

# Transforming Our Town Centres

## The Local Authority Leadership Perspective

Jo Miller  
Chief Executive  
Doncaster Council



Taking Control of Town Centres  
LGA  
14 February 2019



# Introduction – the Doncaster contribution to today's event

## I will cover....

1. The dimensions of the **Local Authority Leadership Role** required here
2. The role of the **'big vision'** and where we are in delivering Doncaster's
3. Our take on the crucial importance of **'People and Place'** in a Town Centre context
4. Suggestions for a **'Local Authority Leadership Toolkit'** for repurposing Town Centres
5. **A challenge:** We are not 'Taking Control' but 'creating the conditions for transformation'



# Our Town Centre Challenge – sound familiar?

- Unbalanced town centre base:
  - 19% Office Doncaster Vs 50% National Average
  - 43% retail Doncaster vs 26% National Average
- High Street Vacancies
  - 17.8% Doncaster vs 11.6% National average
- Quality Office Space
  - 11.8% Doncaster vs 25.2% National Average
- Footfall in certain areas low and declining
- Little quality Green Space across Town Centre area
- Low volume and quality of Housing
- Parts of Town Centre where market will not intervene without significant stimulus
- Poor physical connections across the Town Centre
- Growth of Rough Sleeping and associated challenges



# BUILDING ON SUCCESS - TOWN CENTRE

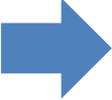


# Animating the spaces – signalling a new cultural purpose



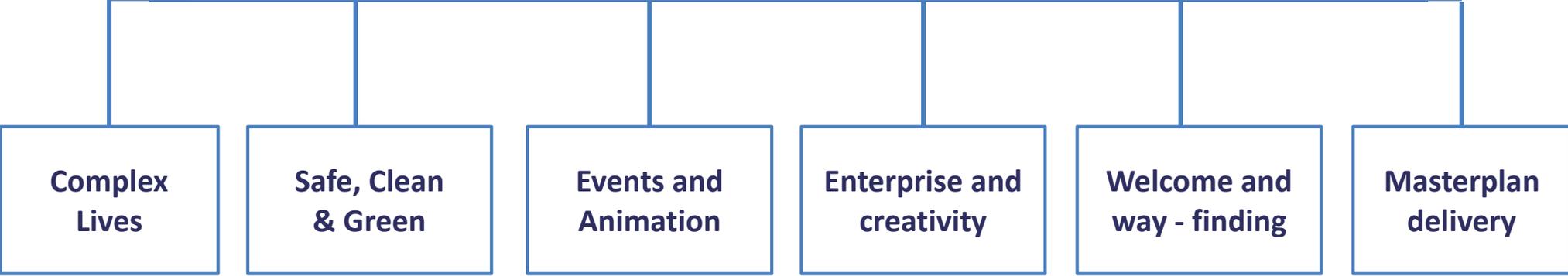
# The Scope of our Leadership role – a ‘whole system’ approach

One, shared objective



Make the Town Centre the enterprising heart of a creative city, increasing footfall, economic activity and visitor numbers – building confidence for future growth

## ‘Urban Centre Team’ – a partnership effort



Supported by:

Gold

Chief Executive Level – Chaired by Jo Miller

Silver

Senior Managers - driving delivery/problem solving

Bronze

Front Line delivery  
With regular business engagement at all levels!



