

Cabinet

Wednesday 19 June 2013 at 2.00 pm

**To be held at the Town Hall,
Pinstone Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Julie Dore	Chair/Leader of the Council
Councillor Isobel Bowler	Culture, Sport & Leisure
Councillor Leigh Bramall	Business, Skills & Development
Councillor Jackie Drayton	Children, Young People & Families
Councillor Harry Harpham	Deputy Leader/Homes & Neighbourhoods
Councillor Mazher Iqbal	Communities & Inclusion
Councillor Mary Lea	Health, Care & Independent Living
Councillor Bryan Lodge	Finance & Resources
Councillor Jack Scott	Environment, Recycling & Streetscene

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Cabinet discusses and takes decisions on the most significant issues facing the City Council. These include issues about the direction of the Council, its policies and strategies, as well as city-wide decisions and those which affect more than one Council service. Meetings are chaired by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Julie Dore.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. on Friday, or you can ring on telephone no. 2734552. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Cabinet meetings. Please see the website or contact Democratic Services for further information.

Cabinet meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Cabinet may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last. If you would like to attend the meeting please report to the First Point Reception desk where you will be directed to the meeting room.

Cabinet decisions are effective six working days after the meeting has taken place, unless called-in for scrutiny by the relevant Scrutiny Committee or referred to the City Council meeting, in which case the matter is normally resolved within the monthly cycle of meetings.

If you require any further information please contact Simon Hughes on 0114 273 4014 or email simon.hughes@sheffield.gov.uk.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**CABINET AGENDA
19 JUNE 2013**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**

Note: (a) Part 2 to the report of the Executive Director, Place, on the Council Homes New Build Programme (item 9) is not available to the public and press because it contains exempt information described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

(b) Appendix C to the report of the Executive Director, Place on the Disposal of Errington Sites B and C, Arbourthorne (item 13) is not available to the public and press because it contains exempt information described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.
- 4. Declarations of Interest**

Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

To approve the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 8 May and 15 May 2013.
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**

To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Items Called-In For Scrutiny**

The Chief Executive will inform the Cabinet of any items called in for scrutiny since the last meeting of the Cabinet.
- 8. Retirement of Staff**

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive.
- 9. Council Homes New Build Programme**

Report of the Executive Director, Place
- 10. Budget Outturn 2012/13**

Report of the Executive Director, Resources.

- 11. Sheffield City Trust's Financing Obligations**
Report of the Executive Director, Resources
- 12. Home to School Transport Policy**
Report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families.
- 13. Disposal of Errington Sites B and C, Arbourthorne**
Report of the Executive Director, Place.

NOTE: The next meeting of Cabinet will be held on Wednesday 17 July 2013 at 2.00 pm

ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

New standards arrangements were introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The new regime made changes to the way that members' interests are registered and declared.

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) -
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Under the Council's Code of Conduct, members must act in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership), including the principle of honesty, which says that 'holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest'.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life.

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously, and has been published on the Council's website as a downloadable document at [-http://councillors.sheffield.gov.uk/councillors/register-of-councillors-interests](http://councillors.sheffield.gov.uk/councillors/register-of-councillors-interests)

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Lynne Bird, Director of Legal Services on 0114 2734018 or email lynne.bird@sheffield.gov.uk

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Cabinet

Meeting held 8 May 2013

PRESENT: Councillors Julie Dore (Chair), Isobel Bowler, Leigh Bramall, Jackie Drayton, Harry Harpham (Deputy Chair), Mazher Iqbal, Mary Lea, Bryan Lodge and Jack Scott

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where it was proposed to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2013 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Petition Requesting the Removal of Land at Jaunty View

An e-petition, containing 14 signatures, was submitted on behalf of the lead signatory stating the following:-

'We the undersigned petition the Council to: Remove the piece of land at the top of Jaunty View as its causing obstruction to people getting in their homes including the elderly and disabled.

The land has no use and causes residents problems getting on and off their drives. The land is muddy through people having to mount it. There is difficulty for the elderly and the disabled getting to their homes due to the obstruction the land causes.'

5.2 **RESOLVED:** That the petition be referred to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development for consideration.

5.3 Public Questions in respect of Jessops Hospital, Redaction of the Highways Contract 'Final Business Case', Use of the Freedom of Information Act in Future Outsourcing Contracts and Parking Permits

Mr Nigel Slack submitted four questions. His first question referred to a recent planning decision in respect of the Jessop Hospital for Women (Edwardian Wing). He commented that he was still awaiting a response to his questions to Full Council on 3rd April which were as follows:-

- How can the Council now avoid the destruction of other listed buildings after setting this precedent?
- Which Officers attended the meetings with Sheffield University?
- What was the subject of these meetings?
- Were the meetings minuted?
- If so have these minutes been published and if not why not?
- Why should we believe the forecasts summoned up by the University and what can the Council do to monitor these forecasts?
- What will they do if the forecasts are wrong?

Mr Slack's second question referred to the review of the redacted sections of the Highways contract 'Final Business Case'. He stated that the first section of the review had now been completed. However, he was concerned about the speed of the review, given that there were eleven further sections to consider. He therefore asked if the review could be concluded at a faster rate?

The third question focused on a previous question Mr Slack had asked in relation to inserting into outsourcing contracts the requirement to comply with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. He had pursued this with his local Member of Parliament, Paul Blomfield. The response he had received from a House of Commons Library Expert was that it would be possible to include a duty to abide by the FOI within specific contract documents, although there was some uncertainty as to how enforceable this would be. The reply also suggested there were a number of ways in which the FOI can be used for current contracts either because the Council holds information about the service or the contractor holds information on behalf of the Council. Mr Slack therefore asked if the Council would digest what this meant for the public in Sheffield when they were making FOI requests and would they publish clear guidelines to assist them when doing so.

Mr Slack's final question related to problems he had been experiencing in being issued with a parking permit and asked if this could be investigated.

In response, Councillor Leigh Bramall, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development stated that he would provide a response to Mr Slack's questions regarding Jessops Hospital within 24 hours.

In relation to the second question, Councillor Bryan Lodge, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources commented that the redaction had been organised by the City Council. This was now with AMEY as the contractor and needed their final approval. This would be available before the end of June.

Regarding the third question, Councillor Lodge reported that there was a clause in contracts requiring compliance with the Freedom of Information Act. However, there were exemptions for commercially confidential and sensitive information. The Council had looked into this matter and contracts now included an approval to

publish information unless the contractor marked an item as confidential.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Julie Dore, added that it was her understanding that an Act of Parliament, such as the Freedom of Information Act, took precedence over Contract Law. She also cautioned that if the Council required the contractor to comply with Freedom of Information requests the contractor would likely include this within their costs causing a greater cost to the Council.

Councillor Bryan Lodge thanked Mr Slack for bringing to his attention problems in respect of issuing parking permits which was a Customer Services issue. He would investigate this and provide a response to Mr Slack.

5.4 Public Question in respect of Responses to Questions at Previous Cabinet Meeting

Mr Barry Bellamy commented that he had did not receive a response to questions that he had asked at the previous Cabinet meeting held on 10 April 2013. Following this meeting, he had emailed Councillor Dore expressing his concern that the questions had not been answered and requesting a private meeting. He had not received an acknowledgement or reply to this email.

Mr Bellamy further stated that the High Green Action Team had been waiting seven months for responses to questions asked at the Cabinet meeting held on 5 November 2012.

He thanked Councillor Mary Lea, Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living, for her response to a request for a meeting in respect of issues related to Sheltered Housing and for investigating the issues raised at the meeting. Sheltered Housing residents' concerns expressed at this meeting had been passed on to Sheffield Homes and Mr Bellamy queried whether these had been passed on to the relevant people.

In response, Councillor Julie Dore apologised for not responding to Mr Bellamy's email. There had been some confusion as to who would respond to the email. She stated that if Mr Bellamy submitted the questions he believed he had not had responses to in writing she would respond.

Regarding the issues in respect of Sheltered Housing, these had been referred to Councillor Harry Harpham, Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods. She requested that Mr Bellamy provide details of the officers with which he had been corresponding on this matter. Councillor Lea and Councillor Harpham were investigating the issues raised by residents and a response would be provided shortly.

6. ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY

- 6.1 The Cabinet noted that (i) no items had been called-in for Scrutiny since the last meeting of the Cabinet and (ii) the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 24th April 2013

had considered reports of the Executive Director, Place in relation to Rural Broadband and Modernisation of Planning and Highways Committee's.

6.2 Emily Standbrook-Shaw, Policy Officer (Scrutiny) attended the meeting and reported that, in relation to the Modernisation of Planning and Highways Committee's report, the Committee had resolved to take no further action in relation to the Cabinet decisions in respect of Rural Broadband and the Modernisation of Planning and Highways Committees.

6.3 However, in relation to Rural Broadband the Scrutiny Committee had requested the following:-

(a) a report be submitted to the September meeting of the Committee outlining progress made in facilitating communities to work together to develop local solutions;

(b) the Children, Young People and Families portfolio actively engage with work being carried out around digital inclusion, and seek solutions to assist those pupils who are disadvantaged by lack of access to broadband; and

(c) the relevant Cabinet Member raise the issue at City level.

6.4 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

(a) notes the decision of the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to take no further action on the called-in decisions on Rural Broadband and Modernisation of the Planning and Highways Committees; and

(b) notes the requests of the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in relation to rural broadband that:-

- a report be submitted to the September meeting of the Committee outlining progress made in facilitating communities to work together to develop local solutions;
- the Children, Young People and Families Portfolio actively engage with work being carried out around digital inclusion, and seek solutions to assist those pupils who are disadvantaged by lack of access to broadband; and
- the relevant Cabinet Member raise the issue at City Region level.

7. **RETIREMENT OF STAFF**

The Chief Executive submitted a report on Council staff retirements.

RESOLVED: That this Cabinet :-

(a) places on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the City

Council by the following staff in the Portfolios below:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Years' Service</u>
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Children, Young People and Families

Carolyn Spray	Service Manager	30
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Communities

Marie Foroughan	Provider Service Worker	28
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Margaret Haddon	Workforce Development Co-Ordinator	42
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Denise Milbourne	Provider Service Worker	22
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Julie Morton	Business Support Manager	33
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Carole O'Brien	Kitchen Assistant	34
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Place

Robert Wheeler	Technical Officer, Parks and Public Realm	34
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Resources

Lyn Vickers	Business Development Officer	33
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Julie Smith	Driver/Attendant	25
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(b) extends to them its best wishes for the future and a long and happy retirement; and

(c) directs that an appropriate extract of this resolution under the Common Seal of the Council be forwarded to them.

8. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2013/14

8.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report outlining the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel so as to provide Cabinet with the opportunity to make recommendations to the Annual Meeting of the City Council on the Members' Allowances Scheme to be agreed for the Municipal Year 2013/14 and onward.

8.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet

(a) refers the report to the Annual Meeting of the Council, to be held on 15 May 2013;

- (b) notes that it is the intention of the Administration not to apply to Councillors' allowances the 1% pay rise awarded to Council employees and all public sector workers for 2013/14; and
- (c) notes that the administration would consult with all political groups on the Council in respect of the report and its recommendations, prior to the annual meeting of the Council.

9. ARBOURTHORNE FIELDS REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME

9.1 The Executive Director, Place and Executive Director, Communities submitted a joint report seeking authority from Cabinet to use allocations from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the Capital Programme and the Local Growth Fund (LGF), to complete rehousing and demolition on the Arbourthorne Fields Redevelopment Scheme as set out in the report and supported by Cabinet in 2008.

9.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) authorises the delivery of the Arbourthorne Fields Development Scheme as set out in the report;
- (b) notes the impact continuing the scheme will have to the HRA 30-year business plan;
- (c) approval be given for the acquisition, vacation and demolition of all the properties listed in Appendix 1 of the report and shown on the plan at Appendix 2;
- (d) approval be given for the acquisition, vacation and demolition of 13 no. garages, listed at Appendix 1 of the report and shown on the plan at Appendix 2;
- (e) authorises the Director of Housing Services (or such other Director as is nominated by the Executive Director, Communities) from time to time to stop letting such of the properties listed in Appendix 1 of the report, in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Development Services as to what he considers desirable to meet the needs of the Redevelopment Scheme;
- (f) resolves that each demolition sub-phase shall be a demolition phase for the purposes of awarding priority under the Lettings Policy;
- (g) authorises the Director of Regeneration and Development Services to declare demolition sub phases and in consultation with the Director of Care and Support (or such other Director as is nominated by the Executive Director, Communities) set the date in a declared demolition sub-phase from which priority will be awarded;

- (h) authorises the Director of Care and Support (or such other Director as is nominated by the Executive Director, Communities) to waive the Lettings Policy in respect of nominations to the Sanctuary Older Persons Housing Scheme of residents of undeclared phases as outlined in the report;
- (i) authorises the repurchase of homes not within a declared demolition phase, where the resident is to be rehoused within the Sanctuary Older Persons' Housing Scheme, Arbourthorne, as shown on the plan in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (j) authorises the Director of Regeneration and Development Services, in exceptional circumstances, outwith resolutions (f), (g), (h), to agree the repurchase of homes not within a declared demolition phase;
- (k) authorises the Director of Regeneration and Development Services to vary or alter the boundaries of demolition sub phases in accordance with the needs of the Redevelopment Scheme;
- (l) resolves that discretionary home loss payments, under Section 29 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 be made to tenants of Council owned properties, listed in Appendix 1 of the report who have been in occupation for 12 months at the time of the displacement, and discretionary payments made to cover any removal expenses under Section 26 of the Housing Act 1985;
- (m) resolves that Notice Seeking Possession may be served under Ground 10 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 on any tenant of the properties listed at Appendix 1 of the report which falls within a declared demolition phase;
- (n) authorises the Director of Capital and Major Projects to (i) negotiate and agree terms for the acquisition of dwellings listed in Appendix 1 of the report, and any other property, not owned by the City Council, and (ii) instruct the Director of Legal and Governance to complete the necessary legal documentation in respect of the acquisition of such properties;
- (o) authorises the Director of Capital and Major Projects to make home loss payments to owner occupiers or tenants in privately owned properties who have been in occupation for 12 months at the time of displacement and basic loss payments to owners as required under the Land Compensation Act 1973 together with the appropriate disturbance payments;
- (p) authorises the Director of Capital and Major Projects to (i) negotiate the surrender of any commercial leases including electrical substations, telecommunications and other service equipment if required; and (ii) instruct the Director of Legal and Governance to complete the necessary legal documentation;
- (q) authorises the Director of Care and Support (or other such Director as is nominated by the Executive Director, Communities) to designate all

premises on the Arbourthorne and Norfolk Park Estates as within a Demolition Band within the meaning of the Lettings Policy for residents at Arbourthorne Fields awarded rehousing priority, vary or terminate the Demolition Band as he considers necessary in the interests of the redevelopment programme;

- (r) notes that a capital approval submission will be made via the monthly budget monitoring report for the capital expenditure associated with this proposal;
- (s) resolves that the Private Sector Housing Policy be amended, as set out in Appendix 4 to the report;
- (t) resolves that the decisions delegated to the Regional Loans Manager within the policy are exercised in respect of Arbourthorne Fields in consultation with the Director of Development and Regeneration Services; and
- (u) resolves that the rents of the 193 Council owned properties, set out in Appendix 1 be frozen upon the declaration of the appropriate demolition phase or sub phase as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and the plan at Appendix 2.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 9.3.1 To deliver the Arbourthorne Fields Redevelopment Scheme, as set out in the report.
- 9.3.2 To deliver a 'whole estate solution' for the Arbourthorne '5M' properties, which the alternative options do not offer.
- 9.3.3 To provide certainty to the residents of the remaining 246 properties (193 Council and 53 Privately Owned) affected by the Arbourthorne Fields Redevelopment Scheme.
- 9.3.4 To demolish unsustainable housing and create the opportunity to redevelop the area with high quality, sustainable new homes.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1 Do Nothing

This is not an option available to the Council, primarily due to the requirement for the Council to bring its housing stock up to the Decent Homes Standard. This option has therefore not been explored in any detail.

9.4.2 Retain Stock

This option involves carrying out Decent Homes and external additional investment works to the 193 Council owned 5M properties.

The cost of bringing the properties up to the Decent Homes Standard and making them structurally sound would be approximately £8.98 million.

The Council would receive net rental income from these properties of approximately £0.3 million per year.

The benefits of this option are as follows:-

- Council properties remain viable for 30 years
- Council tenants receive investment to their properties
- 193 Council properties retained in the HRA, with associated asset values

The risks and issues associated with this option are:-

- Despite this significant level of investment, this option still does not provide a comprehensive solution for the whole estate.
- Fundamental issues with layout and the run down environment of the estate are not addressed
- Retaining existing stock will mean no diversified housing offer for the area
- This option does not deliver the corporate strategic outcome of a 'A Great Place to Live'.
- Investment only benefits the Council owned properties, and does not provide a solution for the remaining 53 privately owned properties
- Failure of private owners to maintain their own properties may result in Council investment being compromised by nature of terrace type construction of 5M properties
- Similarly, the 'pepper potted' nature of privately owned properties will have a negative effect on the appearance of the neighbourhood, if these properties are not maintained
- Existing development sites on Phase 1 are less likely to be attractive to developers, due to the retention of existing stock and the reduced land package on offer

This option has therefore been discounted because it does not offer a whole estate solution, despite significant investment in Council stock. It will not deliver transformational change for the neighbourhood and will result in the retention of unsustainable properties that will require further substantial investment in the future. Privately owned properties will receive no investment, which will have a detrimental effect on the overall appearance of the neighbourhood.

10. SHEFFIELD'S PUBLIC HEALTH BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR 2013-14

10.1 The Director of Public Health submitted a report setting out proposals for the effective use of Sheffield's Public Health Budget for 2013/14 in support of Sheffield's vision and ambitions for Public Health.

10.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) approves the use of Sheffield City Council's £29.7m Public Health Budget for 2013/14 in support of Public Health outcomes and in line with Sheffield's

distributed model of Public Health. This will cover staffing, commissioned Public Health services and related overheads;

- (b) delegate to the Executive Director, Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living, decisions on the use of any unallocated Public Health Grant (subject to negotiations on contracts);
- (c) authorises the Director of Public Health and relevant Executive Directors, in consultation with relevant Cabinet Members, for the purposes of finalising detailed in-year savings, to negotiate detailed arrangements with providers in support of the overall savings envelope included in the report; and
- (d) gives support for Elected Members to undertake a fundamental review of all Public Health investment during 2013/14, which will determine the use of this budget post April 2014. The review will be supported by the Director of Public Health and relevant Executive Directors with subsequent proposals and decisions on the ring-fenced Public Health grant to form part of the Council's 2014/15 Budget planning process.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 10.3.1 A guiding principle for Sheffield's Public Health Transition was to ensure a smooth transfer for staff, providers of Public Health services and service users. For this reason (and in line with the HR staff transfer scheme) existing contractual commitments to the staff that transferred must be honoured.
- 10.3.2 With some exceptions determined the PCT in consultation with relevant Executive Directors, the majority of Public Health services have continued into the 2013/14 financial year, but with the Council as the lead commissioner. These include both commissioned treatment services (substance misuse treatments and sexual health) and Public Health programmes.
- 10.3.3 In order that Public Health funding can be used to support a broader range of Public Health activity and services, and tackle the wider determinants of health a reduction in the value of some contracts is proposed later on in the financial year. The changes proposed have been subject to impact assessments and informed by provider feedback through equalities impact assessments and consultation. Delegations will allow for outstanding negotiations with providers on how required savings are achieved in-year. The proposed Member-led review will build on Member work to date and allow for Elected Members to consider Public Health investment in the round and will inform priorities and funding proposals for 2014/15 onwards.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 10.4.1 Sheffield City Council has the option of maintaining current spending levels on existing (previous PCT) Public Health commissioned services throughout the financial year. However, this would not allow for the Public Health resources to be employed to support a broader range of activity in support of Public Health

outcomes. This would mean ending other valuable Public Health activity altogether and would undermine the Council's 2013/14 budget commitments.

- 10.4. The Council also had the option of seeking to secure savings from 1st April 2013. However, in line with the Sheffield Compact and our Best Value Duty it was agreed that providers would be consulted on proposals and given notice of the Council's intentions.
- 10.4. The legal basis of this staff transfer means that Sheffield City Council must honour the contracts/terms and conditions of the staff that have transferred to us through the transition.
- 10.4. It should be noted that there is no overall reduction on Public Health spend in 2013/14. This is a ring-fenced grant and will all be used in support of Sheffield's Public Health outcomes. Where proposed, the savings on contract value will free up capacity for a broader range of activity in support of Public Health outcomes.
- 10.4. Regarding delegations, the alternative was to take individual contract decisions through the Cabinet process. Given the timescales involved and the pressure to identify savings this was not recommended.

11. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2012/13 (MONTH 11)

11.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report providing the month 11 monitoring statement on the City Council's Revenue and Capital Budget for 2012/13.

11.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) notes the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2012/13 budget position;
- (b) approves the proposed additions to the capital programme listed in Appendix 2, including the procurement strategies and delegations of authority to the Director of Commercial Services or Delegated Officer, as appropriate, to award the necessary contracts following stage approval by Capital Programme Group;
- (c) approve the proposed variations and slippage in Appendix 2 of the report within its delegated authority; and
- (d) notes the variations to project authorities exercised by EMT and service directors under their delegated authority, the emergency approvals and the latest position on the Capital Programme.

11.3 Reasons for Decision

11.3.1 To formally record changes to the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme

and gain Member approval for changes within Financial Regulations and to reset the Capital Programme in line with latest information.

11.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 11.4.1 A number of alternative courses of action are considered as part of the process undertaken by Officers before decisions are recommended to Members. The recommendations made to Members represent what Officers believe to be the best options available to the Council, in line with Council priorities, given the constraints on funding and the use to which funding is put within the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

12. FUTURE USE OF WISEWOOD SECONDARY SCHOOL AND SPIDER PARK

- 12.1 The Executive Director, Place and Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families submitted a joint report outlining work undertaken so far and recommending a swap of land uses between part of the former school site, on which a new children's play area would be developed, and part of Spider Park, which would be sold and developed for housing to fund the new play area. The report also recommended the adoption of a sustainable solution for continued community use of the former Wisewood Secondary School Playing Fields.

12.2 RESOLVED: That Cabinet:-

- (a) resolves that the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields, shown at Appendix A in the report, and those areas of the former school site shown edged red at Appendix B in the report, be declared surplus to the requirements of the Children, Young People and Families portfolio;
- (b) resolves that, subject to the outcome of public consultation and the provision of replacement open space, the public open space at Spider Park shown edged red at Appendix C in the report be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council;
- (c) resolves that the former playing fields, shown at Appendix A in the report, be licensed or leased to an appropriate junior football club endorsed by Sheffield or Hallamshire FA;
- (d) approves the former school library building being leased to RIVA Project for use as a project base;
- (e) resolves that the land, shown in green at Appendix B in the report, be leased to RIVA Project for use as a garden area to be developed and maintained for the use of the community;
- (f) resolves that the former Wisewood Secondary School caretaker's house be leased to the local District Nurses for use as a drop-in office base;
- (g) authorises the Director of Capital and Major Projects to agree final terms for

the disposals above, including the variation of any boundaries as required, and to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the necessary legal documentation;

- (h) resolves that the land, shown in blue at Appendix B to the report, be developed as a new play area of the scale and quality indicated by the design now shown in Appendix E of the report; and
- (i) notes that the Director of Culture and Environment will bring forward, as part of the monthly budget report, a capital approval submission to deliver the new play area using the resources identified in Section 8.3 of this report and taking into account and changes arising from public consultation.

12.3 Reasons for Decision

- 12.3.1 Implementing the proposals in this report would contribute towards the outcome of making Sheffield a Great Place to Live, as identified in Standing Up for Sheffield, the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 12.3.2 A swap of land uses between the former Wisewood Secondary School site and Spider Park would allow the creation of a better quality play area in a safer, more accessible location.
- 12.3.3 It would also allow the Council to realise a greater capital receipt than if it were to sell part of the former school site, which is not suitable for housing due to the proximity of the new floodlit sports pitch.
- 12.3.4 The development of a new children's play area on part of the former school site would help meet an identified shortage of children's play in the local area and complete the creation of a recreational hub including sports centre, artificial sports pitch and community garden.
- 12.3.5 The development of a small amount of housing at the top of Spider Park would provide natural surveillance over the remaining parkland and make the thoroughfare between Dial House Road and Sevenfields Lane safer to use.
- 12.3.6 Licensing or leasing the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields to a Football Association endorsed football club would meet central government requirements regarding the protection of former school playing fields as a community resource and ensure that sufficient investment can be secured for the sustainable maintenance of the amenity for the people of Sheffield.

12.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 12.4.1 The alternative option is the original option: to dispose of part of the Wisewood school site and to invest limited funds in Spider Park. A masterplan for Spider Park was created in 2010 showing how the existing open space could potentially be developed following the removal of the compound that was then in place. However, to implement that masterplan would cost more than the proposed play area at the Wisewood School site, and without the option to generate funding

through residential development at Spider Park this would not be a viable proposition.

- 12.4.2 The potential to generate a significant receipt from the surplus land on the school site is limited given that housing would not be acceptable and retail use could threaten the existing local centre. In any event the proposed play area at Wisewood would be superior to an enhanced Spider Park because of the safer, more accessible location.

13. ENDCLIFFE PARK CAFE - PROPOSED LEASE RENEWAL

- 13.1 The Executive Director, Place submitted a report seeking Cabinet approval for the Council to enter into a new 5-year lease agreement at Endcliffe Park café. Endcliffe Park is held charitably and therefore consent from Cabinet Members acting as Charity Trustees was required for this renewal. In line with the charitable conditions applicable, all income received by the City Council from the café operation was directly reinvested back into the park to assist with its upkeep and maintenance.

- 13.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet acting as Charity Trustees for Endcliffe Park:-

- (a) approves the grant of a new lease for the café on the terms outlined in the report subject to the approval of the Charity Commission and delegates authority to the Director of Capital and Major Projects in consultation with the Director of Culture and Environment to complete negotiations to agree terms and conclude this matter; and
- (b) authorises the Director of Capital and Major Projects to instruct the Director of Legal and Governance to prepare and complete the necessary legal documentation in accordance with the agreed terms and Charity Commission requirements.

13.3 Reasons for Decision

- 13.3.1 The existing café operator is popular with the general public and encourages visitors to the park. Mr Charlesworth works well with the Council and has also been involved in supporting local fund raising activities to benefit the park and its users.

