meeting only.
29. A quorum shall be five Board Members, including a representative from the local authority (Officer or Elected Member). Each member of the Board shall have one vote which may be cast on matters considered at the meeting.
30. The general rule about decision-making by the Board is that any decision of the Board must be a majority decision. The Chair will have the casting vote (this refers to whoever is present and discharging the function of Chair for the purpose of the meeting).

Meetings

31. The Board will meet at least quarterly. The Board may meet at other times during the year as agreed between the members of the Board and may approve recommendations via written procedure.
32. Meetings may be held in person or virtually where required. Attendance in person is encouraged.
33. Board meetings will not be open to the public. However, in line with the principles of public life, the operations of the Doncaster City Centre Board will be transparent. This will include publishing Board papers and minutes incorporating and any conflicts of interest reported. The Board will follow City of Doncaster Council governance and finance arrangements when considering private reports, with the default position being that all papers are open to the public.
34. Informal meetings or workshops involving Board Members may take place from time to time to progress workstreams. These activities will be in private and not open to the public. Other persons and external advisers may be invited to attend all or part of any meeting in an observational capacity where appropriate. They shall be entitled to speak at the meeting with the prior permission of the Chair but shall not be entitled to vote.
35. With the prior agreement of the Chair, any Board Member may participate in a meeting by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment whereby all persons

participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in a meeting in this manner shall be deemed to constitute presence in person at such meeting and the Board member shall be entitled to vote and be counted in a quorum accordingly.

Communication and Reporting arrangements

36. Meetings of the Board shall be called by City of Doncaster Council's Lead Officer at the request of the Chair of the Board. The agenda and papers for meetings shall be approved by the Chair. Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda of the matters to be discussed at the meeting shall be forwarded to each member and any other person required to attend no later than five working days before the date of the meeting. Any supporting reports and/or papers shall be sent to each member of the Board and other attendees (as appropriate) at the same time.
37. The proceedings and resolutions of meetings of the Board, including the names of those present and in attendance, shall be minuted by the Secretariat of the Board. Draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated promptly to the Chair. Minutes of meetings of the Board shall be approved in draft form by the Chair and disseminated to the Board. Minutes shall remain in draft until approved by the Board. Draft minutes of meetings will be published following the meeting within 10 working days. Final minutes will be published within 10 working days once approved by the Board, at the next Board meeting.

Respecting Confidentiality

38. On occasions the Board may wish to discuss matters where one or more members wish to retain confidentiality. This may include instances where the Board is to issue a press release or arrange an event. In such circumstances, and where specifically requested by one or more members of the Board, all Board members are expected to retain confidentiality in the context of the matters being considered. Matters may require more stringent levels of confidentiality due to commercial sensitivity, allowing for ideas to be developed without being negatively influenced before external engagement, and the Board may consider the use of non-disclosure agreements in relation to these discussions.

Review

39. The Government may publish further guidance on the operation and function of 'Town Boards' and these Terms of Reference must be reviewed in accordance with any such guidance. The Board may amend these terms of reference at any time and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Ancillary Matters

40. Freedom of Information:

The Board and its activities will be subject to Freedom of Information requests. Support will be provided by City of Doncaster Council to manage and respond to such requests. It is likely that members of the public may have direct questions that relate to how the Board

functions and the decisions it makes. These in the first instance will be directed to the Lead Officer to manage, and where appropriate engage with the Chair and/or the Board.

41. Sub-groups:

In undertaking the work of the Board, it may be deemed beneficial to set up thematic sub-groups, engaging people and organisations outside of the Board to support the development and delivery of relevant plans and Business Cases. The formation of sub-groups will be approved by the Board and members of the sub-groups will adhere to the relevant Sub-Group Terms of Reference, which will be developed and agreed in consultation with the Chair of DCCB.

Appendix 1: The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles) apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also apply to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix 2: Doncaster City Centre Board Governance Structure