DONCASTER  
A VISION FOR  
THE FUTURE

DONCASTER URBAN  
CENTRE MASTERPLAN





ENTERPRISE  
MARKET  
PLACE

# TAKING AN AWARD WINNING MARKET TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL





# TAKING AN AWARD WINNING MARKET TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL

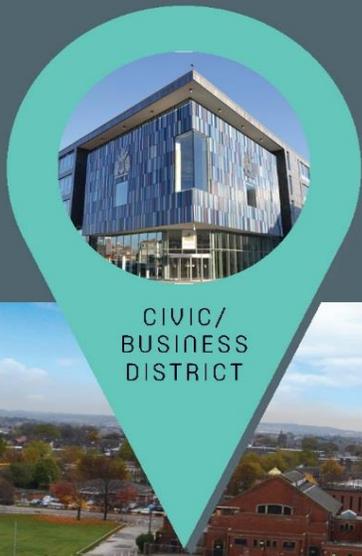






# CREATING A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION





CIVIC/  
BUSINESS  
DISTRICT

# FROM CULTURAL QUARTER TO CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT



# DCLC- new museum / library / gallery



# The importance of 'People and Place' in our approach

## David, 41

**“I should be dead...I've lost a lot of friends on the streets...I know I'm lucky to be alive.”**

David has spent the last 20 years on the streets and on drugs, and in prison and rehab.

He was abused by his father and is beginning to confront his deep-rooted mental health troubles. His self-esteem and self-worth is fragile.

He barely knows himself outside of life on the streets and drugs. Now he is finally in housing, he is uncertain of his surroundings and the life now open to him.

He values his family greatly, and wants his mother to see she does not have to worry about his health, and is determined to be there for his son.

16.54 x 23.39 in

The past two years have seen the growth of major challenges in the UK.....

- Rough sleeping
- Addiction
- Begging
- Spice

This has to be an integral part of our management plans now...requiring....

## Integrated Town Centre Management

# Supporting Rough Sleepers - The Complex Lives Alliance

## Core Integrated Team

- Team Manager
- 3 Intensive Support Workers
- 3 Navigators
- St Leger Homes Single Point of Access Team
- Specialist Drug & Alcohol Worker
- Specialist Mental Health Nurse
- Assertive Street Outreach Team
- NACRO Worker
- Trauma Worker

- Housing Benefits Officer
- Amber Outreach Workers (supporting sex workers)
- CRISIS Skylight Support Workers
- Mental Health Social Worker (aligned)

## Also close work with

- South Yorkshire Police Town Centre
- Town Centre Officers
- Housing Support /Hostel Providers
- Primary Care Doncaster



South Yorkshire  
Community  
Rehabilitation  
Company



# A complex, multi – agency effort – driven by skill and moral purpose



And public support.....

**Changing the way you give changes lives**

Make sure your help counts by giving to **Real Help Doncaster**  
You can also donate by text:  
Text REAL22 £2 to 70070  
(you can change the amount)\*

Alternatively please buy a copy of the Big Issue North from an official vendor

**PROUD OF DONCASTER** @POLICE TD   
**PROUD TO CARE**

\*You must be 16 or over and have the bill payer's permission  
You may be charged for your text message

You can help by not giving money on the street



# The results so far in numbers...and our outstanding challenge

*We have made a big impact – responding to major challenges...*

**115** People are case managed by the team, all were originally rough sleeping.....

**90** Now in settled accommodation and receiving support for the CL Team and Alliance partners (others in Hostels, Prison, sofa surfing)

**67** The peak of a worrying summer spike in rough sleepers – a major challenge in and for the Town Centre

**7** The current number of Town Centre rough sleepers – due to very proactive joint efforts – and still working at it – our goal is 0

*This is not ‘task and finish’ work - we have to stem the flow of demand*

**4** Average number of new rough sleepers per week – prison releases, evictions, newcomers

**54** Known to be at risk of rough sleeping (sofa surfers, unstable housing situations, hospital, planned evictions)

# The Local Authority Leadership Toolkit for Town Centres

## Our experience suggests we need:-

- Realism that no change is not an option
- A bold, proactive intent
- Executive, Political and Commercial courage
- Open minds
- New relationships
- Diverse ideas
- Creativity
- Empathy and moral purpose



We are really clear – Control is not our thing! Leadership is.



Leading Change,  
Conducting the orchestra, setting  
the rhythm.....



Image: Lesley Garrett Orchestra at Cast Doncaster

Thank You

Jo.miller@doncaster.gov.uk