- 13.3.2 The lessee has performed his obligations under his previous Lease to provide an effective service. This service offer has now been expanded further, following investment to provide a new outdoor seating area for customers last year.

- 13.3.3 The revised extended terms now being offered, along with the market rental value agreed, better satisfies the Park's charitable conditions to achieve "best consideration" overall.

13.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 13.4. 1 The Council could market the property with a view to completing an open tender exercise, allowing other businesses the opportunity to run the café. However, any change of operator may present TUPE implications (Transfer of Undertakings: Protection of Employment regulations) for the staff currently employed. Any tender exercise together with marketing is likely to be a lengthy process, be publicly unpopular, will present additional costs, and expose the charity to significant risks. The current operator continues to enjoy significant public support, and based upon the previous tender process, it is anticipated that any proposed change of operator for the Endcliffe Park Café would be met with significant public interest and concern.

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Cabinet

Meeting held 15 May 2013

PRESENT: Councillors Julie Dore (Chair), Isobel Bowler, Jackie Drayton, Harry Harpham (Deputy Chair), Mazher Iqbal, Mary Lea and Bryan Lodge

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Leigh Bramall and Jack Scott.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

2.1 RESOLVED: That the appointment of Councillor Julie Dore as Chair and Councillor Harry Harpham as Deputy Chair be noted.

3. TO FIX DAY AND TIME OF MEETING

3.1 RESOLVED: That meetings of the Cabinet be held on a monthly cycle (with the exception of August) on the following Wednesdays at 2.00 p.m:-

- 19 June 2013
- 17 July 2013
- 18 September 2013
- 16 October 2013
- 20 November 2013
- 18 December 2013
- 15 January 2014
- 19 February 2014
- 19 March 2014
- 16 April 2014

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

Report of: Chief Executive

Date: 19th June 2013

Subject: Staff Retirements

Author of Report: Simon Hughes, Democratic Services

Summary: To report the retirement of staff across the Council's various Portfolios

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- (a) place on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the City Council by members of staff in the various Council Portfolios and referred to in the attached list;
 - (b) extend to them its best wishes for the future and a long and happy retirement; and
 - (c) direct that an appropriate extract of the resolution now made under the Common Seal of the Council be forwarded to those staff above with over twenty years service.
-

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: OPEN

RETIREMENT OF STAFF

1. To report the retirement of the following staff from the Council's Service and to convey the Council's thanks for their work:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Years' Service</u>
<u>Children, Young People and Families</u>		
Christopher Cresswell	Teacher, Forge Valley Community School	33
Janet Hamilton	Headteacher, Reignhead Primary School	30
Beryl Harlow	Assistant Headteacher, Forge Valley Community School	41
Lynne Hodgkinson	Teacher, Holt House Infant School	32
Anna James	Teacher, Holt House Infant School	21
Cath James	Headteacher, Meadowhead School	37
Faizani Khan	Teacher, Holt House Infant School	26
Eileen Vernon	Teacher, Forge Valley Community School	21
Mick Wing	Business Manager, Forge Valley Community School	38
<u>Communities</u>		
Howard Waddicor	Commissioning Officer	37
<u>Place</u>		
Sylvia Atkinson	Personal Assistant to Head of Planning	38
John Birch	Nursery Operative	46
Kevin Cheetham	Outdoor Events Manager	33
Simon Holmesmith	Programme Director	26
Peter Marks	Gardener	36
Roger Rowland	Gardener	32

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Years' Service</u>
Neil Wilkinson	Pest Control Manager	28

Resources

Milana Brady	Finance Officer	30
David Fitzpatrick	Customer Service Agent	31
Carol Hudson	Assistant Finance Officer	38
Christopher Whitney	Customer Service Agent	33

2. To recommend that Cabinet:-

- (a) place on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the City Council by the above – mentioned members of staff in the Portfolios stated :-
- (b) extend to them its best wishes for the future and a long and happy retirement; and
- (c) direct that an appropriate extract of the resolution now made under the Common Seal of the Council be forwarded to those staff above with over twenty years service.

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

Joint Report of: Executive Director, Place and Executive Director,
Communities

Date: 19th June 2013

Subject: Council Homes New Build Programme

Author of Report: Simon Holmesmith 2037128

Summary: It is proposed to kick start the programme for new build Council housing, as a Phase 1, with the acquisition of 30 homes for social rent from the Sheffield Housing Company. This acquisition is to be paid for from monies identified in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan which includes income generated from changes brought forward under the new Right to Buy programme. It is proposed that a second phase of the New Build programme is considered in tandem with these acquisitions in order to establish a project team to further develop the brief for options to deliver a further 45 new build properties on Council owned land.

Reasons for Recommendations:

To bring forward earlier, and to increase the supply of much needed social rented housing in the City, contributing to making these three neighbourhoods a great place to live by ensuring continued investment into the Council's new housing stock and supporting broader economic regeneration.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

Approve the acquisition of 30 new build homes from the Sheffield Housing Company as set out in section 4 to this report as being Phase 1 of the Council's new build programme as identified in the HRA Business Plan 2012/17.

Delegate authority to the Director of Capital and Major Projects to negotiate and agree terms for the individual purchases of these 30 homes in consultation with the Director of Commissioning and to instruct the Director of Legal and Governance Services to complete the necessary legal documentation in respect of the acquisition of those properties.

Background Papers:
Cabinet Report of 16/1/2013 – Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012-17 Update Report

Category of Report: Part 1 Open; Part 2 Closed

Part 2 not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES Cleared by: Paul Schofield
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by: David Sellars
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by: Ian Oldershaw
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
YES
Human rights Implications
NO:
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES
Economic impact
YES
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
YES
Area(s) affected
Parson Cross, Norfolk Park and Shirecliffe
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Cllr Harry Harpham
Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee if decision called in
Safer and Stronger Communities
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
YES
Press release
YES

COUNCIL HOMES NEW BUILD PROGRAMME Part 1 – OPEN

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 A new build programme of 75 new Council homes was identified in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012-17 Update Report and approved by Cabinet in January 2013. It is proposed to kick start the programme for new build Council housing, as a Phase 1, with the acquisition of 30 homes for social rent from the Sheffield Housing Company (SHC). This acquisition is to be paid for from monies already identified in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan combined with income generated from changes brought forward under the new Right to Buy programme. The total cost of these acquisitions is set out in part 2 to this report. It is proposed that a second phase of the New Build programme is considered in tandem with these acquisitions in order to establish a project team to further develop the brief for options to deliver the remaining 45 new build properties on Council owned land. This will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.
- 1.2 The new build homes to be acquired are a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom properties which include 9 built to mobility standards of which 5 will be to full wheelchair standard. All these properties have been developed using the Council's own Planning and Phase Briefs which sets a high commitment to quality and sustainability having achieved Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 and having been awarded a 'Very Good' certificate by the British Research Establishment (BRE) under its BREEAM Communities framework; one of the first housing schemes in the country to achieve this. The Council has sought to play a significant role in the design of these properties and the layout of the schemes as a whole.

2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE

- 2.1 A new build programme of 75 new Council homes over the next 3 years, the first 30 of which are proposed to be delivered by acquisitions from the SHC, will provide both new and existing tenants with a greater choice and availability of new homes which will be designed to a high quality, will be sustainable, capable of responding to changing life styles and needs and ultimately be cheaper to run. The properties will be available in the Norfolk Park, Parson Cross and Shirecliffe areas of the City within the first phase of acquisitions and will be for social rent. Work will continue to examine other areas of high housing need within the City in order that new properties can continue to be matched to specific demand within the subsequent phase of development.
- 2.2 This new build programme will also promote and help to support the

SHC in the use of local labour in the construction of the new homes as well as providing an opportunity for apprenticeship schemes and supporting local training initiatives. It will also represent a considerable boost to the local and regional economy.

3.0 OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.1 The outcome of the first phase of this new build programme will be the provision of 30 new homes composed of 20 x 2 bedroom and 10 x 3 bedroom properties spread across the mixed tenure development sites being developed by the SHC at Norfolk Park (4 homes), Falstaff (14 homes) and Shirecliffe (12 homes). This includes 9 houses built to mobility standard of which 5 will be to full wheelchair specification. All properties are being built to Lifetime Homes standards; this makes the properties more able to cater for the tenant's changing needs. They are also to Level 3, Code for Sustainable Homes which means that they should be cheaper and more efficient to run, including the provision of rainwater recycling and photovoltaic panels to produce on site 'green' electricity. All these many attributes including how the broader schemes have been developed and laid out has also contributed to the award of the BRE 'Very Good' certificate.
- 3.2 The second phase of this programme will build on the lessons the Council has learnt from helping to develop the SHC schemes particularly in terms of sustainability, design quality and the use of the BREEAM framework. Work is currently being undertaken to develop the brief for the deliver of the remaining 45 homes. In addition, with the Council itself in the position to potentially let a series of building contracts, it will be well placed to continue to support a significant level of local training places and apprenticeships as well as requirements for local labour and the promotion of local supply chains. These are all areas which the SHC is also at present promoting and thus the purchase of properties from the SHC will clearly help to support such initiatives.
- 3.3 Providing new council housing will allow the Housing Revenue Account to retain, and subsequently invest any additional Right to Buy receipts generated as a result of the Government's 'reinvigoration' of the Right to Buy scheme. It will also provide an additional rental stream to the Council over the long term, and help to deliver additional New Homes Bonus (as a result of completing new homes in the City) which can be reinvested elsewhere through the Council's Local Growth Fund initiative to promote local neighbourhood regeneration and additional new homes across the tenures.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The report to Cabinet in January 2013 on the updating of the HRA Business Plan contained within it a commitment to a new build programme of 75 new Council homes starting in 2013/14. This was to represent around £9.5M additional activity over a 3 year period. Some of this cost will be met from the capital receipts gained from the new Right to Buy programme and under the terms of the agreement signed up to by the Council, this should equate to up to 30% of the costs of providing new affordable housing. The proposal to acquire some new build properties, as described in section 4(5) of the HRA Business Plan is being proposed as a phase 1. It is considered that the acquisition of new build properties from the Sheffield Housing Company is an efficient way to deliver some initial outcomes required under the programme described in the HRA Business Plan; that is the provision of a new build programme of 75 new Council homes. By using the monies generated from the Right to Buy receipts for additional social housing – a commitment which the Council has already signed up for, this enables the HRA funds to be stretched further than would otherwise be the case. This advantages the HRA by purchasing high quality new properties at a discount, the latter which is described further in Part 2 to this report, which can then be let at social rents and which increase the Council's housing portfolio.

Purchasing properties from the SHC has a number of advantages both in terms of the quality of the product and value for money. The quality as identified in 3.1 above has been described in the Council's own development brief and in the BREEAM framework which is concerned with the sustainability of the totality of the development as enshrined in various legal agreements with the SHC. In addition the properties represent good value to the HRA. The construction price for the properties (which makes up the majority of the sales price) has been subject to the initial tender evaluation in picking a partner for the SHC to begin with. This was undertaken by the Council's own Capital Delivery Service. These prices were further reviewed by the Council's Strategic Partnership Board at land transfer on the basis of a further tender exercise by the partner which was audited by Gleeds, an external cost consultancy. Current valuations of work in progress are being made by Hall and Partners, a quantity surveying firm retained by the SHC who are checking this against the agreed contract sum. In addition this delivery mechanism for Phase1 minimises the cost of delivery from an internal Council point of view relative to the resources already expended which are not a direct charge to the HRA.

- 4.2 As part of the first phase of delivery, negotiations have been held with the SHC to acquire 30 properties across the three sites which they are currently developing with a mix as described in section 3.1. This will represent a bulk purchase, deemed to be linked transactions and thus the full value of the total of all the transactions should be taken account of when considering the appropriate approvals route. In addition, because this is a linked transaction, Stamp Duty Land Tax

(SDLT) is likely to be charged on the total at a higher rate rather than on individual transactions. However it is considered that the level of discount offered by the SHC more than compensates for this higher rate – the detail of such discount and the proposed purchase is further described in Part 2 (Closed) of this report.

- 4.3 The three SHC schemes are already of mixed tenure with a range of properties for market sale, some now utilising the Government's new 'Help to Buy' and other 'shared equity' products in addition to properties being developed for Great Places Housing Association for affordable rent.

Work is currently being undertaken to develop a brief for the delivery of the remaining 45 homes which will explore a number of options to be presented to a future Member Task and Finish Group.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has the power to provide housing accommodation by virtue of Part II of the Housing Act 1985. This includes a specific power to acquire houses under section 9 of that Act. Such accommodation must then be accounted for within the Housing Revenue Account.

Once the properties are let as Council housing on secure tenancies they will be subject to the statutory Right to Buy (RTB) which potentially has implications of financial loss for the Council as the tenant will potentially be entitled to buy the property at a discounted price.

However, the Cost Floor rule means that the discount must not reduce the purchase price below specified costs incurred by the Council in respect of the property, in the 15 years prior to the date of disposal. These costs include the purchase cost and any other major repair and refurbishment costs.

If the right is exercised in the first 15 years, these costs would include the purchase cost, meaning that the purchase price could not be lower than the price paid by the Council.

In subsequent years, the cost floor would only be applicable if the Council had undertaken any major repair and refurbishment works at the Property. If not, the discount due to a tenant buying under RTB would not be reduced to take account of the costs incurred. However, it may be possible for the Council to reach an agreement with the Secretary of State as regards the capital receipt for such sales.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The financial implications, both capital and revenue, of this proposal are described in detail in the closed Part 2 of this report. The spend

profile itself may vary to some degree based on the delivery of the build programme by the SHC but should broadly be within the parameters suggested.

The HRA Business Plan agreed by Cabinet on 16th January 2013 approved a new build programme of 75 houses and this project will deliver 40% of that target and the revenue implications have been included in that plan.

This transaction will commit the Council to certain capital expenditure over the next two years which is the subject of a separate Capital Approval submission. The project will be funded by contributions from the Housing Revenue Account using future receipts from council house sales under the "Right to Buy" scheme and a balancing amount of HRA Resources/Prudential Borrowing.

The Council has a 50% shareholding in the SHC and will be entitled to a dividend if the directors think the financial performance warrants a distribution. This project will help contribute to the successful financial performance of the company.

The project represents value for money compared to other options such as refurbishment. By using an experienced building company this will also reduce the risk of cost over runs if the Council were to build the homes from scratch.

7.0 PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Whilst the price of purchase has been agreed with the SHC on the basis of a single deal, it is proposed to acquire these properties individually by buying them on a long lease from the SHC, similarly to any other house purchaser acquiring an interest in land. Estate service charges will remain payable on the properties on Norfolk Park and on Falstaff to cover the maintenance of open spaces and some communal areas. There are no service charges on the Shirecliffe scheme. Charges for conveyancing carried out by the Council will also be expected to be covered as a project cost.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The first is that the Council itself should undertake to design and build all of the 75 homes proposed in the programme. Such a significant new build programme invariably takes a considerable time to set up with the need to identify parcels of land, complete project and design briefs, appoint design teams, undertake public consultation, achieve planning permission, specify and tender the project and oversee construction. All this requires considerable project management resources which are already under pressure within the Council. Leading a new build development from start to finish also carries a higher financial risk compared to acquisitions. At this point it is still expected to be able to deliver the full programme within the 3 year

timescale described in the HRA Business Plan however it should be remembered that starting from scratch will make this less easy to complete.

There are considerable advantages over time to the Council designing and building its own homes as it would have greater control over the specification and type of property to be delivered and would have an opportunity to consider a wider geographical area for its development sites; hence the need to run these two phases in tandem.

Another way of designing and building Council homes is to commission a third party to undertake the development work and to run the build programme. This would reduce the risk to the Council in terms of design responsibility, timescale and to an extent the budget for delivery. One mechanism to help with this could be to exploit the Homes and Communities Agency Developer Framework, however this would still require a tender package and the associated site investigation, design work and land due diligence. It is suggested this could be further examined for phase 2, being one of a number of options to be considered in the future, but as it stands this would not deliver any early new build properties.

- 8.2 The second option considered was to purchase properties ‘off the shelf’ from private developers who either are already on site or have properties built but not sold. This did represent a quick option for delivery however it was rejected as this would limit housing choice, the quality could not be assured in the same way as that provided by the SHC with the Council’s own involvement, the space standards would be lower and no mobility or wheelchair housing is immediately available. The ability to secure a financial discount across a number of developers would in all likelihood be less than that secured through the SHC although in the latter’s case this is being provided across three sites increasing the geographical spread of properties.

In addition the build costs themselves will not have been scrutinised in the same way as those of the SHC. The Council under the ‘off the shelf’ option will be buying straight from the market and will be paying an open market value for the properties with no recourse to the knowledge of how that purchase price will have been built up. In the case of the Housing Company, the build cost elements were subject to an initial tender process, they were then further checked by the Council’s in-house quantity surveying service. The cost plan then went through a further tender check undertaken by Gleeds, an external cost consultant firm and build costs continue to be monitored by the company itself using a further firm of cost consultants Hall and Partners.

9.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To bring forward earlier the provision of new Council housing, in the

form of Phase 1 acquisitions to increase the supply of much need social rented housing in the City. This is contributing to making these three neighbourhoods a great place to live by ensuring continued investment into Sheffield's Council new housing stock and building on previously derelict land.

- 9.2 In relation to the first phase, to capitalise on the significant work which the Council has already done in working with the Sheffield Housing Company to generate high quality and sustainable properties which are good value for money and which by design can respond to tenant's changing and particular housing needs.
- 9.3 The completion of new homes will generate additional New Homes Bonus money which the Council can direct as further investment to promote house building and neighbourhood regeneration, as well as being a mechanism to recycle the money received under the Right to Buy scheme and the agreement which the Council has previously signed up to.

10.0 REASONS FOR EXEMPTION (if a Closed report)

- 10.1 Part 2 of this report is presented as an exempt item because it contains exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The reasons for its exemption are that it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of both Sheffield City Council and the Sheffield Housing Company.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

Approve the acquisition of 30 new build homes from the Sheffield Housing Company as set out in section 4 to this report as being Phase 1 of the Council's new build programme as identified in the HRA Business Plan 2012/17.

- 11.2 Delegate authority to the Director of Capital and Major Projects to negotiate and agree terms for the individual purchases of these 30 homes in consultation with the Director of Commissioning and to instruct the Director of Legal and Governance Services to complete the necessary legal documentation in respect of the acquisition of those properties.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

Report of: Executive Director, Communities
Executive Director, Place
Executive Director, Resources

Date: 16th January 2013

Subject: Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2012-17
update report, HRA Budget and Rent Increase 2013/14

Author of Report: Liam Duggan & Louise Cassin, 293 0240

Summary:

This report provides the 2013/14 update to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2012-17. It includes proposals to provide additional support to tenants affected by welfare reform, a new programme of council housing new build, a new programme of communal area refurbishment and sets out an improved long term financial position for the business plan.

This report also presents a 2013/14 revenue budget for the HRA.

A separate report on the Capital Programme, which includes the Council Housing Investment programme 2013/14, will be discussed by Cabinet on 13th February 2013. This will include details of the Council's funded capital investment plan for council housing. The service and financial plans for the HRA in this report complement the Council Housing Investment programme.

Rent increases continue to be driven by Government's national social rent policy and harmonisation with the housing association sector with the target for rent convergence set at 2015/16.

Reasons for Recommendations:

To maximise the financial resources to deliver outcomes on key services in the context of the new national council housing finance regime.

To contribute to making neighbourhoods a great place to live by ensuring continued investment into Sheffield's council housing.

To continue to plan for the long term sustainability of services whilst taking every opportunity to introduce service improvements.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

1. The HRA Business Plan update report for 2013/14 is approved
2. The HRA Revenue Budget for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix B to this report is approved
3. Rents for Council dwellings are increased by an average of 4.8% from April 2013
4. Annual rents for garages and garage sites are increased by an average of 4.8% from April 2013
5. Community heating charges increase by 5% in 2013/14
6. The Director of Commissioning, Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods, be granted delegated authority to increase the sheltered housing service charge in the event of the City Wide Care Alarms charge being increased in 2013/14
7. Charges for furnished accommodation, interim accommodation and burglar alarms are not increased
8. The Director of Commissioning, Communities and the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods, be granted delegated authority to authorise prudential borrowing as allowed under current government guidelines

Background Papers:

Report to Cabinet, *Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012-17*, 25th January 2012

<http://meetings.sheffield.gov.uk/council-meetings/cabinet/agendas-2012/agenda-25th-january-2012>

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES Cleared by: Liz Orme
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by: Andrea Simpson
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by: Phil Reid
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES
Economic impact
YES
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
YES Cleared by: Jo Wright-Coe
Property implications
NO
Area(s) affected
All Community Assembly areas
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods Cabinet Member for Finance
Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in
Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
YES
Press release
YES

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW 2012/17 REVENUE BUDGET AND RENT INCREASE 2013/14

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides the 2013/14 update to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2012-17. It includes proposals to provide additional support to tenants affected by welfare reform, a new programme of council housing new build, a new programme of communal area refurbishment and sets out an improved long term financial position for the business plan.
- 1.2 This report also presents a 2013/14 revenue budget for the HRA.
- 1.3 A separate report on the Capital Programme, which includes the Council Housing Investment programme 2013/14, will be discussed by Cabinet on 13th February 2013. This will include details of the Council's funded capital investment plan for council housing. The service and financial plans for the HRA in this report complement the Council Housing Investment programme.
- 1.4 Rent increases continue to be driven by Government's national social rent policy and harmonisation with the housing association sector with the target for rent convergence set at 2015/16.

2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE?

- 2.1 The Council owns approximately 41,200 homes that are home to over 48,000 Sheffield people as tenants. In addition, approximately 2,200 leaseholders also receive housing services from the Council. The HRA is a statutory account that includes the resources that provide council housing services to tenants. It will be the Council's current tenants and future tenants who will be affected by the ongoing choices that are made in the HRA Business Plan.
- 2.2 One of the aims of the business plan update is to monitor the long term sustainability of council housing as a vital service for Sheffield people. The foundation of the HRA Business Plan is to ensure that council homes are occupied because letting homes generates the rental income which funds all aspects of council housing.
- 2.3 The guideline rent increase arising from the national social rent policy will affect council tenants. In line with the Government's formula, annual rents will increase by an average of 4.8% in 2013/14 (as illustrated at Appendix C).
- 2.4 The Council is reviewing the City Wide Care Alarms charges for 2013/14. The sheltered housing service charge includes an amount for city wide alarms. Any change in the cost of the care alarms service would result in changes to the sheltered housing service charge. A decision on the City Wide Care Alarms Charge will be made in March 2013 as part of the council's wider budget decisions.

- 2.5 Charges for furnished accommodation, interim accommodation and burglar alarms will remain unchanged.
- 2.6 A new build programme of 75 new council homes over the next 3 years will provide new and existing tenants with greater choice and availability of high demand social rented family housing, as well as providing a boost to the economy.
- 2.7 A new refurbishment programme addressing the standards of communal areas in low rise flats will benefit around 3000 properties and make smaller dwellings more attractive for people looking to downsize.

3.0 OUTCOMES AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.1 The proposals in this update report are aimed at maximising financial resources to deliver outcomes to council tenants in the context of the Government's HRA reform settlement, developments to national policy (Right to Buy and welfare reform), the current economic climate and reductions in government funding.
- 3.2 The HRA is the 'landlord account' that covers the day to day housing management and repairs services for council tenants. It includes the rental income and other income from tenants and all related expenditure.
- 3.3 The original HRA Business Plan 2012-17 forecast that all planned activity was fundable over the long term but financial challenges remained. These included
 - the need to delay investment to homes from the early to the later years of the plan,
 - an inability to make provision for the repayment of debt in full over 30 years,
 - a number of items which could not be funded so were not built into the plan e.g. refurbishment of communal areas.
- 3.4 The Council must ensure that under self-financing council housing has a sustainable future in Sheffield. The purpose of the HRA Business Plan 2012/17 and the update report for 2013/14 is to ensure that the investment and services required for council housing, including debt to be serviced, can be met by the income raised in the HRA.
- 3.5 Building new council housing will allow the HRA to retain any additional Right to Buy receipts generated as a result of the government's 'reinvigoration' of Right to Buy and will provide an additional rental income stream for the HRA in the long term.
- 3.6 The start of a programme to refurbish communal areas will make flats more attractive to tenants and residents looking to downsize and should reduce tenancy turnover.
- 3.7 The improved financial position of the business plan means that resources are now available to tackle the maintenance backlog earlier

than originally planned.

- 3.8 The revised 30 year affordability profile for the plan which takes account of the changed financial and planning assumptions in this report is that the HRA does now have the capacity to repay the principal debt sum over the 30 year life of the plan. This is an improved position from the original business plan position and indicates a more secure financial footing with reduced exposure to interest rate risk.

4.0 THE HRA BUSINESS PLAN 2012-17

- 4.1 The objectives of the City Council's first business plan for the HRA under the new self-financing arrangements 2012-17 were;
- Create balanced budgets for next five years, and
 - Prioritise investment that will reduce costs over the long term and allow us to begin funding activity that is currently unaffordable.
- 4.2 The business plan set out the main areas of investment in the early years, aimed at reducing costs overall:
- activity to mitigate the impact of welfare reform,
 - making the best use of the homes we have by improving the rehousing process and supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies,
 - invest to save projects for estate services with an emphasis on reducing fly tipping costs, and
 - reducing the maintenance backlog in the early years, with heating systems as a top priority.
- 4.3 These priorities were to be funded from the following key income and efficiency choices:
- implementing the rent increase as set by Government's national social rent policy,
 - limited prudential borrowing within the borrowing limit,
 - closing the Decent Homes affordability gap,
 - invest to save projects on estate services,
 - reducing the funding available for the Going Local budget,
 - efficiency savings on support costs.

5.0 REVIEWING THE 2012-17 BUSINESS PLAN

- 5.1 The first business plan for the HRA under the new self financing arrangements was approved in January 2012. In this first year of 'self financing' it has not been necessary to undertake a wholesale review of the policy choices set out in the original business plan.
- 5.2 However, since the business plan was published in January 2012 a small number of key factors have had a significant impact on the plan. These are set out in section 6 of this report. Because of their significance these factors have been the focus of the review in 2012 and the focus of the council's conversation with tenants. This has led

to new strategic policy choices being made in this business plan update.

- 5.3 As well as these new strategic choices all the original planning assumptions and targets in the plan have been reviewed and where necessary updated for 2013/14.
- 5.4 During the first year of the business plan, tenants have been informed and consulted via:-
 - City Wide Forum (20th September 2012)
 - The Annual Residents and Governors Conference (5th October 2012)
 - City Wide Forum (15th November 2012)
- 5.5 Tenants also made a contribution to individual areas of the business plan indirectly through Partnership Groups, Challenge for Change and consultation events.
- 5.6 The City Wide Forum in September provided an opportunity to remind tenants of the original business plan and to provide information on progress of the key business plan projects.
- 5.7 The Annual Residents and Governors Conference highlighted the likelihood that additional resources would be available to the business plan as a result of the changed planning assumptions and asked tenants for their view on potential new investment priorities:
 - maintenance backlog,
 - unfunded items,
 - new build,
 - welfare reform mitigation,
 - other priorities
- 5.8 Whilst the support of tenants through welfare reform was a consistently high priority, no clear view emerged on the other strategic priorities of tenants. The feedback from tenants at the Annual Residents and Governors Conference was fed back to the City Wide Forum in November together with an update on the review of the business plan.
- 5.9 In January an update report on the HRA Business Plan will be presented to the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee. The committee will be asked to provide feedback on the business plan update and particularly the proposals being put forward for the support of tenants through welfare reform.
- 5.10 This report to Cabinet and the HRA Business Plan update will be discussed with tenant representatives at the City Wide Forum on 11th January 2013. Comments made and views expressed will be reported verbally to Cabinet.

6.0 SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES FOR 2013/14

6.1 A number of significant factors have changed since the business plan was published. These can be split into factors that improve and factors that have a negative impact on the financial outlook of the plan.

6.2 Factors **improving** the financial outlook of the plan:

- The Council's separation of HRA debt from General Fund debt as part of the transition to 'self financing' gave the HRA greater opportunity to take advantage of cheaper borrowing than originally forecast.
- The decision to bring the delivery of Council Housing in house from April 2013 has been accompanied by efficiency savings. This will also result in the Sheffield Homes reserve being absorbed into the HRA.

6.3 Factors **negatively impacting** the financial outlook of the plan

- The Government has changed the Right to Buy policy. This sees the maximum price discount to tenants increase, the ring fence of any additional receipts to new affordable housing and requires that these receipts are matched by new resources at a ratio of 30:70 if they are to be retained locally.
- The Council's developing understanding of the likely impact of welfare reform is resulting in higher than originally forecast arrears levels.

6.4 The net impact of all the changes is that the financial position of the business plan is significantly improved such that new investment activity can be factored in whilst still improving the long term viability of the plan.

6.5 The key strategic choices for the HRA Business Plan update 2013/14 are:-

1. A new build programme of 75 new council homes in the next 3 years.
2. Additional resources allocated to support tenants and mitigate the potential impacts of welfare reform
3. A programme of refurbishment to the communal areas of low rise flats starting with investment in door entry security and extending to new flooring and windows
4. The improved financial position of the business plan means that resources are now available to tackle the maintenance backlog earlier than anticipated
5. The Council's capacity to repay debt over 30 years is improved

6.6 The following sections provide an overview of the key changes affecting each of the main chapters in the HRA Business Plan 2012-17.

7.0 INCOME AND RESOURCES

- 7.1 It is proposed that in line with Government policy, rents for dwellings be increased by an average of 4.8%, equivalent to an average of £3.23 per week. Appendix C sets out the average rents per house size in Sheffield.
- 7.2 This is in line with the Government's national social rent policy for social housing. The policy aims to ensure that the rent for a similar sized property in a similar area has the same rental value regardless of whether it is owned by the local authority or a housing association. The Government expects the sector to reach target rents by 2015/16.
- 7.3 The self-financing settlement assumes our rent increase is in line with the Government formula. So, if the Council does not increase the rents by this amount this would have an impact on the HRA Business Plan. Savings would need to be identified from services or investment to offset the income shortfall.
- 7.4 The HRA Business Plan assumes rental income in line with the national social rent policy for social housing.
- 7.5 It is recommended that the charges for garages and garage sites are increased by 4.8% in line with the average annual rent increase for dwellings. In recognition of investment required on some garage sites, a strategy for garage sites is being developed in 2012/13. Discussion with tenants on this is underway.
- 7.6 The Council is reviewing the City Wide Care Alarms charges for 2013/14. The sheltered housing service charge includes an amount for city wide alarms. Any change in the cost of the care alarms service would result in changes to the sheltered housing service charge. A decision on the City Wide Care Alarms Charge will be made in March 2013 as part of the council's wider budget decisions.
- 7.7 The Community Heating service charge will increase by 5% in 2013/14 in order to begin addressing the difference between the charge passed to tenants and the current cost of energy. Any accumulated balances on the community heating account will be retained to smooth the impact of future price rises.
- 7.8 Charges for furnished accommodation, interim accommodation and burglar alarms will not be increased in 2013/14.
- 7.9 Detail in the HRA Business Plan update report, section 3 summarises the key changes for Income and Resources.

8.0 HOMES

- 8.1 The 2012-17 HRA Business Plan set out proposals for a £257m investment programme over 5 years which funded essential investment work, the completion of the Decent Homes forward programme by 2014, a programme of heating system renewal, the start of roof and electrical system replacement programmes and other projects.
- 8.2 No changes have been made to these original investment priorities and the £257m 5 year investment programme remains although some re-profiling of spend has taken place between years in order to allow time for tenants to have a meaningful say in how the investment is delivered locally.
- 8.3 In addition to the existing programme new priorities have been identified and new resources allocated. From 2013/14 a new build programme of 75 new council homes will commence. This will represent around £9.5m additional activity over 3 years which will make use of any additional Right to Buy receipts generated through the Government's 'reinvigoration' of the Right to Buy policy.
- 8.4 Also in addition to the existing investment programme will be the start of a new communal area refurbishment programme. This will be funded from £1.5m additional HRA resource matched with £1.4m existing resources for basic maintenance of communal areas brought forward from later in the 30 year plan.
- 8.5 These initial proposals for new investment activity are made for the next 3 years although current projections show that additional resources are likely to be available beyond this. How such additional resources are made best use of will be the subject of future discussions with tenants as the actual level of resource becomes clearer.
- 8.6 In order to maintain a 5 year planning horizon, a year 6 (2017/18) has been added to the programme consistent with the priorities and funding levels set out in the 2012-17 Business Plan. This sees the heating system renewal programme reduce as the programme winds down, the roof replacement programme continue at a high level and the electrical replacement programme grow. By year 6 it is expected that regeneration costs and waste remodelling costs have ended.
- 8.7 Whilst beyond the current 5 year planning horizon it is anticipated that the 2018/19 budget for roofs will be at least £16.4m in order that the roofing programme can continue as planned and all roofs with a higher priority can be addressed.
- 8.8 The improved financial position of the business plan means that resources are now available to tackle the maintenance backlog earlier than anticipated over the 30 year life of the plan.
- 8.9 Detail in the HRA Business Plan update report, section 4 summarises the key changes for Homes.

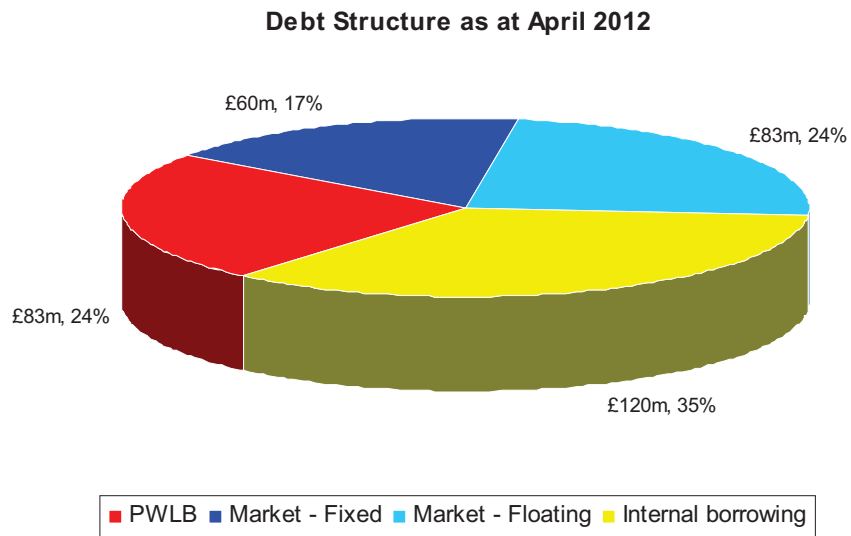
9.0 TENANT SERVICES

- 9.1 The Government's welfare reform continues to represent a risk to income management and other service areas such as rehousing and tenancy support. A key priority for tenant services will be the ongoing work to mitigate this impact and to ensure that all income owed is collected. The 2013/14 update report sets out how the resource allocated to the support of tenants through welfare reform in the business plan will be added to with immediate effect in order to provide a more comprehensive package of support to tenants.
- 9.2 The completion date for the lettings policy review is now March 2013, with implementation in April 2014. The implementation date for the new lettings website is now July 2013. Due to the slippage to the timetable, corresponding implementation costs and efficiency savings will be delayed.
- 9.3 A review of the delivery arrangements of estate services, including green and open space management on council housing land begun and a pilot established in the North east of the city to test integrated working between Sheffield Homes Estate Officers and Sheffield City Council Parks staff. It is proposed that the 10% efficiency target for Sheffield Homes and Parks in relation to the work undertaken on council housing land is delayed from 2013/14 to 2014/15 in order to allow time for tenants to have input into the future of the service via Future of Council Housing service design and Challenge for Change.
- 9.4 Savings from changes to the bulky waste service are being realised as planned. Proposals have been developed for a programme of education and enforcement to tackle the high cost of fly tipping and these will be shared with tenants prior to a phased implementation from late 2012/13.
- 9.5 Provision is made for a Going Local budget of £400k in 2013/14 although tenants will be consulted prior to April on whether this should be reduced to £200k to allow £200k to be added to the resources made available for investment in communal area refurbishment. This proposal comes as a high proportion of the Going Local budget is currently allocated to communal areas.

10.0 DEBT AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT

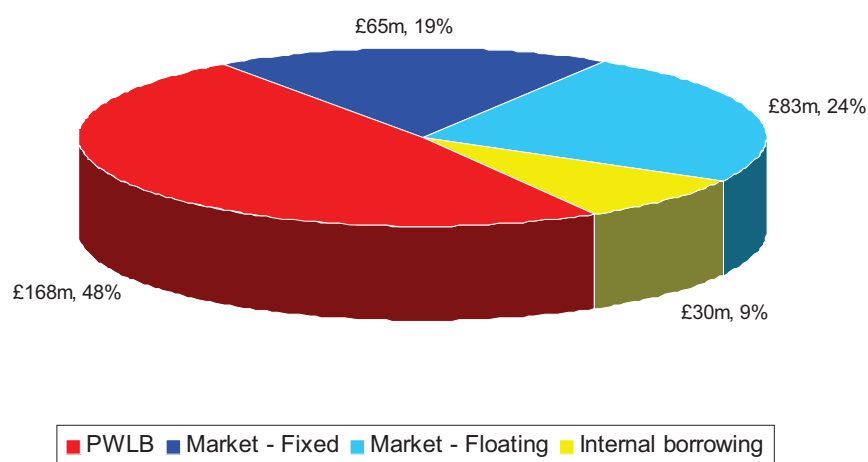
- 10.1 The move to self financing resulted in £518m of Sheffield's HRA debt being written-off by Government on 28th March 2012. This reduced the HRA's borrowing requirement from £864m to £346m. This took the HRA's share of the Council's overall borrowing requirement from 68% to 45%.

- 10.2 The move to self-financing means that the Council had to separate out HRA debt from General Fund debt and manage and account for each separately. Therefore the HRA was required to take 45% of the Council's debt portfolio which consists of fixed-rate PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) loans, fixed-rate bank LOBO (Lender Option Borrower Option) loans, floating-rate bank LOBO loans and internal borrowing.
- 10.3 HRA debt has now been separated from the General Fund for debt management purposes with each type of loan equitably assigned between HRA and General Fund. As at April 2012 the HRA's debt structure was as follows;



- 10.4 At the start of the year the HRA had a significant amount of internal borrowing. Internal borrowing represents the Council's use of cash reserves to finance capital expenditure. This was only a temporary measure and throughout the year a significant proportion of the HRA's internal borrowing needed to be replaced by external borrowing.
- 10.5 This has given the HRA to opportunity to take advantage of highly favourable borrowing rates throughout the year which has resulted in lower than forecast interest rate costs to the HRA for 2012/13 and beyond.
- 10.6 Currently the HRA's debt structure is forecast to be as follows;

Debt Structure forecast April 2013



- 10.7 Over a 30 year period the interest rate risks for the HRA will still be significant due to the amount of floating-rate debt and the need to refinance existing debt as it matures.
- 10.8 In order to mitigate interest rate risk, the business plan aims to make provision for the repayment of debt over a 30 year period whilst mitigating short term interest rate risk through the risk based reserves strategy.
- 10.9 A debt repayment plan will be developed for any new borrowing undertaken by the HRA under self financing. In the coming months work will also be undertaken to explore the potential for a repayment strategy for existing HRA debt in order to further reduce interest rate risk exposure to the HRA and allow flexibility for future investment requirements.

11.0 VALUE FOR MONEY

- 11.1 The 2012/13 business plan set out how greater value for money from the Council and Sheffield Homes will be achieved with 10% savings targets on support costs in 2012/13 and 7.5% savings targets in 2013/14. It is expected that these savings targets will be achieved.
- 11.2 Since the HRA business plan was published a tenant ballot has been held in respect of the Future of Council Housing project and a decision has been made to bring council housing delivery in house from 2013/14 with a view to realising efficiency savings as a result. These efficiency savings and the Sheffield Homes reserve have now been factored in to the business plan together with an initial budget for implementing the transition.
- 11.3 No decision has yet been made in relation to the future of the Repairs and Maintenance service post 2014 but the planning assumption of a

2% efficiency on the service post 2014 remains.

12.0 BUSINESS PLAN GOVERNANCE

- 12.1 The business plan set out how strong governance of the plan must include tenant and resident scrutiny of the business plan alongside councillor oversight / involvement and officer responsibility. The plan set out initial draft arrangements for governance of the plan which were to be developed during the course of 2012/13 in partnership with tenants and stakeholders and which would be subject to review once the outcomes of the Future of Council Housing and Repairs and Maintenance Procurement Strategy projects were known.
- 12.2 Initial draft arrangements for the governance of the business plan are in place and include the existing tenant and resident engagement structures, the annual Delivery Action Plan, Challenge for Change, Cabinet Member and Cabinet decision making, the HRA Business Plan board and the Safer and the Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee.
- 12.3 In 2012, the Future of Council Housing project launched a project group called 'The opportunity to have my say'. This project group will build on the existing approaches to consultation and governance that are working well to make recommendations on the future shape of engagement and governance structures for council housing. The scoping of the project began in November 2012 and the work of the project group will run into 2013.

13.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 13.1 The risk management plan continues to form the basis of the Council's risk management strategy for the HRA Business Plan.
- 13.2 One of the most significant changes to the risk profile of the business plan in 2012 is as a result of the changed Right to Buy policy which has the potential to result in increased sales numbers and rent loss. This will be mitigated by the HRA retaining part of the Right to Buy receipts equivalent to the debt each sold property supported in the business plan before the receipt is pooled for new affordable housing.

14.0 FINANCIAL ASSUMPTIONS IN THE HRA BUSINESS PLAN

- 14.1 Reserves are maintained at the appropriate level to fund potential future financial pressures from risks such as welfare reform, maintenance backlog and interest rate changes.
- 14.2 The cost of Council Housing Services (previously the payment to Sheffield Homes for the delivery of housing services) for 2013/14 is held at the 2011/12 level of £29.9m as it was in 2012/13. This reflects the support cost efficiencies set out in section 7 of the business plan offset by the cost of some new service enhancements (e.g. welfare

reform mitigation) which is set out in section 5 the business plan.

- 14.3 The budget for the delivery of the investment programme (previously capital management fee) in 2013/14 will be held at £3.7m.
- 14.4 2012/13 Council budgets for the delivery of housing services will be reduced to £8.2m in 2013/14. This is in line with value for money savings on support costs as set out in section 7 of the original business plan.
- 14.5 The revenue repairs budget for 2013/14 has increased by assumed contractual inflation and adjusted for stock numbers. The communal facilities budget will increase by £200k in 2013/14 to reflect the cost of communal street lighting on council estates chargeable to the HRA. All other delegated budgets will remain at cash standstill in 2013/14 for the second year.
- 14.6 Detail in Annex A of the business plan update summarises the key financial assumptions.

15.0 HRA BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2013/14

- 15.1 The HRA Business Plan update (at Appendix A) sets out the proposals for 2013/14 and includes the key changes described in the Income, Homes, Tenant Services and Value for Money sections above. The HRA revenue budget for 2013/14 is set out in Appendix B to this report.

16.0 FORECAST OUTTURN 2012/13

- 16.1 Regular revenue budget monitoring reports have been brought during the year to Cabinet. These have shown a better projected outturn compared with the original budget.
- 16.2 The position for the HRA as at the end of October 2012 was a projected in-year surplus of £6.7m. A contribution to the Capital Programme of £0.4m will be made leaving a net surplus of £6.3m compared with a budgeted deficit of £1.3m. This is an improvement of £7.6m.
- 16.3 Further monitoring reports updating the 2012/13 position will be presented in accordance with the Council's budget monitoring timetables.

17.0 RECOMMENDED HRA BUDGET 2013/14

- 17.1 The 2013/14 HRA revenue budget is set out in Appendix B. The HRA opening reserve for 2013/14 is expected to be £25.5m (this includes the Sheffield Homes reserves of £7.5m as a result of Sheffield Homes transferring back to the Council).
- 17.2 The 2013/14 budget is based on an assumed in year surplus of £7.3m. This together with £15.5m from reserves will be used to make a

£22.8m contribution towards funding the 2013/14 capital investment programme.

- 17.3 By 31st March 2014 HRA Reserves are expected to be £10m with community heating reserves forecast to be £1.3m

Summary Recommended Budget 2013/14	HRA revenue (£m)
Forecast HRA balance (net) brought forward at 1 April 2014	25.5
Net Surplus/(Deficit) for year	7.3
Contribution to the Capital Programme	22.8
Forecast HRA Reserve Balance Carried Forward at 31 March 2014 (excluding community heating)	10.0
Community heating balance at 31 st March 2014	1.3

- 17.4 In accordance with the HRA's risk based reserve strategy it is recommended that £10m is maintained in 2013/14 in revenue reserves.
- 17.5 It is proposed to retain a community heating reserve of £1.1m to smooth out the impact of expected future energy price increases.

18.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 18.1 The 2013/14 budget is the second annual budget set under the self-financing system. It follows the principles set out in the original business plan and allows for a continuation of services to tenants, revenue repairs to properties and also financial support for the Council Housing Investment programme by means of a contribution from revenue.
- 18.2 In addition, any annual revenue surpluses on the account are planned to provide further funding for capital investment.
- 18.3 The Council Housing Investment programme up to 2017-18 may require the HRA to undertake further borrowing as allowed under the current government guidelines. In these early years of self financing the debt strategy for the HRA will continue to be reviewed and developed in accordance with the Council's delegated treasury management policy.
- 18.4 Further details on the Council Housing Investment programme will be set out in the report to Cabinet on 13th February.
- 18.5 Appendix B details the initial five-year projections for the HRA income and expenditure account. These are based on current assumptions and will be reviewed during 2013/14 in the light of any known changes.

19.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 19.1 The duty to keep a Housing Revenue Account and prevent a debit balance on it and restrictions as to what may be credited or debited to the account (the "ring-fence") are governed by Part VI of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This has included provision for annual HRA subsidy paid by central Government to local housing authorities, as determined by the Secretary of State.
- 19.2 The housing finance provisions of the Localism Act, amended Part VI of the 1989 Act by abolishing HRA subsidy but providing for the Secretary of State to make a determination providing for the calculation of a settlement payment to or from each local housing authority. This settlement and its implications for the self-financing HRA have informed the HRA Business Plan.

20.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 20.1 Sheffield Homes staff all TUPE transfer into the City Council on 1st April 2013.
- 20.2 The majority of staff will be placed within the Communities portfolio with a smaller number in Resources.

21.0 ENVIRONMENTAL & SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 21.1 Any environmental and sustainability issues arising from the Council Housing Investment programme within this report will be dealt with the Capital Programme report to Cabinet in February 2013.

22.0 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 22.1 Consideration has been given to equalities relating to the HRA budget and business plan options and a full Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed. Issues raised will be addressed through regular monitoring against actions in the EIA.
- 22.2 The Capital Programme report to Cabinet on 13th February 2013 will deal with any equalities considerations relating to the Council Housing Investment programme.
- 22.3 Any in-year proposed change in policy or service provision will require an individual Equality Impact Assessment.

23.0 PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 23.1 There are no additional property implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.

24.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 24.1 To increase rents for Council dwellings by less than the government formula – The self financing settlement from Government assumed the Council's rent increases are in line with the Government formula. If the Council does not increase rents by this amount this would mean pound for pound savings would need to be found to offset the income shortfall. We would then have to live within this reduced resource envelop for every subsequent year or until the council raised rents by above guideline.
- 24.2 Not to undertake a council housing new build programme - the change to the Government's Right to Buy policy means that if the council is to retain any additional receipts raised by the increased sales discounts now available to tenants, the receipt must be used as a contribution to new affordable housing. The alternative of using these receipts for a new build programme would be to pass the receipts to another registered provider such as a housing association who could then provide the affordable housing. However this would be unlikely to result in homes at social rent.

25.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 25.1 To maximise the financial resources to deliver outcomes on key services in the context of the new national council housing finance regime.
- 25.2 To contribute to making neighbourhoods a great place to live by ensuring continued investment into Sheffield's council housing.
- 25.3 To continue to plan for the long term sustainability of services whilst taking every opportunity to introduce service improvements.

26.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 26.1 It is recommended that:
- The HRA Business Plan update report for 2013/14 is approved
 - The HRA Revenue Budget for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix B to this report is approved
 - Rents from Council dwellings are increased by an average of 4.8% from April 2013
 - Annual rents for garages and garage sites are increased by an average of 4.8% from April 2013
 - Community heating charges increase by 5% in 2013/14
 - The Director of Commissioning, Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods, be

- Charges for furnished accommodation, interim accommodation, and burglar alarms are not increased
- The Director of Commissioning, Communities and the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods, be granted delegated authority to authorise prudential borrowing as allowed under current government guidelines.

Richard Webb, Executive Director - Communities Portfolio
Simon Green, Executive Director – Place Portfolio
Laraine Manley, Executive Director - Resources Portfolio,

**The Sheffield City Council Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
Business Plan 2012/17 update report for 2013/14**
(Please see separate document)

Year	2012/13 (Forecast outturn as at October 2012)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total 2013/14 to 2017/18
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Income							
INCOME TOTAL	-142.2	-147.4	-153.9	-161.1	-166.0	-170.9	-799.3
Income from rents	-136.0	-141.4	-147.9	-155.0	-159.8	-164.5	-768.6
Other income	-6.2	-6.0	-6.0	-6.1	-6.2	-6.4	-30.7
Expenditure							
Homes – revenue repairs	32.7	33.1	33.1	33.9	34.8	35.4	170.3
Homes – funding for Capital programme – depreciation	36.4	37.1	38.0	38.9	39.9	40.9	194.8
Tenant services (including overheads/support costs)	49.9	51.3	50.8	51.8	52.8	54.3	261.0
Interest on debt	15.7	17.6	17.3	17.5	17.8	18.1	88.3
Other expenditure	0.8	1.0	2.7	2.1	2.2	3.4	11.4
Total	135.5	140.1	141.9	144.2	147.5	152.1	725.8
Surplus (-) or Deficit	-6.7	-7.3	-12.0	-16.9	-18.5	-18.8	-73.5
Opening revenue reserve	-11.7	-25.5	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	
Surplus (-) or Deficit	-6.7	-7.3	-12.0	-16.9	-18.5	-18.8	
Contribution to the Capital Programme	0.4	22.8	12.0	16.9	18.5	18.8	
Sheffield Homes Reserve	-7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Closing revenue reserve	-25.5	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	

City Wide average weekly rent by bedsize

Bedsizes	Average weekly rent 2012/13 £	Average weekly rent 2013/14 £	Increase £
Bedsit	57.34	60.09	2.75
1 bed	60.02	62.90	2.88
2 bed	67.18	70.40	3.22
3 bed	75.37	78.99	3.62
4 bed	81.54	85.45	3.91
Total (all bedrooms average)	67.19	70.42	3.23

Note: The above rents are for illustrative purposes only as they are based on city wide averages. Actual individual property rents will vary from these figures.

Proposed Community Heating Charges from April 2013

Bedsizes	Full heating		Partial heating	
	Current Prices £/week	Prices April 2013 £/week	Current Prices £/week	Prices April 2013 £/week
Unmetered heat*				
Heating & hot water				
Bedsit	10.52	11.05	9.72	10.21
1 Bedroom	10.92	11.47	10.00	10.50
2 Bedroom	13.55	14.23	12.59	13.22
3/4 Bedroom	14.59	15.32	13.55	14.23
Heating only				
Bedsit	7.74	8.13	7.17	7.53
1 Bedroom	7.93	8.33	7.17	N/A
2 Bedroom	10.00	10.50	9.72	10.21
Metered heat				
Leverton/ Hanover/ Netherthorpe	Ticket price	£ per 100kwh	4.05	4.25
	Standing charge	£ per week	3.40	3.57
Hillside	Ticket price	£ per 100kwh	2.80	2.95
	Standing charge	£ per week	2.90	3.05
Balfour House	Ticket price	£ per 100kwh	3.15	3.30
	Standing charge	£ per week	4.29	4.50

*Note: For sheltered schemes the above prices are split into dwelling heating and communal heating. The communal element of charges will increase from £2.80 to £2.94 per dwelling per week

**Sheffield City Council Housing Revenue Account
(HRA) Business Plan 2012-17:
2013/14 update report**

1. INTRODUCTION

a. Purpose of this report

This is the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2012-17 update report for 2013/14. The report provides a progress report and update on the existing 5 year plan extended to include 2017/18. This report:-

- Sets HRA rents and charges for 2013/14 (year 2 of the business plan)
- Sets HRA budgets for 2013/14
- Reports on progress and sets out new policy choices
- Refreshes the 5 year planning budgets and where appropriate updates the long term planning assumptions
- Provides a 30 year affordability profile based on the updated planning and financial assumptions in the report

This report has been developed part way through the first year of the business plan, so there is no full year data to report and no cause for a wholesale review of our original priorities. The emphasis of the report is therefore to highlight key factors that have changed since the business plan was published in January 2012 and how the council proposes to respond to them.

b. Report structure

The report follows the same structure as the HRA Business Plan

1. Introduction
2. Governance
3. Income and resources
4. Homes
5. Tenant Services
6. Debt and Treasury Management
7. Value for Money

Sections 3- 7 of the report include an explanation of what is covered in this section of the business plan, key risks, key developments and other developments.

A financial summary is set out within each section. Where new financial targets are being proposed in the financial summary tables, the original financial assumptions are shaded grey.

c. Background

i. A Self-Financing Housing Revenue Account

From April 2012, all Local Authorities with retained stock in England moved from a national subsidy system of council housing funding to a new system of local 'self-financing'.

The introduction of self-financing has been positive for Sheffield as it has meant that there are more resources coming into council housing in Sheffield than the old subsidy system. However there still remained funding pressures which were most acute in the early years of the plan.

Self-financing also brought with it a transfer of risk and responsibility from government to the local authority. This includes new risks for the HRA including interest rates and cost inflation.

ii. Business Planning principles

The move to self financing, the additional risk borne by the council and the funding pressures mean that the Council must be more business minded in its approach to council housing. In the 2012-17 HRA Business Plan the Council set out its business principles for council housing as follows:

1. Creating sustainable homes and communities
 - a. Homes in a safe and sound condition
 - b. Neighbourhoods are places where people want to live
 - c. Council tenancies are attractive and accessible to customers.
2. Making the best use of council homes
 - a. Homes are kept in use as much as possible
 - b. Homes and services are charged for fully and fairly
 - c. All income owed is collected
 - d. External investment is levered in to the business.
3. Minimising running costs
 - a. Using the Council's purchasing power and long term view to get the best deals for tenants
 - b. Management of known hotspots of expense in the business
 - c. Keeping overhead costs under control.

These business principles are the criteria the Council uses to inform how investment decisions are made and what the priorities are for Sheffield council housing over the next five years.

iii. The 2012-17 Business Plan

In 2012 Sheffield City Council approved its first business plan for council housing under the new self financing arrangements.

The key themes in the business plan were efficiencies where possible and investment which reduced costs or optimised income over the long term.

As a result of the measures in the plan, all planned activity was deemed affordable over the 30 years but financial challenges remained. These were:-

- High volumes of backlog repairs were delayed until the later years of the plan
- The plan was unable to make provision to pay off debt in full over 30 years
- A number of items could not be funded so were not built into the 30 year plan e.g. refurbishment of communal areas

d. Summary of key changes to planning assumptions

A number of significant factors have changed since the business plan was published in January 2012. Some of the most significant developments which have a positive or negative financial impact on the business plan are summarised below;

Factors **improving** the financial outlook of the plan

- The Council's separation of HRA debt from General Fund debt as part of the transition to 'self financing' gave the HRA greater opportunity to take advantage of cheaper borrowing than originally forecast.
- The decision to bring the delivery of Council Housing in house from April 2013 has been accompanied by efficiency savings. This will also result in the Sheffield Homes reserve being absorbed into the HRA.

Factors **negatively** impacting the financial outlook of the plan

- The Government has changed the Right to Buy policy. This sees the maximum price discount to tenants increase, the ring fence of any additional receipts to new affordable housing and requires that receipts are matched by new resources at a ratio of 30:70 if they are to be retained locally.
- The Council's developing understanding of the likely impact of welfare reform is resulting in higher than originally forecast arrears levels.

e. Strategic choices

The new savings and resources arising from the Future of Council Housing decision and interest rate savings significantly outweigh the additional costs of welfare reform at this update and the Right to Buy policy change. This means that new investment activity can be factored in whilst still improving the overall long term viability of the plan.

The original HRA Business Plan 2012-17 set out three challenges for the business plan which meant that efficiencies would be required in future. These were;

- High volumes of backlog repairs delayed over 20 years
- The plan was unable to make provision to pay off debt over 30 years and could only begin to make provision for debt repayment at year 20
- A list of unfunded items including refurbishment of communal areas could not be factored into the 30 year plan

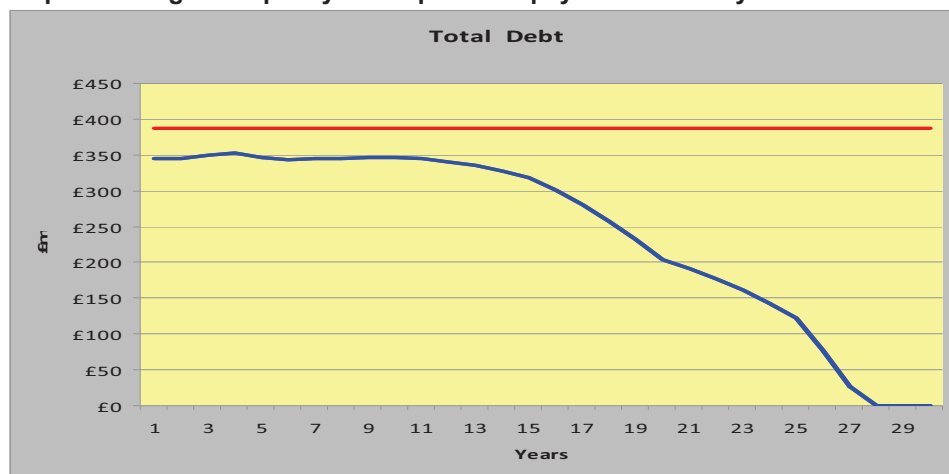
However, the business plan must also respond to risks (e.g. welfare reform) and incentives (Right to Buy policy) which have developed since the original business plan was approved in January. The strategic choices for the HRA Business Plan update 2013/14 are therefore as follows;

- i. In response to the Government's Right to Buy policy change and the subsequent agreement entered into by the council to retain Right to Buy receipts locally, a new build programme of 75 new council homes will be undertaken over the next 3 years (further details in section 4 of this report).
- ii. Additional resources are allocated to mitigate the potential impacts of welfare reform on tenants and the HRA (further details in section 5 of this report).
- iii. A programme of refurbishment to communal areas will begin with an emphasis on door security, new flooring and windows (further details in section 4 of this report).
- iv. The improved financial position of the business plan means that resources are now available to tackle the maintenance backlog earlier than anticipated over the 30 year lifetime of the plan (this has no impact on the 5 year investment programme set out in section 4 of this report).
- v. The council's capacity to repay debt over 30 years is improved (further details in section 7 of this report).

f. Revised 30 year financial profile

As a result of the strategic choices and updated planning assumptions set out in this report, the long term financial profile for the HRA has changed. The current forecast is that the HRA is able to fund all planned activity over the 30 year period and is now able to make provision for the repayment of debt in full over 30 years.

Graph showing the capacity of the plan to repay debt over 30 years



This is an improved position from the original business plan and indicates a more secure financial footing with reduced exposure to interest rate risk.

It is important to remember that all long term forecasts are the product of a series of assumptions based on information available at a point in time. Such forecasts can only ever serve as an indicative guide which must be subject to regular review.

g. Next steps for the business plan

One of the priorities for the future will be to continue to monitor and address the key risks for the business plan particularly welfare reform, the Right to Buy policy and long term interest rate risk.

2013 will see council housing delivery re-integrate into the council and a number of service designs begin to report recommendations about how best to take advantage of the opportunities this presents. In 2013 a decision will also be made about the future of the repairs and maintenance service. These pieces of work have the potential to have a significant impact on the Business Plan.

The Council will continue to seek opportunities for freeing resources from the business plan in order to accelerate investment in council homes and estates, particularly

1. Bringing forward investment in the maintenance backlog such that the high cost of responsive repairs are minimised and work not in the Decent Homes forward programme is undertaken as early as possible post 2014
2. Tackling previously unfunded items such as communal area refurbishment earlier

The actual level of resource available to the investment programme in future years is sensitive to revenue as well as capital projections. Discussions will take place with tenants to make the best use of future available resources.

2. GOVERNANCE

Governance of the HRA Business Plan includes three key structures; tenant governance and scrutiny, political governance and the officer structure. This section of the business plan set out the initial draft governance arrangements of the business plan and how these will be developed during the course of 2012/13 in partnership with tenants and stakeholders.

a) Tenant and resident involvement and scrutiny

Tenants and residents have been involved in the development of the business plan in 2012/13 via the established governance and engagement structures such as the Sheffield Homes Board of Directors, the Area Boards, City Wide Forum, the Annual Tenant Conference, and Local Housing Forums.

Tenants have made a contribution to the business plan through these structures as well as examining individual areas of the business plan in more detail through individual partnership groups, Challenge for Change and individual consultation events.

Customer promises, the annual Delivery Action Plan and the annual report to tenants continue to be key tools through which tenants have oversight of council housing activity.

b) Elected member governance

Elected members continue their role in relation to the business plan through decision making by the Cabinet Member and the Cabinet.

Cabinet receives a formal finance report monthly which includes revenue and capital aspects of the plan.

c) Officer governance

The HRA Business Plan board has responsibility for monitoring performance against the business plan and coordinating the annual review of the business plan.

The membership of the board has a role in ensuring the business plan is aligned with the Council's strategic outcomes.

d) The future management of council housing

The business plan proposed to establish a new tenant group dedicated to the oversight of the business plan which was to be discussed with tenants in 2012/13.

The business plan also noted that the Future of Council Housing project and the repairs and maintenance procurement strategy project would impact on the governance arrangements for the business plan so should be reviewed once the outcomes of these projects were known.

In 2012, Cabinet decided that delivery of council housing would be brought in house from April 2013. Following this decision, the Future of Council Housing project launched a project group called 'The opportunity to have my say'. This project group will build on the existing approaches to consultation and governance that are working well to make recommendations on the future shape of engagement and governance structures for council housing. The scoping of the project began in November 2012 and will run into 2013.

3. INCOME AND RESOURCES

a) Overview

This part of the business plan is concerned with income into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It includes rent setting and charges payable by tenants to the Council as landlord.

b) Risks

1. Welfare Reform

The key risk to income and the single biggest policy risk to the business plan overall continues to be welfare reform. The most significant risks in relation to welfare reform arise from the introduction of Universal Credit which will be paid direct to tenants of working age and the linking of household size to Housing Benefit eligibility. Universal Credit will start from October 2013 for new claimants and will be phased in by 2017. Housing benefit eligibility linked to household size comes into operation in April 2013. Initial attempts to quantify the risk associated with welfare reform and establish mitigating actions were made in the original business plan. These estimates have now been reviewed, updated and uplifted based on our developing understanding of the Government's proposals.

Other welfare reform proposals may also have an impact on the HRA such as the Council's draft Council Tax Support Scheme (from April 2013). There is also a risk that when the new Universal Credit regulations are announced some charges could cease to be eligible for housing support.

Welfare reform will also affect other HRA costs such as transaction costs, payment card costs, eviction costs and housing management costs.

2. Right to Buy

A second key risk to business plan income remains the Government's 'reinvigoration' of the Right to Buy policy. Since the HRA Business Plan was agreed in January 2012, Government has changed its Right to Buy policy which has resulted in additional financial risk for the business plan.

Key changes to the Right to Buy policy from April 2012:

- An uplift to the maximum Right to Buy discount from £24k to £75k which is likely to result in more sales (and subsequent rent loss)
- The Council can now retain any additional receipts for replacement housing, however before any receipts can be used for replacement housing, it has to pay the Government an amount for receipts that the Government would have received under the previous system.
- Any additional receipts generated after deducting costs are ring fenced for re-investment in affordable housing but must constitute no more than 30% of the replacement scheme cost. The remaining 70% has to be funded from other sources.

Implications for Sheffield:

- It is too early to tell the impact of the increase in the discount cap will have on the number and value of sales in Sheffield.
- If the overall sales receipts fall as a result of the discounts, a higher number of sales will need to be generated in order to cover existing commitments to the Government.
- The discount policy is poor value for money for the HRA as assets will be sold at well below their market values.

- Any retained receipts will be insufficient to replace every house sold with one for affordable rent, but by agreeing to use additional receipts for affordable housing the Council are able to retain the receipt for local provision.

Updated assumptions for the Business Plan

- It is assumed the number of Right to Buy sales rise as a result of this policy from 90 to 140-150 per year up to 2015 beyond which forecasting becomes increasingly more speculative so it is assumed that from then the projections continue as per the original business plan assumptions.
- Increases in Right to Buy sales has a significant detrimental impact on the long term viability of the business plan particularly if the HRA is left to service debt on properties it no longer owns. Therefore it is assumed that before receipts are ring fenced for new build, the HRA retains a sum equivalent to the debt each sold property supported in the initial business plan.
- If Right to Buy sales increase as predicted and at the sale price assumed, the additional receipts generated over 3 years might be around £1.3m. Any receipt income raised will be matched with HRA resources at a ration of 30:70 to deliver new council housing at social rent.

3. Supported Housing Funding

The current supported housing subsidy (previously Supporting People) is under ongoing financial pressure as a result of the Council's wider budget reductions. There are no plans to reduce the budget at the present time but as the longer term future of the subsidy cannot be guaranteed the Council's Sheltered Housing arrangements may need to be reviewed.

c) Updates

1. Rents

Under self-financing, the Government continues to set guideline rent levels as it did under the subsidy system. On this basis, in 2013/14 rents will increase by an average 4.8%, equivalent to an average increase of £3.23 per week.

2. Target Rent

The commitment made in the business plan to undertake a dialogue with tenants about the potential to let vacant properties at target rent before the 2015/16 convergence date has been met. A consultation took place during August and September 2012 with the outcome that there was no majority support for the proposal. A decision was therefore made in November 2012 not to pursue the proposal and to continue with the existing path to rent convergence.

3. Charges

Garage rent will continue to increase in line with rent for dwellings (4.8%).

The community heating service charge will increase by 5% in 2013/14 in order to begin addressing the difference between the charge passed to tenants and the current cost of energy. Any accumulated balances on the community heating account will be retained to smooth the impact of future price rises.

The Council is reviewing the City Wide Care Alarms charges for 2013/14. The sheltered housing service charge includes an amount for city wide alarms. Any change in the cost of the care alarms service would result in changes to the sheltered housing service charge. A decision

on the City Wide Care Alarms Charge will be made in March 2013 as part of the council's wider budget decisions.

Other charges for furnished accommodation, interim accommodation and burglar alarms will remain unchanged for 2013/14.

4. Service Charge de-pooling

Consultation with tenants about whether to de-pool service charges from rent will now take place in 2013/14 rather than in 2012 as stated in the business plan. This is due to uncertainty, created by welfare reform, in respect of the future eligibility of some service charges for housing benefit. Clarity about eligibility is needed before a dialogue with tenants can begin.

4. HOMES

a) Overview

This part of the business plan is concerned with the physical condition of the homes and environment. It includes capital investment in the homes such as new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers etc and also the revenue repairs which can be either planned such as gas servicing or responsive e.g. where a tenant reports a repair.

b) Risks

1. Maintenance Backlog

The backlog of repairs/ maintenance is investment to homes which is now due. It is a combination of:

- Work required to complete Decent Homes
- Picking up all of the backtrack properties, omits and refusals that have built up since 2004/05
- All elemental work that was not included in the Decent Homes Programme and has emerged as the Decent Homes Programme has stretched from 2010 to 2014

Work element	Maintenance Backlog (as at end 2012/13)
Decent Homes	99,122,800
Heating	26,312,392
Roofs	85,600,385
Electrics	18,810,740
Total	229,846,317

The maintenance backlog is a key risk because any delay to the work increases the risk of the boiler or roof or other component failing. If a boiler or roof fails it will trigger a responsive repair which is more expensive than the same work undertaken through a planned programme. The later the backlog is tackled, the higher the overall cost of the business plan and the greater the risk.

c) Updates

The aim of the investment programme in the first five years was to create an affordable plan to match expected resources and to try to address as much of the high risk maintenance backlog elements as possible in order to minimise costs overall.

Since these priorities were agreed in early 2012, work has been underway with tenants to agree how to sequence the works. This planning phase has been essential in order to secure tenant support for prioritisation of works but it has meant that some works have delayed. By the end of 2014 it is expected the programme will be back on track compared with the financial profile.

a. Essential investment work

The business plan made a commitment to begin exploring opportunities for making better use of already adapted properties with a view to tackling a potential oversupply of adapted properties. Work has been undertaken in 2012/13 to develop a better understanding of where in the city there exists the highest number of adapted properties and where there is greatest demand for adapted properties. The Lettings Policy Review is due to report to Cabinet in March 2013 and the letting of adapted properties is likely to be considered within that report.

Work has begun on developing a proposal for responding to the growing number of mobility scooters used by tenants living in council flats. This will be made available for consultation in 2013.

b.Maintenance backlog - Decent Homes

The business plan sets out how a commitment to tenants to complete the Decent Homes forward programme by 2014 would be met. Work on the forward programme is ongoing and on track. All tenants in the forward programme are now aware when work is to be carried out to their home.

2.Maintenance backlog - the rest of the backlog

Investment in obsolete heating systems and boilers is the top investment priority from the maintenance backlog and a commitment to tackle 90% of the heating backlog over the first 5 years of the plan was made in the business plan. This was in order to alleviate fuel poverty as well as reducing the high repair costs associated with boiler breakdowns.

Arrangements are now in place with the contractor and the work is expected to be completed by year 5 as planned.

The next priority from the maintenance backlog was roofs with significant and increasing resources being allocated from year 3 (2014/15) onwards. This programme remains as planned with high levels of activity profiled to continue beyond year 5 and into year 6 of the business plan (2017/18). Whilst beyond the current 5 year planning horizon it is anticipated that the 2018/19 budget for roofs will be at least £16.4m in order that the roofing programme can continue as planned and all roofs with a higher priority can be addressed.

3.Unfinished projects

Resources were set aside in the 5 year investment programme for regeneration / refurbishment schemes which were ongoing or yet to be worked up/ approved.

Funding set aside to support tenants to move home and make council dwellings safe where commitments have been given to tenants and residents (SWaN and Park Hill) will continue as planned.

Proposals for Arbourthorne are expected to be the subject of a Cabinet decision in 2013. Subject to this decision, additional HRA resources may be required from the capital programme.

The Council made a decision in respect of older people's accommodation in Stocksbridge on 26th September 2012. This included a decision to bring Balfour House up to the Sheffield Decent Homes Standard in 2013 and to continue with the decommissioning of Sweeney House as planned. This activity will be funded from the investment programme using existing resources.

4. Revenue Repairs

In recent years there has been ongoing financial pressure on the revenue repairs budget. The budget is demand led and is consequently hard to forecast. As the maintenance backlog is eroded over the coming years, this budget pressure should be alleviated and with this in mind, a comprehensive forecast of future revenue repairs costs linked to capital investment is being undertaken in 2012/13. This will be available for next year's review of the business plan. During

2013/14, pending the outcome of this review, it is recognised the repairs budget may face pressures in order that cyclical maintenance can continue as planned.

5. New investment activity for 2013/14

As a result of the overall improved financial position of the plan in 2013/14 new investment priorities are to be added to the council housing investment programme.

i. Council Housing New Build

The HRA will make use of additional resources released as a result of the transfer of council housing delivery into the council by launching a new build programme of 75 new family sized council houses over the next 3 years.

The new build programme will also allow the council to retain any additional receipts generated as a result of the government's 'reinvigoration' of the Right to Buy policy. The changed Right to Buy policy means that in order to retain such receipts locally they must be used as 30% funding for new affordable housing and the Council has entered into an agreement with Government to retain any additional receipts locally for this purpose. Based on current estimates (but with no trend data to base them on) this change in policy may generate an additional £1.3m receipts for affordable housing over the next 3 years.

The total cost of delivering 75 new homes will be around £9.5m. If additional Right to Buy receipts of £1.3m are realised the cost to the HRA will be just over £8m. However it must be stressed that the actual level of receipt income which will be generated as a result of the changed Right to Buy policy is not known.

A lead-in period is always required when undertaking new build. If this lead in period should extend such that additional receipt income cannot be charged against new build before Government deadlines, then the Council reserves the option to make acquisitions of properties in the short term. This would be a means of retaining the receipt within the HRA whilst maintaining stock numbers. Separate to the Right to Buy policy, the Council will also seek funding from the Government to support the purchase by the HRA of long term empty properties for use as council housing. If successful, such funding might be used to create additional council dwellings and rental income into the HRA.

The Council will also explore the viability and benefits of remodelling existing council properties in order to help meet changing demand.

ii. Communal Area Refurbishment

Because initial forecasts suggested the self financing determination from Government would not provide the resources needed, some activities were deemed unaffordable in the original business plan and not factored into the investment plan. Included in this list was the refurbishment of communal areas.

There are over 18,000 flats and maisonettes in the city located within about 3,000 blocks which have not benefitted from substantial refurbishment since they were built. Despite all the investment into the internal improvements through the Decent Homes Programme little or no investment has been made to communal areas. In addition to this as part of the fire risk assessments to flats it has been necessary to take away a mixture of unsafe communal furniture and carpets which have covered poor quality walls stairs and flooring. Unattractive communal areas have a major impact on how customers feel about

their home and neighbourhood and at a time when welfare reform will mean greater numbers of people looking to downsize, it is important that flats are an attractive option.

The Decent Homes environmental programme has carried out some door entry installations to low medium rise flats, but not all. Some poor quality communal windows and doors have been replaced but not all.

A new programme of communal area refurbishment will begin in 2013/14 with the focus initially on low rise flats. An additional £1.5m resources will be added to the capital programme for this purpose which, when matched with £1.4m existing funding for basic maintenance brought forward from later in the 30 year plan, will benefit around 3000 properties.

Investment will initially focus on communal door entry security systems but will extend to communal windows and floor coverings. Scoping work will also begin on developing the Council's approach to addressing the standard of communal areas in maisonettes.

Initial proposals for new investment activity are made in this business plan update for the next 3 years although current projections suggest that additional resources are likely to be available beyond this. How such additional resources are made best use of will be the subject of future discussions with tenants as the actual level of resource becomes clearer.

6. Other updates

Work has started in 2012/13 to review the current condition of garage assets in council ownership under the HRA, the income and expenditure of garages, consider the approach to maintenance and investment and make recommendations for investing / disinvesting in specific garages / garage sites in the future. The involvement of tenants in developing proposals is underway.

In September 2012 the Council decided to upgrade the city's community heating sites through the wider installation of heat metering.

d) Financial Summary

The table below sets out the updated investment and repairs budgets over the first years of the business plan.

The original 2012-17 business plan set out an investment programme of £257m over 5 years. No changes have been made to these original investment priorities and the £257m 5 year investment programme remains although some re-profiling of spend has taken place between years in order to allow time for tenants to have a meaningful say in how the investment is delivered locally. Other changes are the transfer of the budget for heat metering installation from 'Other' to 'Decent Homes' following the September decision to upgrade the community heating sites for the whole of the City in addition to the pilot areas previously approved, and refinement of the budgets for Roofs & Externals and Adaptations & DDA to reflect planned activity.

In addition to the existing 5 year programme, additional resource will be added from 2013/14 to fund new priorities and new investment activity. From 2013/14 a new build programme of 75 new council homes will commence. This will represent around £9.5m additional activity over 3 years which is expected to be funded partly from additional Right to Buy receipts (£1.3m) and the remainder from HRA resources. The new communal area refurbishment programme will be funded from £1.5m new resources matched with £1.4m existing resources from the 30 year plan

(for basic maintenance of communal areas). A consultation will be undertaken with tenants at the January City Wide Forum to assess the scope for reducing the 2013/14 Going Local budget by half (to £200k) with a view to using this funding to add to the refurbishment programme.

In order to maintain a 5 year planning horizon, a year 6 (2017/18) has been added to the programme, in line with the priorities set out in the original business plan.

Investment	2012/13 Expected outturn £m	2013/14 (incl. slippage) £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m	5 yr total £m	2017/18 £m
Essential investment work incl. Health & Safety	0.839	3.743	2.011	1.373	1.882	9.848	1.500
Adaptations & DDA	2.200	2.225	2.225	2.225	2.225	11.100	2.100
Regeneration	0.907	7.740	2.550	0.114	0.114	11.425	0.000
Waste	0.500	0.633	0.756	1.906	0.155	3.950	0.000
Other (sheltered lifts, community heating, programme mgt)	0.905	2.730	1.855	2.105	1.805	9.400	1.605
Decent Homes programme	20.820	31.776	2.599	3.300	0.000	58.494	0.000
Heating & boilers	7.600	7.700	10.050	8.250	8.250	41.850	3.500
Roofs & externals	0.050	2.004	21.922	25.310	21.364	70.650	26.300
Electrics	0.000	0.000	1.000	4.000	4.000	9.000	5.000
Other planned elementals (including backtracks)	0.000	6.600	3.547	6.144	15.055	31.346	17.895
Subtotal	33.820	65.150	48.515	54.727	54.850	257.062	57.900
New build programme	0.000	0.600	5.115	3.810	0.000	9.525	0.000
Communal area refurbishment	0.000	0.200	2.700	0.000	0.000	2.900	0.000
Total	33.820	65.950	56.330	58.537	54.850	269.487	57.900

Repairs	2012/13 Expected outturn £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m	5 yr total £m	2017/18 £m
Revenue repairs budget	32.7	33.1	33.1	33.9	34.8	167.6	35.4

5. TENANT SERVICES

a) Overview

This part of the business plan is concerned with the services provided to tenants. It includes services such as tenancy management, income management and re-housing services together with tenancy enforcement (ASB), supported housing, estate services and governance and involvement.

b) Risks

The main risk facing this aspect of the business plan is the challenge on services to gear up to meet the new demands brought about by welfare reform.

c) Updates

1. Ensure all income owed is collected

A key priority for the business plan was to begin work on mitigating the potential impact of the Government's welfare reforms and to start work on this early. The business plan made provision to fund additional staff for the Income Management Unit Team, a specialist debt worker based at the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Smartmove (previously grant funded).

It is now proposed that additional resources are allocated to this aspect of the business plan as follows;

a) *Visiting affected tenants (fast-tracked- already underway)*

Social landlords are stressing the importance of face to face contact with tenants when explaining the Government's welfare reform changes to tenants. They say that tenants report they had not understood the changes until they were explained in person.

Therefore additional staff are being recruited so that all tenants affected by the benefits cap and the under occupancy rules can be visited at home by April 2013 when the changes come into force.

b) *Training on welfare benefits for staff.*

The welfare reform changes are large scale and complex. It is proposed that Income Management Unit staff are provided training on the reforms to enable them to better signpost tenants to claim appropriate benefits.

c) *Support for under-occupying customers who wish to move*

In addition to the downsizing support offered through Smartmove, it is likely that more practical support with moving home) would be beneficial to tenants concerned about the implications of the under-occupancy rules on housing benefit. The cost of providing this additional support will be factored into the business plan.

d) *Payment methods*

The Council will look to increase the use of alternative payment methods such as direct debits and jam jar accounts to mitigate the risk associated with direct payments to rent accounts ending under the Universal Credit. The cost associated with administering these schemes would need to be funded and these costs will be factored into the business plan.

e) *Hardship Fund*

The Council will consider the benefits and viability of establishing a limited (HRA) fund that could be accessed by council tenants who are at severe risk of eviction. This would complement the Social Fund which transfers to the City Council from the Department for Work and Pensions in April 2013.

f) Increased funding to the CAB Debt Support Unit for another specialist

This would allow a further 150 tenants to be supported each year to help tenants manage and reduce debts, reduce the number of legal actions taken and improve the sustainability of tenancies.

2. Make best use of homes

The business plan made a commitment to make the re-housing process more effective and efficient by reviewing the lettings policy and introducing a new lettings website for the bidding process.

The completion date for the lettings policy review is now March 2013, with implementation in April 2014. The implementation date for the new lettings website is now July 2013. Due to the slippage to the timetable, efficiency savings associated with the new website have been reduced from £100k to £75k in 2013/14. This is offset by £75k staffing costs for implementation carried forward into 2013/14.

The business plan also had an ambition to improve the sustainability of tenancies over the long term. The Successful Tenancies scoping project completed in the summer of 2012 and it is proposed that the learning from this will be used to inform Future of Council Housing Service design work.

3. Attractive Neighbourhoods

A key aim for 2012/13 was to begin to reduce the high cost of estate services whilst ensuring neighbourhoods continue to be attractive and pleasant places to live. This was to be achieved in two ways.

a. Reviewing green and open space management on council housing land, including a 10% efficiency target for Sheffield Homes and Parks staff in relation to the work they undertake on council housing land.

- Work has commenced in 2012/13 on a pilot in the North East of the city to test integrated working between Sheffield Homes Estate Officers and Sheffield City Council Parks staff and whether this might offer financial efficiencies as well as a more joined up service for the customer.
- Green and Open Space, particularly grass cutting, has been a high tenant priority this year with two reviews of this work area launching in 2012 (Challenge for Change and the Future of Council Housing 'Safe and Attractive neighbourhoods' project). In order that these reviews have the opportunity to inform any design of the service it is proposed that implementation of the business plan's green and open space efficiency targets are delayed by 12 months.

b. Taking a coordinated approach to the prevention of fly tipping through investment in facilities, education and enforcement. This intervention was to be funded through savings made on bulky waste collection service.

- Savings from changes to the bulky waste service are being realised as planned.
- Proposals have been developed for a programme of education and enforcement and these will start to be implemented in a phased approach during 2012/13.

d) Other updates

1. Provision is made for a Going Local budget of £400k in 2013/14 although tenants will be consulted prior to April on whether this should be reduced to £200k to allow £200k to be allocated to investment into communal area refurbishment. This proposal comes as a high proportion of the Going Local budget is currently allocated to communal areas.

2. Cornhill Concierge - The original business plan proposal was to provide a concierge service at the Cornhill temporary accommodation scheme. The project has now been extended to enable relocation of the current office from two converted flats, therefore freeing these properties so they can be converted back to residential accommodation. This is expected to result in additional rental income of around £20k per year.

3 .Others - It is not proposed to make any changes to the plans set out in the original business plan in respect of the Night Time Noise service, the Homefinders service or Digital Region.

e) Financial Summary

The tables below set out the investment and efficiency savings expected during the 5 years of the business plan. Each figure represents a one-off saving (negative numbers) or cost (positive number) compared with the 2011/12 budget and does not take account of inflation.

Where the proposed numbers are different from those in the original business plan, the original numbers are shown in grey beneath the proposed figure.

Indicative figures have also been shown in a new year 6 column in order to maintain a 5 year planning horizon.

Existing activity to mitigate welfare reform	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
	12/13 (£000)	13/14 (£000)	14/15 (£000)	15/16 (£000)	16/17 (£000)	17/18 (£000)
Smartmove	70	70	70	70	70	70
Debt advice worker	40	40	40	40	40	40
Additional IMU staff – preventative & arrears work	50	190	190	190	190	190

=Original Business Plan figure if different from proposed

Proposed <u>additional</u> activity to mitigate welfare reform	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
	12/13 (£000)	13/14 (£000)	14/15 (£000)	15/16 (£000)	16/17 (£000)	17/18 (£000)
Visiting affected tenants	90 0	0	0	0	0	0
Training on Welfare Benefits	0	5 0	0	1 0	0	1 0
Support for under-occupying customers who want to move	14 0	27 0	14 0	14 0	0	0
Payment methods - jam jar	0	0	37 0	37 0	37 0	37 0
Hardship Fund	0	50 0	50 0	50 0	50 0	50 0
Payment methods - direct debit	0	0	25 0	25 0	25 0	25 0
Increased funding to the CAB Debt Support Unit for another specialist Debt Worker	0	40 0	40 0	40 0	40 0	40 0

Make best use of the homes we have	Yr1 1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
	12/13 (£000)	13/14 (£000)	14/15 (£000)	15/16 (£000)	16/17 (£000)	17/18 (£000)
Lettings Policy review implementation & efficiencies	185	140 150	-50	-50	-50	-50
Lettings ICT system - implementation & efficiencies	100	0 -100	-100	-100	-100	-100
Tenancy Sustainment – implementation & efficiencies	50	190	130	0	-250	-250

Invest to save on Estate Services – Open Space Maintenance	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
	12/13 (£000)	13/14 (£000)	14/15 (£000)	15/16 (£000)	16/17 (£000)	17/18 (£000)
Review of estate management arrangements (SH grounds maintenance saving)	0	0 -40	-40 -80	-80	-80	-80
Open space maintenance (10% saving)	0	0 -110	-110 -220	-220	-220	-220
Block cleaning - service improvements	0 50	50 75	75 100	100 125	125 150	150
Cleared Sites	0	-50	-100	-150	-200	-200

x =Original Business Plan figure

Invest to save on Estate Services – Fly tipping costs	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
	12/13 (£000)	13/14 (£000)	14/15 (£000)	15/16 (£000)	16/17 (£000)	17/18 (£000)
Savings from limiting bulky waste collections to one few collection per year	-145	-145	-145	-145	-145	-145
Education and enforcement investment	70 145	150	150	120	100	70
Savings on tipping charges	-20	-59	-97	-133	-169	-169
Savings on staff charges	-26	-78	-128	-177	-225	-225

Other ongoing investment priorities	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
	12/13 (£000)	13/14 (£000)	14/15 (£000)	15/16 (£000)	16/17 (£000)	17/18 (£000)
Going Local	-400	-400	-400	-400	-400	-400
Cornhill concierge (year 1 is capital, not revenue)	121 100	55 100	55 100	55 100	55 100	55
Night time noise service contribution	46	46	46	46	46	46
Homefinders service (pending review)	292	292	292	292	292	292
Digital region – implementation	30	0	0	0	0	0

=Original Business Plan figure if different from proposed

6. DEBT AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT

a) Overview

This section of the business plan is concerned with how we ensure the risks and opportunities associated with borrowing are optimised for the benefit of the HRA.

b) Risk

The key risk to this element of the business plan is interest rate risk. The HRA currently supports around £346m borrowing. This costs around £18m in interest payments each year. Interest rates can affect the business plan in two ways; on existing variable rate loans, but also when the HRA takes on new loans at a higher than forecast fixed rate. Both of these risks have to be understood and mitigated against in the business plan.

HRA borrowing is made up of a number of different fixed and variable rate loans. As each loan matures the Council can choose to repay it either from rental income, or by taking out a new loan (refinancing). If the Council chooses to repay through refinancing the new loan may either be cheaper or more expensive than the original, depending on interest rates at the time. In order to mitigate the risk of having to take on new debt at high interest rates it is preferable to ensure the Council can always afford to *choose* whether to pay off newly maturing debt from income or by refinancing so is never held to ransom by high interest rates.

c) Key updates

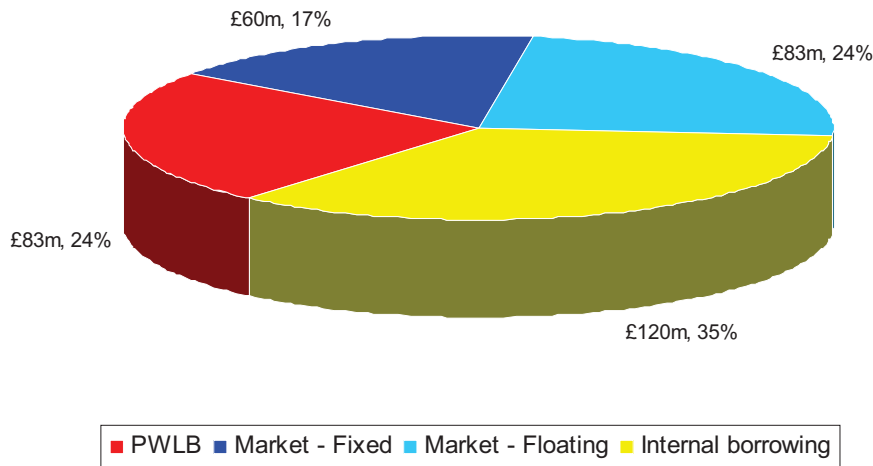
1. The self financing transaction and subsequent de-pooling of debt

The move to self financing resulted in £518m of Sheffield's HRA debt being written-off by Government on 28th March 2012. This reduced the HRA's borrowing requirement from £864m to £346m and took the HRA's share of the Council's overall borrowing requirement from 68% to 45%.

'Self financing' required the separation of HRA debt from General Fund debt and the management and accounting of each separately. Therefore from April 1st the HRA was required to take 45% of the Council's overall debt portfolio which consisted of fixed-rate PWLB loans, fixed-rate bank (LOBO) loans, floating-rate bank (LOBO) loans and internal borrowing.

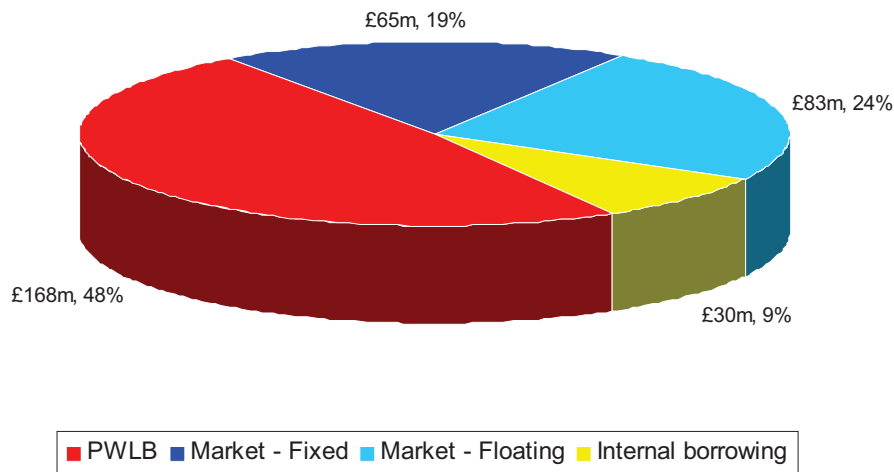
HRA debt has now been decoupled from the General Fund for debt management purposes with each type of loan equitably assigned between HRA and General Fund. As of April 2012 the HRA's debt structure was as follows:

Debt Structure as at April 2012



At the start of the year the HRA had a significant amount of internal borrowing. Internal borrowing represents the Council's use of cash reserves to finance capital expenditure. This was only a temporary measure and throughout the year a significant proportion of the HRA's internal borrowing needed to be replaced by external borrowing. This has given the HRA the opportunity to take advantage of highly favourable borrowing rates throughout the year which has resulted in lower than forecast interest rate costs to the HRA for 2012/13 and beyond.

Debt Structure forecast April 2013



2. Developing our approach for managing interest rate risk

The interest rate risk for the HRA is significant and is due to:

1. The amount of floating-rate debt (24%); and,
2. The need to refinance fixed rate debt as and when it matures.

The original business plan set out how one of the continuing challenges for the business plan was the repayment of debt. It said that in choosing to prioritise the funding of the maintenance

backlog, the business plan could not afford to pay off debt over 30 years. This would result in continuing interest rate payments and less resource to fund other activities. The business plan's inability to repay debt over 30 years was also a concern in respect of interest rate risk as it increases the likelihood of the HRA having no choice but to refinance newly maturing loans in the future, even if interest rates are prohibitively high at the time.

During 2012/13 work has been undertaken to develop the Council's approach for mitigating interest rate risk in the business plan. Three strategies are being considered.

- i. Build the financial capacity into the plan to repay debt over the 30 years of the plan
- ii. Quantify interest rate risk exposure to the plan over the next 5 years and build a financial contingency into the HRA reserve to cover it
- iii. Set aside an amount of money each year for the repayment of debt in line with the business plan's debt maturity profile (the dates when debt matures and becomes repayable)

The first option has been the interim approach taken by the Council in the transfer to self financing. The premise being that if the plan has the capacity to repay debt over 30 years then any refinancing decisions over the 30 years will be the Council's to make. However, this approach sees the financial capacity to repay debt built into the plan in the later years as financial resources in the early years are prioritised on the maintenance backlog. In the original business plan this capacity was insufficient to repay all debt.

As a result of the improved financial position described in this update report for 2013/14 the business plan does now have the capacity to repay debt over a 30 year period. However, in recognition that this approach does not set aside resources for the repayment of debt until the later years of the plan provision is made in the HRA reserve (option ii) to mitigate interest rate risk in the short to medium term.

Whilst option ii in this list does provide cover to the business plan in the event of interest rate rises in the early years it does not provide the resources for the repayment of debt, only the interest payments. If it were in the best interests of the business plan to repay debt one year, then additional resources would have to be found (most probably out of the capital programme) to fund it.

Therefore it is proposed that in the coming months work is undertaken to explore option iii as a more robust means of mitigating interest rate risk in the business plan. This would see the HRA set aside resources to reflect the maturity profile of its actual current loan portfolio. This would not only mitigate interest rate risk for the business plan but would give more flexibility to create borrowing headroom and tailor the HRA's loan portfolio to the needs to of the business plan. The challenge would be to do this whilst still allowing a sufficient level of resources for investment in the maintenance backlog.

Any *new* borrowing undertaken by the HRA since April 2012 (the start of self financing) will be undertaken in line with option iii and will have a repayment plan.

7. VALUE FOR MONEY

a) Overview

This section on value for money underpins all aspects of the business plan. The section also reviews overheads and support costs such as management costs, accommodation costs and Service Level Agreement (SLA) costs.

b) Risk

The risk to this section of the business plan is that efficiency targets built into the plan do not materialise or that costs associated with achieving them exceed budget. The main risk at this time is the Repairs and Maintenance Redesign as no decision has yet been made about how the efficiencies set out in the business plan will be delivered.

c) Key updates

1. Back Office Efficiencies

The original target in the business plan was to achieve efficiency savings of 10% in 2012/13 and 7.5% in 2013/14 on Sheffield City Council and Sheffield Homes support costs. It is proposed these targets remain.

2. Future of Council Housing Efficiencies

At the time of the first business plan the ballot was yet to be held so no efficiencies and only £180k project costs were factored into the plan. It is now proposed that £1.2m efficiency savings are built into the plan together with a budget for implementation costs. It is also proposed that Sheffield Homes reserves are factored in to the HRA from 2013/14.

3. Repairs and Maintenance service redesign

A business plan priority is for a value for money repairs and maintenance service ready for 2014: "The HRA Business Plan assumes an efficiency saving of 2% (£665k) on the repairs and maintenance service post 2014 but this is dependent on the procurement". As well as this efficiency target £300k procurement costs for 2012- 2014 were factored into the plan.

The Council is now looking at the options for the HRA Repairs and Maintenance Service with a Cabinet decision expected in early 2013.

d) Financial Summary

The table below set out the investment and efficiency savings expected during the 5 years of the business plan. Each figure represents a one-off savings (negative numbers) or cost (positive number) compared with the 2011/12 budget and does not take account of inflation.

Where the proposed numbers are different from those in the original business plan, the original numbers are shaded grey.

Indicative figures have also been shown in a new year 6 column in order to maintain a 5 year planning horizon.

Value for money	Yr1 1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
	12/13 (£000)	13/14 (£000)	14/15 (£000)	15/16 (£000)	16/17 (£000)	17/18 (£000)
SCC/SH support cost efficiencies	-673	-1178	-1290	-1403	-1403	-1403
Future of Council Housing project costs	196	196	0	0	0	0
	180	0				
Future of Council Housing project implementation/ efficiencies	-25	-400	-1200	-1200	-1200	-1200
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repairs & maintenance implementation and post 2014 efficiencies	200	100	-665	-665	-665	-665

=Original Business Plan figure

HRA Financial Information

Annex A

Housing Revenue Account – 5 year projections

Year	2012/13 (Forecast outturn as at October 2012)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total 2013/14 to 2017/18
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Income							
INCOME TOTAL	-142.2	-147.4	-153.9	-161.1	-166.0	-170.9	-799.3
Income from rents	-136.0	-141.4	-147.9	-155.0	-159.8	-164.5	-768.6
Other income	-6.2	-6.0	-6.0	-6.1	-6.2	-6.4	-30.7
Expenditure							
Homes – revenue repairs	32.7	33.1	33.1	33.9	34.8	35.4	170.3
Homes – funding for Capital programme – depreciation	36.4	37.1	38.0	38.9	39.9	40.9	194.8
Tenant services (including overheads/ support costs)	49.9	51.3	50.8	51.8	52.8	54.3	261.0
Interest on debt	15.7	17.6	17.3	17.5	17.8	18.1	88.3
Other expenditure	0.8	1.0	2.7	2.1	2.2	3.4	11.4
Total	135.5	140.1	141.9	144.2	147.5	152.1	725.8
Surplus (-) or Deficit	-6.7	-7.3	-12.0	-16.9	-18.5	-18.8	-73.5
Opening revenue reserve	-11.7	-25.5	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	
Surplus (-) or Deficit	-6.7	-7.3	-12.0	-16.9	-18.5	-18.8	
Contribution to the Capital Programme	0.4	22.8	12.0	16.9	18.5	18.8	
Sheffield Homes Reserve	-7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Closing revenue reserve	-25.5	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	-10.0	

Capital Account – 5 year projections

Year	2012/13 (Forecast outturn as at October 2012)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total 2013/14 to 2017/18
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Expenditure							
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	33.8	66.0	56.3	58.5	54.8	57.9	293.5
Funding							
Homes – funding for Capital programme depreciation	-36.4	-37.1	-38.0	-38.9	-39.9	-40.9	-194.8
Revenue Surplus	0.0	-7.3	-12.0	-16.9	-18.5	-18.8	-73.5
Contribution from revenue reserves	-0.4	-15.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-15.5
Borrowing	0.0	0.0	-4.3	-1.6	0.0	0.0	-5.9
RTB receipts	-1.3	-1.4	-1.2	-0.9	-1.2	-1.2	-5.9
Other capital contributions	-0.2	-0.2	-0.8	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-1.6
Total funding	-38.3	-61.5	-56.3	-58.5	-59.8	-61.1	-297.2
Capital balance b/f	0	-4.5	0	0	0	-5.0	
Use of /- contribution to balances in year	-4.5	4.5	0	0	-5.0	-3.2	
Capital balance c/f	-4.5	0	0	0	-5.0	-8.2	

HRA Financial Assumptions

Annex B

The detailed financial model behind the HRA Business Plan includes a number of assumptions we have used to understand what resources will be available for council housing over the next five years in the context of the next thirty years. These baseline assumptions are listed below.

Revenue assumptions	Assumption
Homes – opening number of homes in 2012/13	41,361
Homes - dwellings by 2042	36,816
Number of RTBs 2013/14	149
Total number of RTBs by 2042	4,285
Rents assumed at inflation + 0.5% from 2013/14	Based on 2.75%
Convergence date	2015-16
All income lines excluding supported housing funding	Increased by inflation 2.75% from year 3 (2014/15)
Supported housing subsidy	No uplift
Management costs for Sheffield Homes and SCC	Increased by inflation 2.75% from year 3 (2014/15)
Bad Debts	Average of 1% of debt
Void rate	1.55%
Repairs	Increased by contractual inflation to 2014 then 2.75%
HRA reserves are maintained in accordance with risk based reserves strategy	£10m in 2013/14

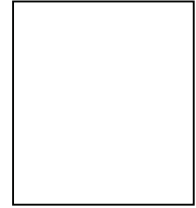
Debt assumptions	Assumption
Opening HRA Borrowing requirement as of 1 st April 2012	£349m
HRA borrowing limit	£391m
Interest rates on HRA debt	Approx rates 4.1% to 5.2%

Capital assumptions	Assumption
Capital receipts	£9,417 RTB receipts credited to HRA to cover average debt per dwelling. Additional receipts used towards affordable housing.
Capital management fee has been assumed throughout the model	£3.7 million per annum 2013/14
SCC capital costs council housing investment	£0.605 million per annum 2013/14

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report



Report of: Eugene Walker

Date: 19 June 2013

Subject: Revenue & Capital Year End Financial Position
2012/13

Author of Report: Allan Rainford; 35108

Summary: This report provides the full year outturn statement on the City Council's Revenue and Capital Budget for 2012/13.

Reasons for Recommendations To formally record changes to the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme and gain Member approval for changes in line with Financial Regulations and to reset the capital programme in line with latest information.

Recommendations:

Please refer to paragraph 115 of the main report for the recommendations.

Category of Report: OPEN/~~CLOSED~~

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial implications
YES/NO Cleared by: Eugene Walker
Legal implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Equality of Opportunity implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Tackling Health Inequalities implications
YES/NO
Human rights implications
YES/NO :
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES/NO
Economic impact
YES/NO
Community safety implications
YES/NO
Human resources implications
YES/NO
Property implications
YES/NO
Area(s) affected
Relevant Scrutiny Board if decision called in
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council? NO
Press release
YES/NO

THE COUNCIL'S OUTTURN POSITION FOR 2012/13

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report provides the final year-end position on the City Council's Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2012/13, subject to review by the external auditors. The first section covers Revenue Budget Outturn and the Capital Programme is reported from paragraph 89.

REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN

SUMMARY

2. The outturn position on the revenue account is summarised in the table below:

Portfolio	Outturn £000s	Budget £000s	Variance £000s	Movement from Month 11
CYPF	81,019	81,273	(254)	↑
PLACE	165,927	166,800	(873)	↓
COMMUNITIES	173,552	170,743	2,809	↑
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	11,625	11,816	(191)	↓
RESOURCES	60,456	60,821	(365)	↔
CORPORATE	(493,038)	(491,453)	(1,585)	↓
GRAND TOTAL	(460)	(0)	(460)	↓
Carry forwards			460	
ADJUSTED GRAND TOTAL				

- (0)
3. As part of the analysis of the outturn position, Portfolios have identified a requirement to carry resources forward to 2013/14. Some of these resources relate to grants that will be required in the next financial year.
4. The outturn position shows a contribution to balances of £460k by the year end. Based on a net revenue budget of £463m for 2012/13, this is equivalent to a variance of approximately 0.1% and therefore represents a broadly balanced position. Although there have been issues in Portfolio's that have resulted in spending varying from budget, the position on corporate budgets has enabled the Council to achieve this favourable year end position.

5. The reasons for the £1.4m improvement from month 11 are:
- Children Young People and Families are reporting an adverse movement of £364k since month 11 due to a review of year end liabilities and subsequent accruals to cover contractual commitments within Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities for training.
 - Place are reporting an improvement of £135k since month 11. There are no significant movements to report with the overall improvement being attributable to small savings across a number of services.
 - Communities are reporting an adverse movement of £142k since month 11, due predominantly to increased costs relating to Adults Social Care and the Learning Disability Service of £512k. This adverse movement is partly offset by a reduction in spending within Community Assemblies of £154k and £168k from small savings across the Business Strategy service.
 - Deputy Chief Executive are reporting an improvement of £224k since month 11. As with the Place portfolio, there are no significant movements to report with the overall improvement being attributable to small savings across a number of services.
 - Corporate are reporting an improvement of £1.5m since month 11 due to reduced cost of borrowing and increased investment income within the Capital Finance budget of £1.1m and savings relating to the expected costs for Digital Region and Carbon Reduction Credits of £629k and £312k respectively. The improvement on Digital Region only emerged at year-end because the decision on the company was finalised later than planned in the year.

INDIVIDUAL PORTFOLIO POSITIONS

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES (CYPF)

Summary

6. As at month 12 the Portfolio is reporting a full year outturn of a reduction in spending of £254k, an adverse movement of £364k from the month 11 position. The key reasons for the outturn position are:
- **Children and Families:** £288k reduction in spending, due to savings within Early Years, Placements, Prevention and Early Intervention,

Fostering Services, Placement Strategy Budgets and Youth Justice Service.

- **Business Strategy:** £206k overspend, mainly due to an overspend of 3 and 4 year Free Early Learning (FEL) of £472k, which has been partially offset by a reduction in spending of £349k on 2 year FEL.

Financials (Non – DSG activity)

Service	Outturn £000s	Budget £000s	Variance £000s	Movement from Month 11
BUSINESS STRATEGY	15,117	14,911	206	↔
CHILDREN & FAMILIES	53,240	53,528	(288)	↔
INCLUSION & LEARNING SERVICES	5,289	5,396	(106)	↔
LIFELONG LEARN, SKILL & COMMUN	7,372	7,438	(66)	↑
GRAND TOTAL	81,019	81,273	(254)	↑

Commentary

DSG and Non DSG Budgets

7. The following commentary concentrates on the changes from the previous month.

Non DSG Budgets

8. The actual £254k reduction in spending on Non DSG budgets is an adverse movement of £364k from the month 11 position.
9. This change is due mainly to a review of liabilities at the year-end. This review identified contractual commitments within Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities for training contracts that the Council is contractually obliged to deliver and therefore a liability has been taken to recognise the expenditure in this financial year.

DSG Budgets

10. The following is a summary of the outturn position on DSG budgets which have underspent by £2.9m in total and are reflected in the DSG reserves movements detailed below:

	Month 11 £000	Month 12 £000
Business Strategy	(647)	(2,336)
Children and Families	(347)	(329)
Inclusion and Learning Services	(58)	(174)
Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities	(60)	(96)
	(1,112)	(2,935)

11. The key reasons for the movement from the month 11 position are:
- **Business Strategy:** an improved movement of £1.7m, this is due to an improvement of £1.7m on the Individual Schools Budgets. This is due to additional drawdown of DSG grant income in month 12 which was not known at month 11.
 - **Inclusion and Learning Services:** an improved movement of £116k, this is due to small improvements in the actual outturn position across the service, compared to the forecast month 11.

Use of Reserves

CYPF non-DSG Reserves

12. CYPF has in place non-DSG reserves which have been built up as a result of planned reduction in spending. The balance on non DSG reserves at 1 April 2012 was £371k.
13. There have been no withdrawals from reserves during this financial year. Of the £371k, £333k is related to Aldine House and it has previously been agreed to retain this to support the service from fluctuations in demands.
14. During the year, a number of carry forward requests have been approved in principle and added to the reserve balance, these are:
- Successful Families - £1.8m.
 - Apprenticeships - £630k.
 - City Skills Fund - £350k.
15. The balance on non DSG reserves at 31 March 2013 was £3.1m.

DSG Reserves

16. The central DSG reserve at 1 April 2012 was £6.2m. During 2012/13 £5.8m of these reserves were drawn down. The central DSG budget has under spent to the value of £2.9m as reported in the table above; the cumulative balance at 31 March 2013 is therefore £3.3m. All the balance is earmarked for specific projects in future years.
17. Reserves of £19m were held by individual schools as at 1 April 2012. Schools have withdrawn £1m from the reserve in 2012/13 as a result of their outturn positions. As a result of Academy conversions £4.9m of the school balances have been paid to the Academies during the year. Reserves held by Schools at 31 March 2013 were £13.1m.

PLACE

Summary

18. As at month 12 the Portfolio is reporting a full year outturn of a reduction in spending of £873k, an improvement of £135k from the month 11 position. The key reasons for the outturn position are:

- **Development Services:** £935k reduction in spend due to staff vacancy savings across the whole service area (£1.2m), slippage of Local Growth Fund project spend (£215k) and the re-prioritisation of staff on to Local Growth Funded projects (£211k), offset to some extent by reductions in income within car parking and planning (£900k).
- **HERS:** £274k reduction in spend largely due to planned slippage of Local Growth Fund project spend into the following financial year.
- **Street Force:** £183k overspend due to costs of backdated pay and grading appeals and increased bad debt provisions relating to historic debts which are now being closed following the implementation of the Highways PFI.
- **Marketing Sheffield:** £129k overspend due budget due to reductions in forecast grant/fee income from major events.

Financials

Service	Outturn £000s	Budget £000s	Variance £000s	Movement from Month 11
BUSINESS STRATEGY & REGULATION	32,116	32,111	5	↔
CREATIVE SHEFFIELD	5,899	5,979	(80)	↔
CULTURE & ENVIRONMENT	41,259	41,192	67	↔
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	84,355	85,290	(935)	↔
HERS	1,622	1,896	(274)	↔
MARKETING SHEFFIELD	1,166	1,037	129	↔
STREET FORCE	(872)	(1,055)	183	↔
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	383	350	33	↔
GRAND TOTAL	165,927	166,800	(873)	↓

Commentary

19. There are no significant movements to report with the overall improvement being attributable to small savings across a number of services. However there are a few key issues affecting the following service areas.

Development Services

20. A key risk for the service has been in securing £10m planned external fee income from planning, building regulation and car parking activities, where actual fees generated were around £900k below budget.
21. However, the above pressure has been more than offset this year primarily by reductions in staff costs due to vacancies across the whole service of around £1.2m, together with the re-prioritisation of core staff to Local Growth Funded projects (£211k).

Housing Enterprise and Regeneration

22. The outturn for this activity is £274k reduction in spending, broadly in line with the previous period's forecast.
23. A further key variance is an estimated £300k for potential grant 'claw-back' following a recent European audit on Tudor Square. Work is ongoing to ascertain the most realistic level of claw-back and mitigate any further recovery of grants paid.

COMMUNITIES

Summary

24. The Portfolio's outturn position is an over spend of £2.8 million, an adverse movement of £142k from the month 11 position. The key reasons for the outturn position are:
 - **Business Strategy:** a £1.4m reduction in spending against budget, due mainly to contingencies held in Portfolio-Wide Services to offset overspends on care purchasing budgets (especially in Learning Disabilities (LD) services). This is a slight improvement compared to last month's position.
 - **Care and Support:** a £6.4m overspend, due to LD purchasing (£2.9m), LD Transport contract (£177k), Provider Services (£276k), Adult Social Care purchasing (£4.9m), with some reductions in Assessment & Care Management and LD staffing costs against budget. These overspends are offset, to some degree, by reduction in spend against budget in Housing-Related Services of £274k. This position represents an adverse movement of £512k from the previous month.
- Commissioning:** a reduction in spending against budget of £1.9m due to: Mental Health Commissioning - £1.0m overspend on care purchasing; Social Care Commissioning – £2.6m reduction in spend against budget as a result of the release of funds unspent in previous years into 2012/13 revenue budgets and reduction in spend on LD

ex-Health care and accommodation provision. Housing Commissioning - £382k net reduction in spending against budget across several areas, reported in detail in PLT/SMT reports. This position is an improvement of £68k compared to last month.

Community Services: a reduction in spend against budget of £173k, a slight improvement compared to last month's position.

Financials

Service	Outturn £000s	Budget £000s	Variance £000s	Movement from Month 11
BUSINESS STRATEGY	14,900	16,333	(1,434)	↓
CARE AND SUPPORT	109,450	103,089	6,361	↑
COMMISSIONING	38,336	40,281	(1,946)	↔
COMMUNITY SERVICES	10,866	11,039	(173)	↓
GRAND TOTAL	173,552	170,743	2,809	↑

Commentary

25. The following commentary concentrates on the changes from the previous month.

Business Strategy

26. £1.4m reduction in spending against budget, mainly due to contingencies held to offset the adult social care purchasing position. This is a slight improvement compared to last month's position made up of various, small movements in each area.

Care and Support

27. The outturn for this service is a £6.4m overspend against budget. This is an adverse movement of £512k from the previous month and is mainly due to:

- **Assessment & Care Management:** adverse movement of £825k in Adult Social Care purchasing, due, mainly to the full, net, effect of year end assets and liabilities recognised between SCC and SPCT (Health) for Adult Social Care purchasing.
- **Joint Learning Disabilities Service:** adverse movement of £262k due, mainly to the assets & liabilities referred to above.
- **Housing Related Services:** an improvement of £149k due to further grant income.
- **Contributions to Care:** an improvement of £361k due to assets recognised between SCC and SPCT (Health) and a review of property-related debt assets.

- The remaining variance is due to the cumulative effect of reduced spend against salary budgets across Care & Support services.

Community Services

28. The outturn for this service is a £173k reduction in spend against budget. This is an improvement of £134k from the previous month due to reductions in spend by Community Assemblies of £154k and a small underspend in central costs.

RESOURCES

Summary

29. The Portfolio is reporting a full year outturn of a reduction in spending of £365k, an improvement of £59k from the month 11 position. The key reasons for the outturn position are:

- £394k under spend in central costs /Housing Benefit and Council Tax;
- £157k additional income in Commercial Services (Savings) due to achieving increased savings (net of E Business project costs);
- £202k under spend in Transport due to reduced expenditure in the workshops following the transfer to AMEY.

Offset by:

- £240k overspend in BIS, in part due to anticipated delay in Achieving Change process required to make staff savings;
- £258k over spend in Customer Services due to transfer of staff costs from Customer First Programme.

Financials

Service	Outturn £000s	Budget £000s	Variance £000s	Movement from Month 11
BUSINESS INFORMATION SOLUTIONS	282	42	240	↔
COMMERCIAL SERVICES	1,905	1,899	6	↔
COMMERCIAL SERVICES (SAVINGS)	(977)	(820)	(157)	↑
CUSTOMER FIRST	3,564	3,565	(1)	↔
CUSTOMER SERVICES	3,185	2,927	258	↔
FINANCE	1,780	1,870	(90)	↔
HUMAN RESOURCES	432	479	(47)	↔
LEGAL SERVICES	2,317	2,276	41	↓
PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS	1,622	1,688	(66)	↔
PROPERTY AND FACILITIES MGT	30,319	30,272	47	↓
TRANSPORT	22	224	(202)	↔
TOTAL	44,451	44,422	29	↔
CENTRAL COSTS	17,183	15,647	1,536	↔
HOUSING & COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT	(1,178)	752	(1,930)	↔
GRAND TOTAL	60,456	60,821	(365)	↔

Commentary

30. The following commentary concentrates on the changes from the previous month.

Commercial Services (Savings)

31. The outturn for this service is a £157k reduction in spending. This is an adverse movement of £335k from the previous month. The adverse movement this month is due to £318k being utilised to part fund the implementation costs of the E- Business project. The service has achieved gross cashable procurement savings of £1.7m, £476k in excess of target.

Legal Services

32. The outturn for this service is a £41k overspend. This is an improvement of £170k from the previous month and is due to additional recharge income in month 12.

Property and Facilities Management

33. The outturn for this service is a £47k overspend. This is an improvement of £209k from the previous month and is due to additional recharges of Kier and legal fees to portfolios of £472k. This improvement is partly offset by additional spending on minor works and unanticipated PFI costs £256k.

Central Costs

34. The overall position has improved by £83k. Central costs (excluding Capita) have reported an outturn of £2.4m underspent, the result of exceeding targets on the reduction of benefits subsidy transfer payments paid to claimants. The Capita contract costs have improved by £155k since Month 11, notably on Capita – Finance, but are £2m over spent for the year.

Central Costs	Variance	Forecast Variance
	Outturn	Month 11
	£ 000	£ 000
Capita – Control Account	602	692
Capita – ICT BIS	834	767
Capita – Finance	353	561
Capita - HR	243	167
Sub total Capita	2032	2187
Benefits subsidy	(1930)	(1885)
Other Central Costs	(496)	(613)
Total	(394)	(311)

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S

Summary

35. The Portfolio is reporting a full year outturn of a reduction in spending of £191k, an improvement of £224k from the month 11 position. The key reasons for the outturn position are:

- Increased costs of elections and registration of £221k.

Off set by:

- delay in spending the DEFRA grant for reservoir flood planning of £53k.
- £161k under spend in Business Development due to salary sacrifice and vacant posts.
- £57k reduction in spending in Performance and Corporate Planning due to vacancy management and increased income.
- £66k reduction in spending in Policy Partnership and Research due to £30k Fairness Commission funding and vacancy management.
- £39k reduction in spending in Sheffield First.

Financials

Service	Outturn £000s	Budget £000s	Variance £000s	Movement from Month 11
ACCOUNTABLE BODY ORGANISATIONS	(39)	(0)	(39)	↔
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	2,575	2,736	(161)	↔
E-CAMPUS	814	814	(0)	↔
HEALTH IMPROVEMENT	124	125	(1)	↔
MODERN GOVERNANCE	3,899	3,767	132	↔
PERFORMANCE AND CORP PLANNING	730	787	(57)	↔
POLICY, PARTNERSHIP, AND RESEARCH	3,521	3,587	(66)	↔
GRAND TOTAL	11,625	11,816	(191)	↓

Commentary

36. There are no significant movements to report with the overall improvement being attributable to small savings across a number of services.

CORPORATE ITEMS

Summary

37. The outturn position for Corporate budgets is a £1.6m reduction in spending which is an improvement of £1.5m since month 11. The table below shows the items which are classified as Corporate and which include:

- **Corporate Budget Items:** corporate wide budgets that are not allocated to individual services / portfolios, including capital financing costs and the provision for redundancy / severance costs.
- **Corporate Savings:** the budgeted saving on review of management costs and budgeted saving from improved sundry debt collection.
- **Corporate income:** Formula Grant and Council tax income, some specific grant income and contributions from reserves.

Financials

	FY Outturn £'000	FY Budget £'000	FY Variance £'000
Corporate Budget Items	32,465	35,149	-2,684
Savings Proposals	-387	-1,494	1,107
Income from Council Tax, RSG, NNDR, other grants and reserves	-525,116	-525,108	-8
Total Corporate Budgets	-493,038	-491,453	-1,585

Commentary

38. The following commentary concentrates on the changes from the previous month.

Corporate Budget Items

39. Corporate Budget items are reporting an outturn reduction in spending of £2.7m, which is an improvement of £2.1m from the month 11 forecast.
40. The temporary reduced cost of borrowing and increased investment income within the capital financing budget accounts for £630k of the reduction in spending and is an improvement of £130k from month 11. Another improvement in this area included additional income of £253k generated from lending to the Housing Revenue Account from General Fund.
41. Approval was sought through the revenue budget process to change the way the Council puts money aside each year to repay debt, reflecting that there is often a time lag between capitalisation directives being recognised in the accounts and debt actually being incurred by way of payments out of the bank account. Approval for this new policy has allowed the Council to delay the start of debt repayment provisions being made for the Digital Region capitalisation until we begin to pay out cash, along with deferment of some charges on the Equal Pay capitalisation that has not yet been fully drawn down on. This policy change has reduced the charge for debt provisions by £735k.
42. There was a £3.8m budget for the potential impact of Digital Region in the 2012/13 budget. Part of this budget was required to cover the interest and debt costs of the capitalised £12m dealt with in the 2011/12 accounts. Additional revenue grants of £2.6m to support the continuation of Digital Region have also been made. The total expenditure has resulted in a £629k reduction in spending against the original budget.
43. A reduction in spending against Carbon Reduction Credits of £312k is being reported in outturn. This improvement was not previously reported due to uncertainty surrounding the charge per credit, items included or not in the scheme (Street lighting) and the level of CYP contribution to costs.

Savings Proposals

44. The outturn position on Savings Proposals of a £1.1m overspend is an adverse movement of £536k from the month 11 forecast.

45. Sundry debt collection rates and the subsequent reduction of the savings proposal, accounts for £563k of the overspend. This is consistent with the month 11 forecast.

NON-EARMARKED AND EARMARKED REVENUE RESERVES - APPENDIX 1

47. Within the existing statutory and regulatory framework, it is the responsibility of the Executive Director of Resources to ensure that the City Council has an adequate level of reserves and that there are clear protocols for their establishment and use.
48. Work on the reserves balances as at 31 March 2013 is still being undertaken and is dependent on the completion of the statement of accounts. However, the estimated balance of revenue reserves as at 31 March 2013 is £62.8m. This is shown in Appendix 1. Included in the total is a figure of £11.2m of un-earmarked reserves, this is considered to be a prudent amount based on the requirements of the Council.
49. The estimated balance of revenue reserves as at 31 March 2013 is £9.1m higher than the figure of £53.7m stated in the 2013/14 revenue budget report. This is because spending has been deferred and will now occur from those balances during the course of 2013/14. One such example is the Major Sporting Facilities (MSF) reserve which is referred to in a separate report on the agenda.
50. The Major Sporting Facilities (MSF) and PFI reserves exist because of the need to smooth the significant payments made on the MSF and PFI schemes over the 20 year plus terms of the underlying agreements. In both cases the costs being incurred at the moment are lower than the resources available hence we have a temporary surplus. However, over time, this position changes and future payments are higher than our resources and the reserves will be needed to support their primary purpose (around 2015 to 2016).
51. The Council has made significant use of the money from these reserves to fund things on a temporary basis and it is part of the financial plan to have the reserves refunded by the time the call on them is required. The main temporary use has been to support investment in key change projects through Invest to Save and priorities like Highway PFI.

52. Earmarked reserves are set aside to meet known or predicted liabilities, such as equal pay liabilities, but ones that are not certain enough to create an exact provision in the accounts. The liabilities are, however, likely enough to say that the earmarked reserves are not normally available to fund the budget or other measures.

INSURANCE FUND

53. An independent review of the Insurance Account has been undertaken to identify the level of fund required. This includes:
- Known outstanding liabilities.
 - Incurred but not reported liabilities (IBNR), residual IBNR and incurred but not enough reserved (IBNER).
 - Claims previously paid by Municipal Mutual Insurance (one of the Council's Insurers who went in to a form of receivership in the 1990's) in case MMI does not achieve a solvent run off and payments are clawed back from the Council.
 - Emerging claims.
 - Uninsured asbestos related claims.
54. Since the actuarial review the Directors of MMI 'triggered' the scheme of arrangement under section 425 of the Companies Act 1985 (now section 899 of the Companies Act 2006). Ernst & Young are now responsible for the management of the MMI's business, affairs and assets in accordance with the terms of the Scheme.
55. The Scheme provides that following the occurrence of a Trigger Event, a levy may be imposed on all those scheme creditors which, since the record date, have paid an amount or amounts in respect of established scheme liabilities which, together with the amount of elective defence costs paid by MMI on its behalf, exceeding £50k in aggregate. Additionally, payments made after the imposition of a Levy in respect of established scheme creditors will be made at a reduced rate (the payment percentage).
56. Ernst & Young have carried out a review of assets and liabilities of MMI and concluded that the initial rate of the levy will be 15%, which will be raised in the near future. The levy will be reviewed at least once every 12 months.
57. The Council has a potential claw back of £4.5m with MMI and £640k relating to South Yorkshire Residuary Body (SYRB).

58. The Insurance Account as at 31 March 2013 has £18.5m. Outstanding liabilities as at 31 March 2013 are £22.8m, taking into account repudiation it would be prudent to set aside £18m.
59. The Insurance Account is therefore 103% funded as at 31 March 2013. A review will be undertaken in 2013/14 to ascertain the financial impact on outstanding claims with MMI as following setting the levy Ernst & Young are required by the scheme to instigate payment of all claims at a payment percentage, being 100% less the Levy. Consequently the initial payment will be 85%.

COLLECTION FUND – APPENDIX 2

60. The Council has to maintain a separate fund for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates. As at 31 March 2013, the Council's Collection Fund showed a final surplus of £2.4m (of which the Council's element is around £2m). No surplus or deficit balance was taken into account in setting both the Council Tax and Revenue Budget for 2013/14. However, the surplus will be carried forward into 2013/14 and will potentially be available to use as part of the 2014/15 budget.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) - APPENDIX 3

61. The HRA outturn position is an in year surplus of £8.7m (excluding Community Heating) compared to a budgeted deficit of £1.3m. This is an improvement of £10m on the budgeted position.
62. The main reason for the variation in the overall budget position relates to a reduction in the capital financing costs. The overall reduction is £6.4m. This is primarily as a result of access to more attractive interest rates.
63. Although some of this overall saving on interest rates is sustainable, some is a one off. Now that that HRA is self-financing, the Council has to consider the longer term risks on interest rates and ensure that its 30 year business plan includes a sustainable level of debt, factoring in the cost of the additional capital investment required to fund the backlog maintenance. This has been considered as part of the 2013/14 refresh of the HRA business plan and an improved 2012/13 position has been included and factored in that plan.

64. Other main areas that contribute to the improved year end position include revised rental income £100k; a reduction in the level of vacant properties £500k and related council tax savings of £300k; revised service charge income £400k; a reduction on repair costs £600k; a decrease in the running costs £1m; a delay in a number of projects £700k.
65. **Community Heating:** The outturn position is a draw down from Community Heating reserves of £600k compared to a budgeted draw down from reserves of £1m. This is primarily due to a reduction in energy costs and invoiced consumption.

CORPORATE FINANCIAL RISK REGISTER

66. The Council maintains a Corporate Financial Risk Register which details the key financial risks facing the Council at a given point in time. The most significant risks are summarised in this report for information together with a summary of the actions being undertaken to manage each of the risks.

Digital Region

67. The Council faces risks on its direct investment, as well as on guarantee clauses to key contractors. Provision has been made in the 2011/12 accounts for the potential capitalised costs of the losses on current operations and the procurement, but the final costs will only be clarified as the procurement is finalised from April 2013.

Capital Receipts & Capital Programme

68. Failure to meet significant year on year capital receipts targets due to depressed market and reduced Right-to-Buys, resulting in potential over-programming / delay / cancellation of capital schemes.
69. Building Schools for the Future Programme Affordability – Latest projections indicate that the affordability gap in the capital programme for the secondary schools estate, which must be underwritten by the Council, is in the order of £9m to £12m. This requirement has been identified in the Council's Capital Programme.

Pension Fund

70. Bodies whose Pension liability is backed by the Council are likely to find the cost of the scheme a significant burden in the current economic context. If they become insolvent the resulting liability may involve significant cost to the Council.

Electric Works

71. The running costs of the business centre are not covered by rental and other income streams. The approved business plan set-aside contingency monies to cover potential deficits in its early years of operation. However, there remains a risk that the occupancy of units within Electric Works might be slower (lower) than that assumed within the business case, such that the call on the contingency is greater (earlier) than planned.
72. A refresh of the financial model was undertaken for 2011/12 budgeting purposes and again for 2012/13. The assumed level of occupancy for 2011/12 was 68% and the actual achieved was 64%. Most of the income shortfall was made up from conference lettings and virtual services. A target of 78% has been set for 2012/13. At December, the target was 79% but the actual is only 63%, mainly as the result of the termination of a tenant's licence due to trading conditions. A report on the future of Electric Works will be brought to Members in 2013.

Contract Spend

73. The high and increasing proportion of Council budgets that are committed to major contracts impairs the Council's flexibility to reduce costs or reshape services. This is exacerbated by the fact that in general these contracts carry year-on-year inflation clauses based on RPIx which will not be available to the Council's main funding streams, e.g. Council Tax, RSG and locally retained Business Rates.

Economic Climate

74. There is potential for current adverse economic conditions to result in increased costs (e.g. increased homelessness cases) or reduced revenues.
75. The Council seeks to maintain adequate financial reserves to mitigate the impact of unforeseen circumstances.

NHS Funding Issues

76. There are significant interfaces between NHS and Council services in both adults' and children's social care. The Council has prioritised these services in the budget process, but savings have nevertheless had to be found. Working in partnership with colleagues in the Health Service efforts have been made to mitigate the impact of these savings on both sides. However, on-going work is required now to deliver these savings in a way that both minimises impacts on patients and customers and minimises financial risks to the NHS and the Council.

77. The Council is participating in the Right First Time (RFT) programme with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Hospital Trust. This programme aims to shift pressures and resources from the hospital to community settings over the longer term, which should assist the Council in managing adult social care pressures. However, there are short-term pressures from the programme changes that are adding costs to the Council.

Housing Regeneration

78. There is a risk to delivering the full scope of major schemes such as **Parkhill** and **SWaN** because of the severe downturn in the housing market. This could result in schemes 'stalling', leading to increased costs of holding the sites involved, and in the case of SWaN, potential exposure to termination payments. In addition, the ending of the Housing Market Renewal programme has caused funding pressure on the Council's capital programme, e.g. on site clearance work and in enabling further phases of commenced demolition schemes.

Trading Standards

79. There is a low risk that it will not be possible to recover outstanding contributions from the other South Yorkshire Authorities. However, negotiations are in the final stages and there is an expectation that an agreement will be reached.

External Funding

80. The Council makes use of a number of grant regimes, central government and European. Delivering the projects that these grants fund involves an element of risk of grant claw back where agreed outputs are not delivered. Strong project management and financial controls are required.

Academies & Independent Schools

81. During 2012/13 18 (9 primary / 9 secondary) of the Council's maintained schools became independent academies. In 2013/14, a further 25 academy conversions are currently anticipated (20 primary / 5 secondary). To date 4 primary schools have converted in 2013/14.
82. Academies are entitled to receive a proportion of the Council's central education support services budgets. Based on actual and projected academy conversions it is estimated that:
- In 2012/13 £635k of DSG funding was deducted from the Council and given to the Academies. For 2013/14 it is estimated that up to

£1.75million of DSG funding will be given to academies to fund support services.

- In 2013/14 it is estimated that up to £3.25million will be deducted from the Council's DCLG funding, under the new Education Services Grant (ESG), and given to academies.

83. If an academy is a sponsored conversion then the Council will have to bear the cost of any closing deficit balance that remains in the Council's accounts. It is estimated that this may be up to £750k based on current projected academy conversions during 2013/14.
84. Where new independent schools (free schools) or Academies are set up and attract pupils from current maintained PFI schools, then the funding base available to pay for a fixed long term PFI contract would reduce, leaving the Council with a larger affordability gap to fund. There are also further potential risks if a school becoming an academy is a PFI school, as it is still unclear how the assets and liabilities would be transferred to the new academy and whether the Council could be left with residual PFI liabilities.

Treasury Management

85. The on-going sovereign-debt crisis is subjecting the Council to significant counterparty and interest-rate risk. Counterparty risk arises where we have cash exposure to banks and financial institutions who may default on their obligations to repay to us sums invested. There is also a real risk that the Eurozone crisis could impact upon the UK's recovery, which in turn could lead to higher borrowing costs for the nation.
86. The Council is mitigating counterparty risk through a prudent investment strategy, placing the majority of surplus cash in AAA highly liquid and diversified funds. On-going monitoring of borrowing rates and forecasts will be used to manage our interest-rate exposure.

Welfare Reforms

87. The government is making changes to the Welfare system, phased in over the next few years, which will have a profound effect on council taxpayers and council house tenants in particular. The cumulative impact of these changes will be significant. Changes include:
- Abolition of council tax benefit – due from April 2013 to be replaced by a local scheme. It will be cash limited and subject to a 10% reduction from current levels. The Council approved a replacement scheme, including a hardship fund in January 2013, but there are

risks to council tax collection levels and pressures on the hardship fund.

- Housing Benefit changes – there are a number of proposals where the anticipated impacts are that a number of claimants will receive fewer benefits than they do now, thereby impacting on their ability to pay rent.
- Introduction of universal credit – from October 2013 administered by DWP. Along with the impact of reducing amounts to individuals and the financial issues that might cause, the biggest potential impact of this change is the impact on the HRA and the collection of rent. This benefit is currently paid direct to the HRA; in future this will be paid direct to individuals. This will potentially increase the cost of collection and rent arrears. There will also be an impact on the current contract with Capita and internal client teams.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

88. There are a number of future risks and uncertainties that could impact on the 30 year HRA business plan. As well as the introduction of Universal Credit, outlined in the risk above, the main identified risks to the HRA are:

- Interest rates – fluctuations in the future levels of interest rates have always been recognised as a risk to the HRA.
- Repairs and Maintenance – existing and emerging risks within the revenue repairs budget include unexpected increased demand (for example due to adverse weather conditions).

CAPITAL OUTTURN FOR 2012/13

Summary

89. At the end of March 2013 the 2012/13 Capital Outturn is £115.6m. This means that £48.3m of spending will be carried forward into 2013/14, representing the balance between actual spend and programmed spend at the end of the 2012/13 financial year.
90. The Outturn for the year shows that all portfolios are below budget recording project slippage of £43.3m (subject to investigation) of which £25.8m is in CYPF, £11.3m in Place, £6.0m Resources and £200k in Communities. This is on top of £44.4m slippage already approved earlier in the year bringing to £87.7m the total slippage on a budget of £219m. This is the highest annual level of slippage recorded to date.
91. The Outturn is £10.0m lower than the forecast of £125.6m based on February's position made in March. The greatest shortfalls are in CYPF, (£6.8m) and Resources (£3.1m). Further detail can be found in the specific sections below.

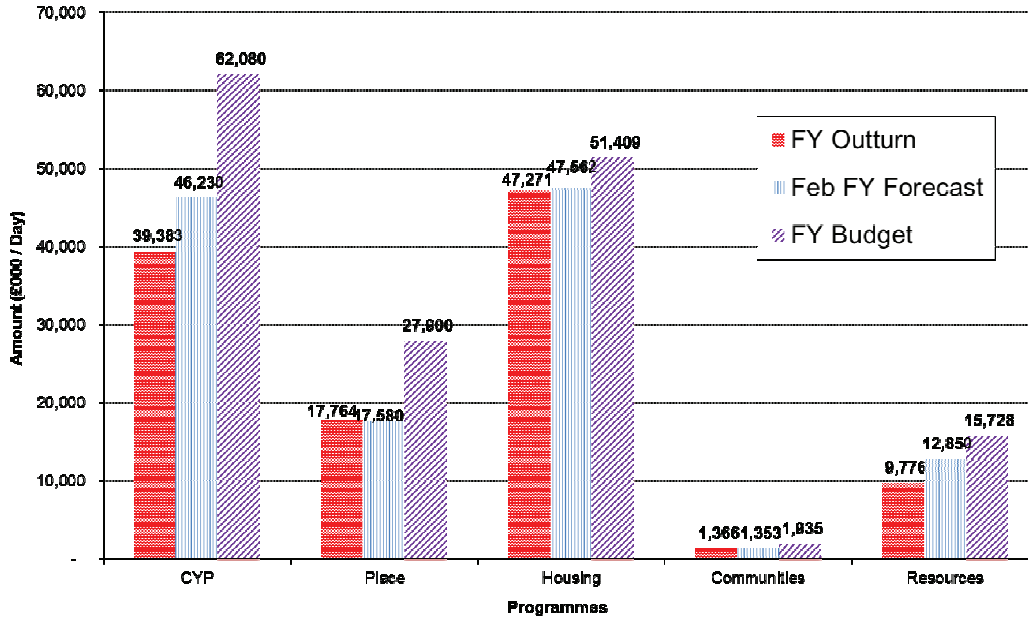
Financials 2012/13

All figures reported in £000

Portfolio	Outturn	Budget	Variance	Month 11 forecast	Change on Month 11
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
CYPF	39,383	66,942	(27,559)	46,230	(6,847)
Place	17,764	27,900	(10,136)	17,580	184
Housing	47,271	51,409	(4,137)	47,562	(291)
Communities	1,366	1,935	(569)	1,353	13
Resources	9,776	15,728	(5,952)	12,850	(3,074)
Grand Total	115,560	163,913	(48,353)	125,575	(10,015)

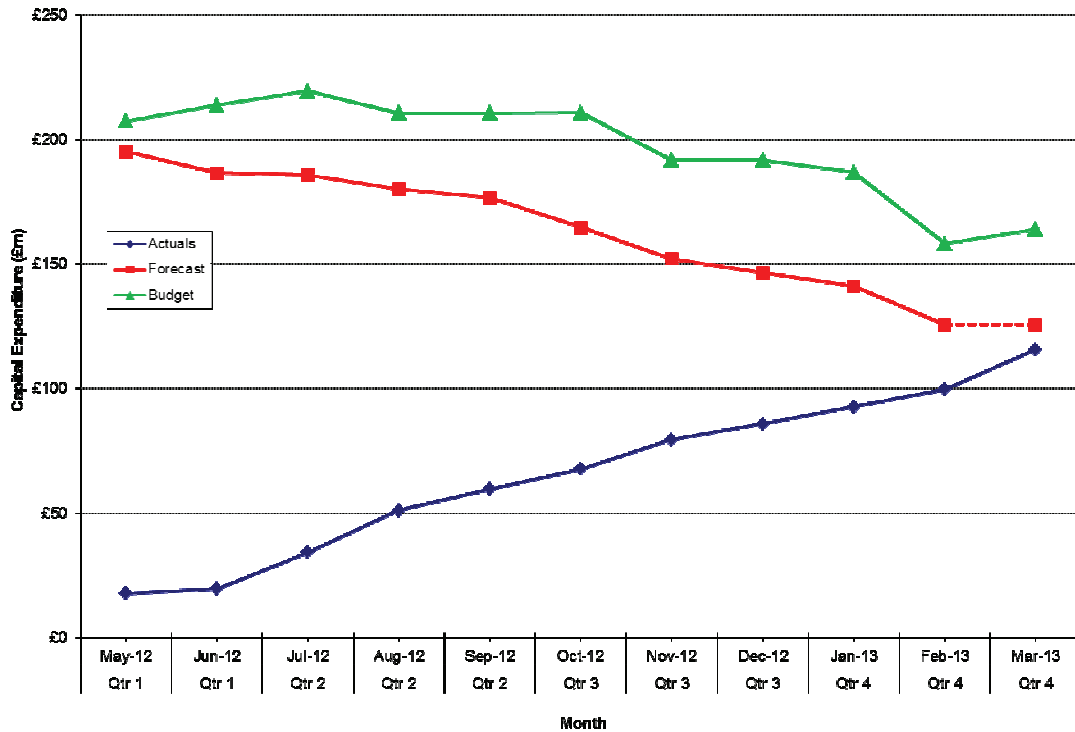
92. The graph below shows the accuracy of forecasting by comparing the Year End Outturn against the Approved budget and the forecast at Month 11. It clearly shows:
- the significant shortfall against the Budget (after the £44m of previously approved slippage has been taken out); and
 - the variation in the CYPF and Resources programme Month 11 forecasts

Full Year Outturn against February Forecast against Final Budget

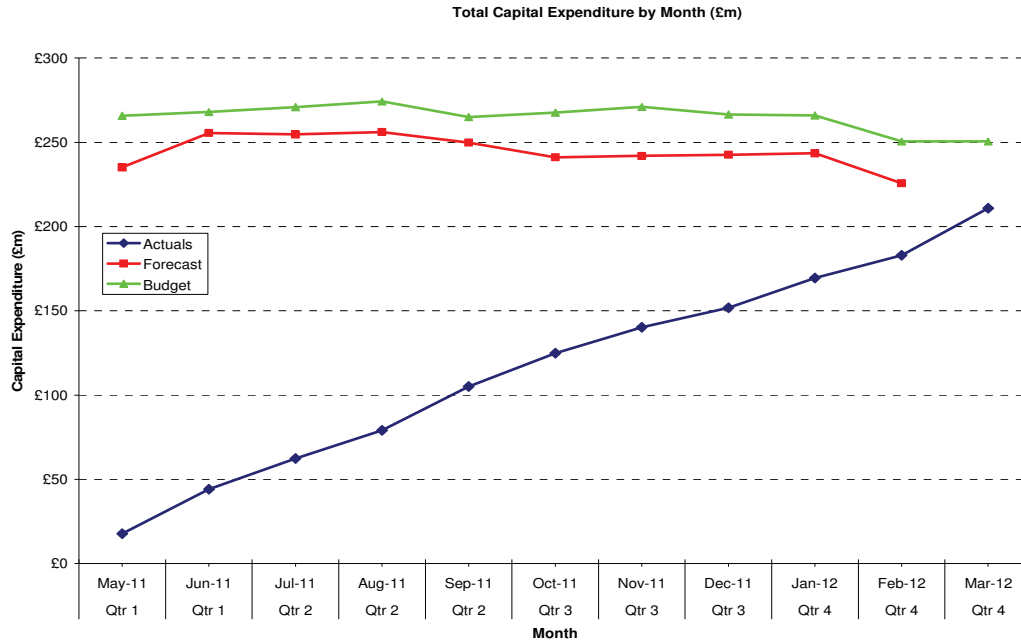


The variation has been present all year as the graph below shows the degree to which forecasts have been reduced over the year, but still leaves a large slippage gap against budget.

Total 2012-13 Capital Expenditure by Month (£m)

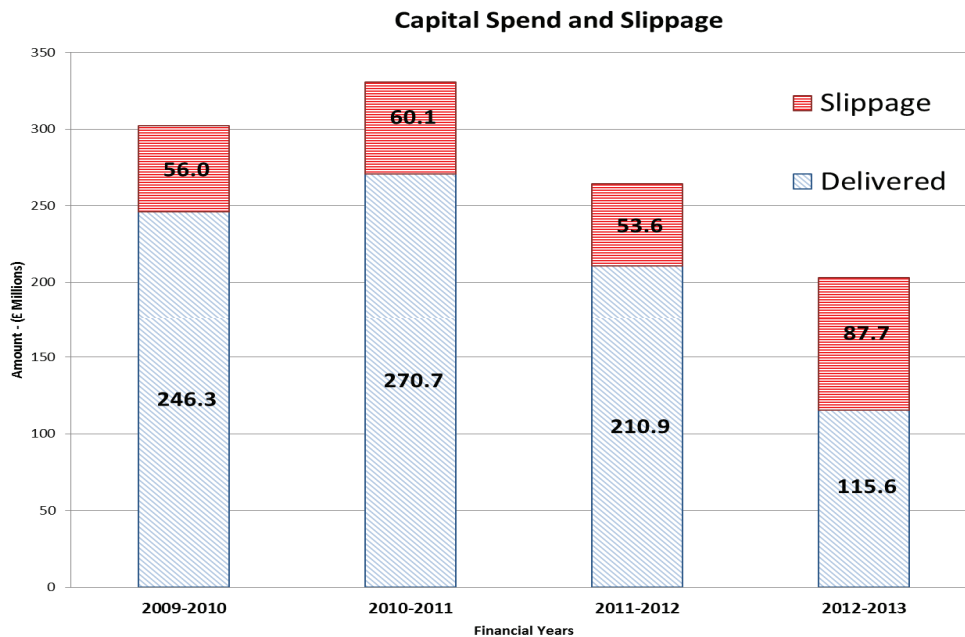


The overall variance to budget is larger than 2011/12. However the 2012/13 graph shows that forecast has been adjusted regularly and the reduction in budget shows that slippage has been recognised earlier in the year.



Slippage

93. The year-end position is that only 60% of the programme was actually delivered by 31 March 2013. This compares against previous annual slippage of £56m in 2009/10, £60.1m in 2010/11 and £53.6m in 2011/12.



The analysis of the £87.7m slippage by programme is shown in the table below:

Portfolio	Previously Authorised Slippage	Year End Slippage	Total
	£m	£m	£m
CYPF	9.6	25.8	35.4
Highways	0.0	5.2	5.2
Other Place	0.2	3.8	4.0
Housing	19.3	2.3	21.6
Communities	0.9	0.2	1.1
Resources	14.5	6.0	20.5
TOTAL	44.4	43.3	87.7

94. Projects requesting Year End slippage which have not spent in the last three months (totalling £900k) have been separated from the year end slippage figures pending investigation. These may reveal further under spending, the majority of which (£500k) is in CYP.
95. Other underspending projects will be discussed with the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet member in whose portfolio the project resides in order to establish if the project funding is still required.

Children, Young People and Families Programme

96. CYPF capital expenditure is £27.6m (41%) below the profiled budget for the year for the reasons set out in the table below.

Cause of change on Budget	Outturn £000
Slippage to be carried forward	-24,191
Slippage on Devolved Budgets	-2,207
Accelerated spend	562
slippage - no spend in last 3 months	-500
Under spending on project estimates	-343
Other variances	-880
	<u>-27,559</u>

97. £26.8m of the underspend against budget is due to slippage, comprising mainly £13.9m BSF; £4.7m on the Basic Need Block Allocation due to re-phasing of school building/capacity costs; and £1.5m on the Primary

Prioritisation Programme. Additionally, £2.2m has been slipped on Devolved Formula Capital which is under the control of individual school managements. A further £343k of under spend against approved amounts has been identified on various school programmes.

98. The BSF underspend reflects revised project plans e.g. £2m re-phasing at Handsworth Grange due to a revised demolition plan, and, potential cost savings.

Place Programme

99. The Place portfolio programme Outturn (excluding Housing) is £17.8m, £10.1m (36%) below the budget for the reasons set out in the table below.
100. The main reason for variance to date is £9.4 of project slippage details as follows: £4.5m of slippage is numerous Local Transport Planning schemes, the largest being £1.5m for the BRT North and Tinsley Link where land purchases have not been completed as quickly as anticipated, £294k slippage on the Moor Public Realm scheme, £259k On Edward Street, £1.5m on Alison Crescent and £500k on Ann's Grove the last two schemes both LEGL funded.

A further £1m of under spend on projects including £262k on Woodseats Road Railway Bridge, £86k on section 278 for which no budget were set up in the system, and £262k of underspend on Safety Cameras due to work now being carried out by the PTE not SCC.

Cause of change on Budget	Outturn £000
Slippage to be carried forward	-9,255
Accelerated spend	39
slippage (no spend in last 3 months)	-247
Overstatement of budgets	
Underspends	-1,022
Overspending on project estimates	726
Other variances	-377
	<u>-10,136</u>

Housing Programme (Place Portfolio)

101. The Place portfolio programme out turn for housing is £47.3m. The Housing capital programme has outturned £4.1m (8%) below the budget set for 2012/13 of £51.4m for the reasons set out in the table below:

Cause of change on Budget	Outturn £000
Slippage to be carried forward	-3,453
Accelerated spend	1,142
slippage on Home Improvement grants Homes and Loans	212
Projects submitted for Approval overspends on projects	15
Under spending on project estimates	-1,856
Other variances	-197
	<u>-4,137</u>

102. The main reason for this variation is due to slippage (£3.4m) of which £720k is within the Delegated Capital Schemes managed by Sheffield Homes. The £1.8m underspends are made up of £74k Skinnerthorpe, £219k Sheltered decommissioning (due to contract demolition payments being cheaper than anticipated), £304k SWaN (due to the difficulty of predicting when the agreement on acquisitions and the agreement with home owners can be completed), £481k Low Carbon Pioneer Cities (due to solid wall insulation measures not being carried out due to planning timescales, contractors capacity and difficulty in identifying willing households, other plans to use the funding were hampered because of asbestos problems resulting in grant not being taken up) and £139k on the Obsolete Heating scheme.

Communities

103. The Outturn on the Communities portfolio capital programme is £1.3m which is £569k (29%) below the full year budget. £127k relates to slippage on the implementation of the ICT infrastructure and £355k due to delayed work on the Joint Reconfiguration Strategy project.

Resources

104. The outturn is £9.7m (38%) below the approved programme budget of £15m.

The key reasons for the variance are below:

Cause of change on Budget	Outturn £000
Slippage to be carried forward	-6,209
Accelerated spend	199
Slippage no spend in last 3 months	-124
underspends	-131
Overspending on project estimates	140
Other variances	173
	<u>-5,952</u>

105. The Outturn position is £5.9m under budget and comprises the following:

- £3.5m slippage on the Castle Market Demolition and construction of the new Market and yard. The cold weather in March has created a four week delay in the construction programme which will be recovered and the market will open on time ;
- £541k slippage on non- office asset rationalisation
- £629k slower progress on Health and Safety Compliance works.

Approvals

106. A number of schemes have been submitted for approval in line with the Council's agreed capital approval process.

107. Below is a summary of the number and total value of schemes in each approval category:

- 6 additions to the capital programme with a total value of £93.6m;
- 2 Variations to the capital programme creating a net decrease of £408k;
- Year End slippage requests totalling £43.3m;
- 1 procurement strategy;
- 1 contract award;
- 1 instance where directors have exercised their delegated powers to vary approved expenditure levels; and

- 2 instances where Executive Directors and Cabinet Members have exercised their delegated powers to make emergency approvals.

108. Further details of the schemes listed above can be found in Appendix 4

TREASURY MANAGEMENT ISSUES

109. Under the terms of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, there is an obligation to report on the borrowing and investment activity which has been undertaken during the year. This is contained in Appendix 5.
110. Furthermore, under the Prudential Code For Capital Finance, the Council also needs to report on the actual Prudential Indicators for the year and compare these against the original indicators which were set as part of the 2012/13 Revenue Budget approved by Council on 9 March 2012. These are also contained in Appendix 5.
111. In summary, the Council has complied with all the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements which limit the levels of risk associated with its treasury management activities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

112. The primary purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the City Council's Budget Monitoring position for 2012/13 and, as such it does not make any recommendations which have additional financial implications for the City Council.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

113. There are no specific equal opportunity implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

114. Although this report deals, in part, with the Capital Programme, it does not, in itself, contain any property implications, nor are there any arising from the recommendations in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

115. Members are asked to:

- (a) Note the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2012/13 outturn.
- (b) In relation to the Capital Programme, Cabinet is recommended to:
 - (i) approve the proposed additions to the capital programme listed in Appendix 4, including the procurement strategies and delegations of authority to the Director of Commercial Services or Delegated Officer, as appropriate, to award the necessary contracts following stage approval by Capital Programme Group;
 - (ii) approve the proposed variations in Appendix 4;
 - (iii) note the proposed slippage adjustments to the capital programme in 2012/13, and delegate to the Cabinet Member for Finance the authority to approve such adjustments on conclusion of any necessary review, and note;
 - (iv) the latest position on the Capital Programme.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

116. To formally record changes to the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme and gain Member approval for changes in line with Financial Regulations and to reset the capital programme in line with latest information.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

117. A number of alternative courses of action are considered as part of the process undertaken by Officers before decisions are recommended to Members. The recommendations made to Members represent what Officers believe to be the best options available to the Council, in line with Council priorities, given the constraints on funding and the use to which funding is put within the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

Eugene Walker
Director of Finance

NON-EARMARKED AND EARMARKED REVENUE RESERVES

* a negative number indicates that the reserve is in deficit: in this case because of up front investment that is to be repaid in future years from savings

Description	Balance at 31/03/12	Movement in 2012/13	Balance at 31/03/13	Movement in 2013/14	Balance at 31/03/14	Explanation
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Non-earmarked Reserves						
General Fund Reserve	10,350	832	11,182	(460)	10,722	The Council's working balance: used as a last resort for emergency spend. Level at just over 2% of net spending benchmarks low compared to most Local Authorities.
	10,350	832	11,182	(460)	10,722	
Earmarked Reserves						
Invest to Save Reserve:						
Projects	(7,458)	2,079	(5,379)	4,207	(1,172)	This reserve is in deficit because it has funded up front investment in the Capita contract (mainly ICT investment) and various Transformation projects (e.g. procurement savings; changes in finance including replacement of the council's finance system and Customer First). These projects have been funded on an invest-to-save basis with savings being used in two ways, to repay the reserve by 2015 and an annual contribution, now £3.5m to support the revenue budget.
Capita Contract	(15,860)	3,551	(12,309)	2,425	(9,884)	
Customer First	(4,868)	(3,565)	(8,433)	(2,101)	(10,534)	
Investment Fund	0	959	959	1,500	2,459	
Total Invest to Save Reserve:	(28,186)	3,024	(25,162)	6,031	(19,131)	
PFI Reserve	18,305	(1,104)	17,201	(1,681)	15,520	The PFI reserve represents grant we have received in advance of the need to make payments. It is set aside to ensure we can cover the cost of contracts in future years. The Deficit on Highways PFI represents project costs incurred prior to the start of the programme and will be repaid by 2014/15.
Highways PFI Reserve	(10,016)	(1,852)	(11,868)	6,745	(5,123)	
Total PFI Reserve	8,289	(2,956)	5,333	5,064	10,397	

APPENDIX 1

This fund has been made available on a temporary basis to support Invest to Save projects as described above, but will be required to fund the future costs of the Major Sporting Facilities. (re Ponds Forge, Don Valley Stadium and Hillsborough Leisure Centre).
 This reserves is earmarked to support economic development across the City.
 Various earmarked funds including Equal Pay Provisions, Redundancies, Social Care Pressures, Business Rate Appeals, Insurance risks not specifically covered by the insurance provision and portfolio reserves agreed by Cabinet in previous years for service specific issues e.g. Troubled Families Support.

MSF	35,569	5,458	41,027	(11,193)	29,834
Local Growth Fund	2,202	(505)	1,697	96	1,793
Other earmarked	30,952	(2,271)	28,681	(11,884)	16,797
Total Earmarked Reserves	48,826	2,750	51,576	(11,886)	39,690
Total Revenue Reserves	59,176	3,582	62,758	(12,346)	50,412

Schools Reserves

The balance on schools reserves allocated under Local Management of Schools Legislation of £16m is not shown in the above table as it does not form part of the usable reserves - it is restricted to spend on schools.

<u>COLLECTION FUND</u>			Appendix 2	
<u>FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2013</u>				
<u>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT</u>				
			<u>2012/13</u>	
<u>2011/12</u>	<u>INCOME</u>			
<u>£'000</u>		<u>£'000</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>£'000</u>
228,538	Council Tax	231,674		
195,330	National Non-domestic Rates	202,121		
0	Adjustment of Previous Years Community Charges	0		
423,868	<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>			433,795
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
Precepts and Demands:				
197,227	Sheffield City Council	197,737		
South Yorkshire Joint Authorities:				
20,298	South Yorkshire Police	21,153		
9,230	South Yorkshire Fire & Civil Defence	9,618		
226,755				228,508
-192	Estimated Previous Year's Council Tax Surplus			597
National Non-Domestic Rates:				
194,565	Payment to National Pool	201,347		
765	Cost of Collection	774		
195,330				202,121
0	Adjustment of Previous Years Community Charges			0
460	Provision for Non-Payment of Council Tax			1,410
422,353	<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>			432,636
-1,515	(Surplus)/Deficit for the Year			-1,159
305	Balance Brought Forward			-1,210
-1,210	Balance Carried Forward			-2,369

	Month 12 Outturn £ '000	2012/13 Budget £'000	Variance £'000
Housing Revenue Account			
Total Income	(141,897)	(141,093)	804
Total Expenditure	133,169	142,386	9,217
Surplus () / deficit in the year	(8,728)	1,293	10,021
HRA Balances			
Balance b/fwd as at 1 April 2012	(11,658)	(11,658)	0
Surplus () / deficit in the year	(8,728)	1,293	10,021
Balance c/fwd as at 31 March 2013	(20,386)	(10,365)	10,021

Community Heating Account			
Total Income	(3,353)	(3,369)	(16)
Total Expenditure	3,962	4,428	466
Surplus () / deficit in the year	609	1,059	450
Community Heating Balances			
Balance b/fwd as at 1 April 2012	(2,751)	(2,751)	0
Surplus () / deficit in the year	609	1,059	450
Balance c/fwd as at 31 March 2013	(2,142)	(1,692)	450

Appendix 4

Capital Schemes

Scheme Description	Approval Type	Value £000	Procurement Route
A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE:-			
Homes			
Council Homes New Build Programme			
<p>It is proposed to kick start the programme for new build Council housing with the acquisition of 30 homes for social rent from the Sheffield Housing Company. This acquisition is to be paid for by a £3.5m contribution from the Housing Revenue Account. The funds for this will come from £1.05m of estimated receipts from the new Right to Buy programme and £2.45m of prudential borrowing.</p> <p>The new build homes to be acquired are a mix of 2 and 3 bedroom properties which include 9 built to mobility standards of which 5 will be to full wheelchair standard. All these properties have been developed using the Council's own Planning and Phase Briefs which sets a high commitment to quality and sustainability having achieved Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 and having been awarded a 'Very Good' certificate by the British Research Establishment (BRE) under its BREEAM Communities framework; one of the first housing schemes in the country to achieve this. The Council has sought to play a significant role in the design of these properties and the layout of the schemes as a whole. The houses will provide both new and existing tenants with a greater choice and availability of new homes which will be designed to a high quality, will be sustainable, capable of responding to changing life styles and needs and ultimately be cheaper to run. The homes will be built in the Shirecliffe area.</p>	Addition	3,500	Single tender

Capital Schemes

<p>A second phase of the New Build programme will deliver a further 45 new build properties on Council owned land and plans will be brought forward in due course.</p>			
<p>Roofing Projects In 2011/12 as part of the HRA task and finish work the need to tackle the backlog of external work that had not been affordable during the Decent Homes programme was agreed as a priority. This work is essential in order to protect the substantial investment in the internal fabric that the Council has made since 2004/05 and will also enhance the appearance of neighbourhoods. Investment in the external fabric also provides an opportunity to generate savings to the revenue repairs budget by a planned programme of replacement rather than carrying out expensive individual responsive repairs which may require scaffolding. Sheffield Homes has developed a substantial roofing programme, around £100m which has been agreed in principle by the Housing Investment Board.</p> <p>The projects are funded mainly from revenue contributions from the HRA. The Projects below show the 5 year plan. There is a further year 2018/19 taking the spend up to £100m which has at this time not been included and will be added next year</p>			
<p>Flat Roofing This project is for supply and installation of replacement flat roof coverings to houses and flats in various locations throughout the City including removal of existing coverings, checking structure and remedial structural work. Approximately 2,500 homes will benefit over the 5 year Project.</p>	<p>Addition</p>	<p>8,568</p>	<p>Competitive Tender</p>
<p>Pitched Roofing & Rooflines This Project is to carry out roof renewals to 16,977 properties across the city. This will be a substantial investment over the next 5 years and reduce the volume of responsive</p>	<p>Addition</p>	<p>74,832</p>	<p>Competitive Tender</p>

Capital Schemes

<p>repairs to council properties across the city.</p> <p>It is envisaged that four contracts will be let in 2013/14, two of £25-32m each and two smaller contracts of up to £1m each which will be specifically promoted to the local supply chain. A further procurement strategy with a value of circa £11m will be brought in 2014/15 in the light of experience from the first round of procurement.</p>			
<p>Community Heating – Plant rooms – Callow Tower Blocks</p> <p>This project is to replace 2 gas community heating boilers at the Callow Tower blocks. If these boilers are not replaced urgently they will become un-serviceable and would lead to complete loss of heating and hot water for around 300 homes across 6 tower blocks. It is anticipated that the likelihood of failure will increase over the colder months of the year and it has become urgent to replace these boilers before the winter months. In Dec 2012 one boiler had to be shut down for repairs and the remaining one struggled to maintain supply in peak periods. There is also a sheltered block within this scheme which would mean the re-homing of residents if the heating failed.</p> <p>There are four boilers in place at the moment - 2 gas boilers which are operating, and one biomass which has broken down and a Combined Heat and Power boiler (CHP) that has reached the end of its life and has been shut down. Phase 1 of the project will replace the gas boilers which are sufficient to meet all the heating needs of the buildings, Phase 2 is to install a new biomass boiler and phase 3 will replace the CHP if there is a viable business case. Reactivating these two boilers would strengthen the Council's decentralised energy network and meet demand surges as well as generating money. Funding for phases 2 and 3 has not yet been identified. The immediate need is for Phase 1 to be completed before the 2013 autumn/winter heating season.</p> <p>The boiler replacement project is drawing down funds from the HRA Capital Projects</p>	<p>Addition</p>	<p>215</p>	<p>Kier Sheffield LLP Jobs compact</p>

Capital Schemes

<p>Unallocated Block Funding which is funded mainly from revenue contributions from the HRA.</p>			
<p>SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE :-</p>			
<p>Norfolk Park School Replacement</p>	<p>This project will refurbish and adapt the Standhouse Centre (formerly the site of the Manor Young Children's Centre) on Queen Mary Road, to accommodate the permanent relocation of Norfolk Park Primary School.</p>	<p>Addition</p>	<p>4,230</p>
<p>Norfolk Park Primary School currently occupies premises which are not suitable for purpose due to inappropriate layouts for delivering appropriate education to some extremely vulnerable children, in addition to the poor physical condition of the buildings and HME (Heating, Mechanical & Electrical) equipment, which would require either a significant upgrade or permanent relocation. The school provides education for 80 pupils with learning difficulties and complex needs.</p>	<p>Feasibility studies undertaken by CDS (Capital Delivery Service) indicate that a permanent relocation of Norfolk Park Primary school to the Standhouse building would be the optimal solution.</p>		<p>Design by In-house provider (Capital Delivery Service); full competitive tender for contract works</p>
<p>This would provide enhanced and more modern facilities without the need to decant (and return) these vulnerable pupils offsite whilst major refurbishment was being undertaken, improving the education, welfare and dignity of these pupils.</p>	<p>The project will be funded from DfE Capital Maintenance Grant allocations for 2013/14 and 2014/15 (£3,823k) and from budget savings transferred from other, now completed, capital maintenance projects, as noted below, Asbestos Removal (£136k) and Asset</p>		

Appendix 4

Capital Schemes

Management Plan Condition Surveys (£271k).				
<p>Asbestos Removal This project was originally set up to enable the safe removal of asbestos from CYPF owned sites. The final forecast has resulted in costs being managed at a lower level than the originally anticipated costs. Accordingly, the budget is requested to be varied to enable a specific contribution to the funding of the Norfolk Park School Replacement project above. The project was originally funded from Single Capital Pot funding.</p> <p>AMP Condition Surveys This project was originally set up to facilitate site condition inspections in Sheffield schools. The final forecast has resulted in costs being managed at a lower level than the originally anticipated costs. Accordingly, the budget is requested to be varied to enable a specific contribution to the funding of the Norfolk Park School Replacement project above. The project was initially funded from a Government Modernisation Grant.</p> <p>Gleadless Primary Rebuild This project consists of the <u>design</u> of both new <u>Infant and Junior</u> blocks to be located at the existing Gleadless Primary School site and the subsequent <u>construction</u> of the new <u>Infant</u> block. The school exists on a split site, separated by a main road. The Infant site has significant condition issues which need addressing. It is proposed to rebuild the Infants on the Junior site area which is large enough to accommodate both Infant and Junior schools.</p> <p>The vacant Infant site proceeds can then be used for other corporate investment priorities.</p> <p>The project provides for the design of new school Infant and Junior blocks but, at this point in time, to rebuild only the Infant block. The plan is to rebuild the Infant block adjacent to the existing Junior building, with the Juniors remaining in their current</p>	Variation (Cabinet)	(136)	N/A: Variation	
	Variation (Cabinet)	(272)	N/A: Variation	
	Addition	2,300	Design by YorConsult And competitive tender for the construction	

Capital Schemes

<p>accommodation at this stage.</p> <p>The concurrent design of a potential new Junior block is recommended to allow for economies of scope and to ensure the two school blocks, future funding permitting, are rebuilt to similar designs and standards. All major construction work is to be scheduled for the school summer holidays to minimise disruption to pupils and to be ready for use from the beginning of the relevant Autumn term.</p> <p>The project will be funded through Capital block allocations from DfE grants covering 2013/14 and 2014/15.</p>										
<p>SLIPPAGE / ACCELERATED SPEND:-</p>		None								
<p>STAGE APPROVALS:-</p>										
<p>See Stage Approvals Report (Appendix 2) for further details.</p> <p>PROCUREMENT STRATEGY</p> <p>Local Transport Plan</p>										
<p>These projects are <u>not</u> part of the “core” Streets Ahead highways maintenance contract but the Council’s agreed strategy is to deliver these “non-core works” through Amey, as the great majority of the schemes can be delivered simultaneously with the Streets Ahead project maximising value for money and minimising disruption to highway users. The programme has therefore been designed to align with Amey’s “zonal” programming approach as closely as possible.</p>		Procurement Strategy							7,325	Single source tender and in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Highways PFI contract

Appendix 4

Capital Schemes

<p>This submission requests approval for the procurement strategy for a range of projects funded by:</p> <p>Local Transport Plan (SCC) £3.194m LSTF-Key Component £0.150m LSTF-Main Bid (SCC)... £0.710m LSTF-MB (PTE)... £0.700m Better Buses Area Funding (BBAF)1 £0.510m (SCC allocation) BBAF1 (PTE)..... £0.609m BB2..... £2.000m [BB – Better Buses; LSTF – Local Sustainable Transport Fund; SCC – Sheffield City Council; PTE – South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive].</p>			
<p>EMERGENCY APPROVALS:- (Note only)</p>	None		
<p>Sheffield LDV Flood Defence This Emergency approval is to accept an additional £188k from the Environment Agency to cover increased costs of the flood Defence work. The extra costs are due to the complexity of the work and additional surveying and modelling work. The emergency approval is required due to the opportunity to receive £98K before the end of this financial year which would be lost if it is not claimed by the March deadline. The loss of this funding would threaten the completion of this project as no other funding is yet in place.</p>	Emergency	188	<p>A waiver has been granted in favour of Peter Brett Associates for them to undertake this work in December 2012. The waiver is capped at a value of £83k and subsists until April</p>

Appendix 4

Capital Schemes

<p>Don Valley SYITS (South Yorkshire Intelligent Transport Systems) Part of the overall SYITS traffic management programme led* by Sheffield City Council to develop adaptive traffic management strategies and identify priority junctions and requirements for investment in new or modified traffic signal control equipment, this scheme will develop a traffic model for Sheffield within the Don Valley Enterprise Corridor.</p> <p>Emergency approval was sought to include initial works as part of the Don Valley SYITS scheme in the Capital Programme in order to ensure the money could be used in time to progress this project which would otherwise lead to a significant (unfunded) pressure on Transport, Traffic and Parking Services revenue budget.</p> <p>It is funded through the LSTF (Local Sustainable Transport Fund) - held by SYITA. *£204k of the £345k will be met by Rotherham BC - £40k to be spent via a framework contractor and the remainder via in house supplier.</p> <p>The full scheme budget is £870k: the difference between this and the amount approved by Emergency Approval (£345k), at £525k will be presented to CPG at a later date and a new procurement strategy written.</p>	Emergency	345	Procurement Strategy not required as part covered by Internal Framework, part staffing costs and part covered by Rotherham BC procurement processes.
<p>DIRECTOR VARIATIONS:- (Note only)</p> <p>Hollinsend Park MUGA (Multi Use Games Area):- This project is to provide a multi-use games area in Hollinsend Park. There are no other alternative outdoor sports facilities within the neighbourhood, the nearest alternatives are all over 1.5 km and separated by dual carriageway/ring road. This is a variation for £3,175 of Section 106 monies to be used to cover increased fee and consultation costs already identified in the business plan</p>	Director	3	Competitive Tender

Appendix 4

Capital Schemes

RETROSPECTIVE APPROVALS:-	None		
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Annual Treasury Management Review

1. Introduction

This Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2012/13. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

During 2012/13 the full Council received the Annual Treasury Strategy whilst Cabinet were presented with the Outturn Report and a Mid-Year Report. Regular reports were also taken to the Cabinet Member for Finance throughout the year.

The regulatory environment places responsibility on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is therefore important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members.

Member training on treasury management issues was requested during the year in order to support members' scrutiny role. A number of training sessions have taken place in April and May 2013.

2. The Economy and Interest Rates

The financial year 2012/13 continued the challenging investment environment of previous years, namely low investment returns and continuing heightened levels of counterparty risk.

The original expectation for 2012/13 was that Bank Rate would start gently rising from quarter 4 2014. However, economic growth in the UK was disappointing during the year. Many reasons have been put forward for this including the UK austerity programme, weak consumer confidence and spending, a lack of rebalancing of the UK economy to exporting, and weak growth in our biggest export market - the European Union (EU).

The UK coalition Government maintained its tight fiscal policy stance against a background of warnings from two credit rating agencies that the UK could lose its AAA credit rating. Key to retaining this rating will be a return to strong economic growth in order to reduce the national debt burden to a sustainable level, within the austerity plan timeframe.

Weak UK growth resulted in the Monetary Policy Committee increasing quantitative easing by £50bn in July to a total of £375bn. Bank Rate therefore ended the year unchanged at 0.5% while CPI inflation fell from 3% at the start of the year to end at 2.8% in March, with a fall back to below 2% pushed back to quarter 1 2016. The EU sovereign debt crisis was an ongoing saga during the year with first Greece and then Cyprus experiencing crises which were met with bailouts after difficult and fraught negotiations.

Gilt yields which influence the price of Council borrowing from PWLB fluctuated during the year as events in the ongoing Eurozone debt crisis ebbed and flowed, causing corresponding fluctuations in safe haven flows into / out of UK gilts. This, together with a further £50bn of QE in July and widely expected further

QE still to come, combined to keep PWLB rates depressed for much of the year at historically very low levels.

The Funding for Lending Scheme, announced in July, resulted in a flood of cheap credit being made available to banks and this has resulted in money market investment rates falling sharply in the second half of the year. However, perceptions of counterparty risk have improved after the European Central Bank statement in July that it would do “whatever it takes” to support struggling Eurozone countries. This has resulted in some return of confidence to move away from only very short term investing.

2. Overall Treasury Position as at 31 March 2013

At the beginning and the end of 2012/13 the Council’s treasury (excluding borrowing by PFI and finance leases) position was as follows:

Authority Level

TABLE 1	31 March 2012 Principal	Rate/ Return	31 March 2013 Principal	Rate/ Return
Total debt	£591m	4.7%	£698m	4.6%
CFR	£821m		£790m	
Over / (under) borrowing	(£230m)		(£93m)	
Total investments	£46m	0.9%	£138m	0.8%
Net debt	£545m		£560m	

HRA & General Fund Level

HRA	31 March 2012 Principal	Rate/ Return	31 March 2013 Principal	Rate/ Return
Total debt	£225m	5.2%	£268m	4.9%
CFR	£346m		£346m	
Over / (under) borrowing	(£120m)		(£78m)	
Total investments	£0m	0%	£0m	0%
Net debt	£225m		£268m	

General Fund	31 March 2012 Principal	Rate/ Return	31 March 2013 Principal	Rate/ Return
Total debt	£366m	5.2%	£430m	4.4%
CFR	£471m		£465m	
Over / (under) borrowing	(£105m)		(£35m)	
Total investments	£46m	0.9%	£138m	0.8%
Net debt	£319m		£292m	

3. Treasury Strategy

The expectation for interest rates within the strategy for 2012/13 anticipated low but rising Bank Rate (starting in quarter 4 of 2014) with similar gradual rises in medium and longer term fixed borrowing rates over 2012/13. Variable or short-term rates were expected to be the cheaper form of borrowing over the period. Continued uncertainty in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis promoted a cautious approach, whereby investments would continue to be dominated by counterparty risk considerations, resulting in relatively low returns compared to borrowing rates.

The actual movement in gilt yields meant that PWLB rates fell during the first quarter of the year to historically low levels. This was caused by a flight to quality into UK gilts from EU sovereign debt, and from shares, as investors became concerned about the potential for a Lehman's type crisis of financial markets if the Greek debt crisis were to develop into a precipitous default and exit from the Euro. During the second and third quarters, rates rose gradually and agreement of a second bail out for Greece in December saw the flight to quality into gilts reverse somewhat, as confidence rose that the Eurozone crisis was finally subsiding. However, gilt yields then fell back again during February and March as Eurozone concerns returned, with the focus now shifting to Cyprus, and flight to quality flows into gilts resumed. This was a volatile year for PWLB rates, driven by events in the Eurozone which oscillated between crises and remedies.

The Council opted to take advantage of the historically low-rate environment to take new fixed-rate loans from the PWLB and a long fixed-term loan from a local authority. This has allowed the Council to 'de-risk' a large element of its exposure to interest-rate rises that was present through having such a large under-borrowed position (as shown above). Taking on new fixed-term low-rate loans was also a key factor in Treasury's support of the HRA's new self-financing business-plan which favoured a degree of certainty over risk.

Taking on new loans during a low-rate environment requires us to measure up the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. Taking the loans allowed us to remove a large degree of risk that we were carrying and had little opportunity to mitigate; it also allowed us to take historically cheap borrowing that will benefit the Council over a long period; taking the loans also allowed us to support the Council's move to a two-pool approach to debt management where the HRA's and General Fund's debt is independently managed to better support each fund's business plans. However, taking the loans resulted in larger than normal cash surpluses that attracted poor investment returns. Officers are content that on balance the overall strategy will efficiently support the Council's plans during these difficult times.

4. The Borrowing Requirement and Debt

The Council's underlying need to borrow to finance capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).

	31 March 2012 Actual	31 March 2013 Budget	31 March 2013 Actual
CFR General Fund (£m)	£698	£686	£751
CFR HRA (£m) <i>(if applicable)</i>	£346m	£360m	£346m

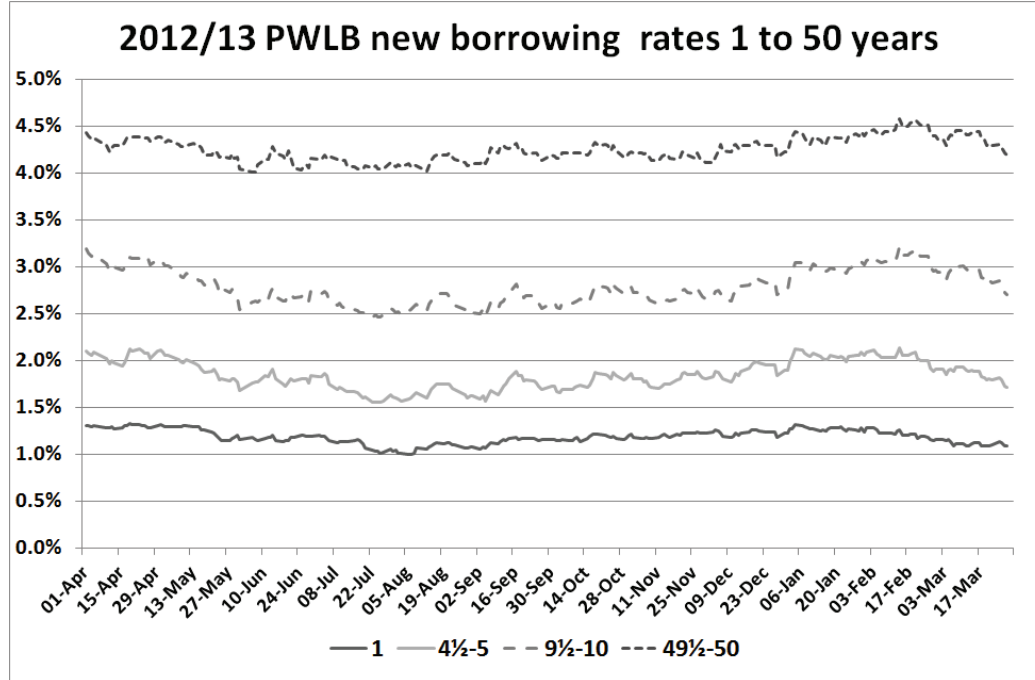
	31 March 2012 Actual	31 March 2013 Budget	31 March 2013 Actual
Total CFR	£1,044m	£1,046	£1,097

The increase on overall CFR and the General Fund CFR is principally due to the recognition of two PFI projects that are accounted for as credit liabilities. These schemes relate to the Highways PFI project and Bradfield School.

It was anticipated that the HRA would use around £14m of borrowing during the year to fund capital expenditure. However, this was not required so the HRA's borrowing requirement did not increase.

6. Borrowing Rates in 2012/13

PWLB borrowing rates - the graph below shows how PWLB rates remained close to historically very low levels during the year.



7 Borrowing Outturn for 2012/13

During the year the Council borrowed £115m for the General Fund (see annex 2).

The use of this borrowing can be broadly represented as follows:

Use	Value
Borrowing Raised	£115m
To refinance existing borrowing	(£56m)
To fund in-year capital expenditure	(£8m)
To clear under-borrowing position (backlog borrowing from prior years)	(£51m)

The average rate of new long term borrowing taken was 3.9% compared to 10.4% on the long term borrowing it replaced.

During the year the Council borrowed £48.5m for the HRA (see annex 2).

The use of this borrowing can be broadly represented as follows:

Use	Value
Borrowing Raised	£48.5m
To refinance existing borrowing	(£3.5m)
To fund in-year capital expenditure	(£0m)
To clear under-borrowing position (backlog borrowing from prior years)	(£45m)*

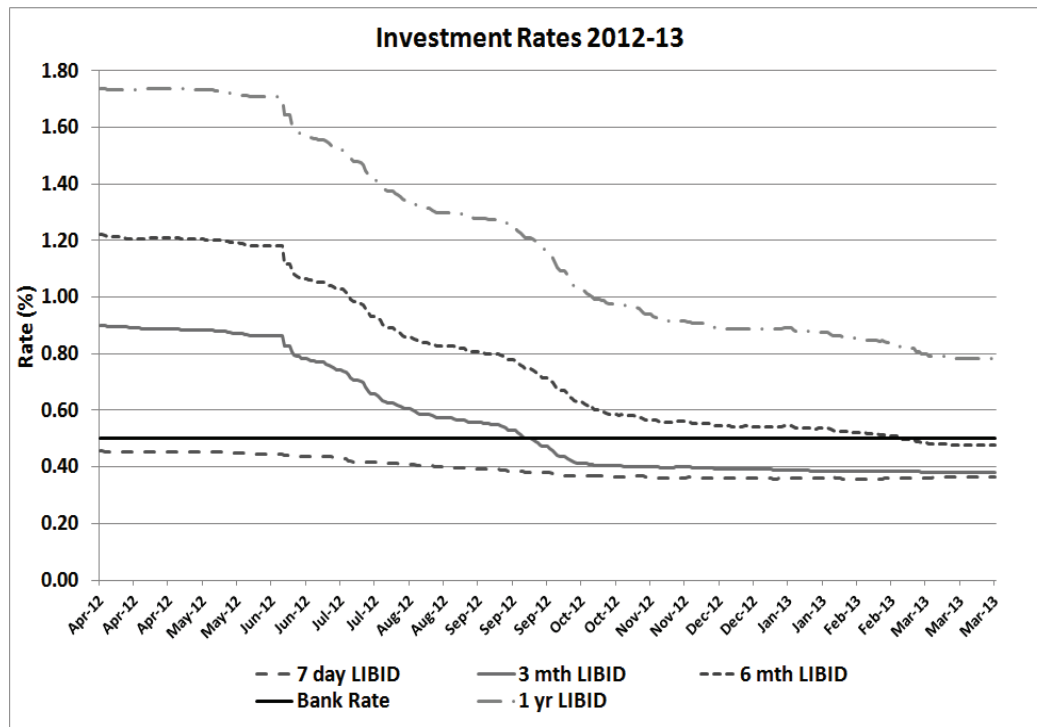
*Relates to repayment of internal 'loans' afforded to the HRA by the General Fund as part of the transition to a two-pool debt approach following HRA self-financing

The average rate of new long term borrowing taken was 3.7% compared to 10.4% on the long term borrowing it replaced.

Clearing a significant amount of the Council's under borrowed position has enabled the Council to manage down the risk that the Council was open to concerning interest-rate rises.

8 Investment Rates in 2012/13

Bank Rate remained at its historic low of 0.5% throughout the year; it has now remained unchanged for four years. Market expectations of the start of monetary tightening were pushed back during the year to early 2015 at the earliest. The Funding for Lending Scheme resulted in a sharp fall in deposit rates in the second half of the year.



9 Investment Outturn for 2012/13

The Council's investment policy is governed by government guidance, which was been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by the Council. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties, and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies supplemented by additional market data (such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps, bank share prices etc.).

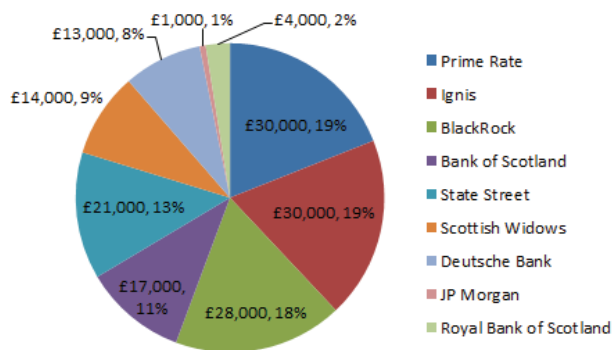
The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy, and the Council had no liquidity difficulties.

The Council maintained an average balance of £158m of internally managed funds. The internally managed funds earned an average rate of return of 0.77% against a budgeted return of 0.70%. The comparable performance indicator is the average 7-day LIBID rate, which was 0.39%.

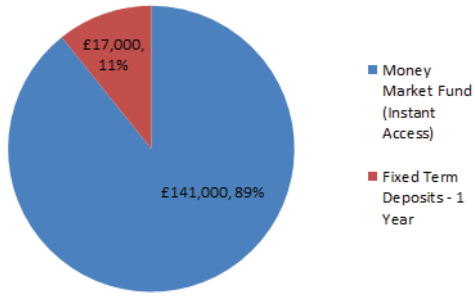
The Council would not normally plan to have such high cash balances, but the position was compounded by slippage and underspends on the capital programme of around £100m.

The following graphs represent how our investment portfolio looked, on average, throughout the year.

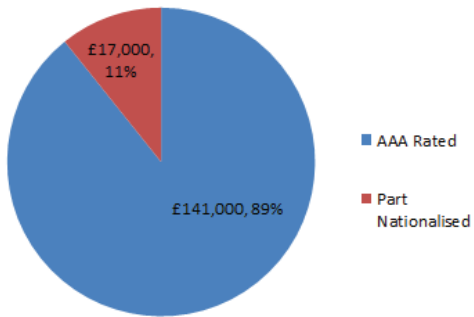
This graphs show that we split of deposits across a wide array of investment options. Having our investments spread across a large number of counterparties helps us diversify our portfolio reducing our direct exposure to any one institution should it get into trouble:



This graph shows that most of our money was placed with money market funds. Throughout the year we only invested in funds with assets of over £1bn and monitored who these funds invested with themselves. Money market funds are an attractive counterparty when there is significant counterparty risk because they only invest in the most secure assets whilst they allow us to remove our investment day-by-day should be we need to:



The final graph shows that our investments throughout the year were with only the most secure counterparties. The majority of deposits were placed with AAA rated money market funds whilst we also placed a fixed-term deposit with the Bank of Scotland. As Bank of Scotland is part of the part-nationalised Lloyds Banking Group this is akin to investing with the UK Government and gives us significant security:



Annex 1: Prudential and Treasury Indicators

During 2012/13, the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The key actual prudential and treasury indicators detailing the impact of capital expenditure activities during the year, with comparators, are as follows:

Actual prudential and treasury indicators	2011/12 Actual £000	2012/13 Original £000	2012/13 Actual £000
Capital expenditure			
General Fund	146,000	116,302	74,754
HRA	30,000	50,953	40,930
Total	176,000	219,000	115,684
Capital Financing Requirement:			
General Fund	698,288	688,733	751,559
HRA	345,586	360,315	345,564
Total	1,043,874	1,046,368	1,097,123
Net External debt	772,140	891,990	851,306
Gross External debt	817,815	891,990	989,191
Investments			
0 Longer than 1 year	0	0	20,000
1 Under 1 year	45,675	0	117,885
2 Total	45,675	0	137,885

Commentary

Although the Council's external debt has increased by around £170m during the year, our overall need for debt, which is represented by the Capital Financing Requirement, has only increased by around £51m.

This discrepancy is due to the Council's decision in prior years to use surplus cash from reserves and grants received in advance of need. Using this cash has meant that the Council could avoid taking on new loans, and adding to its external debt, where it would have otherwise needed to. This, in turn, saved the Council paying interest costs.

However, this was only ever a short term strategy as the Council would eventually need to put the cash back so that it could be spent as originally intended. Replacing this would require the Council to raise cash from loans or its revenue resources. Should loans need to be raised it was key to do so when costs were cheap, and before interest-rates rose as is probable.

During the year officers saw an opportunity to manage this issue in a cost-effective way. As borrowing costs hit record lows the Council took on a number of new loans. These loans allowed the Council to replace the cash it has previously 'borrowed' from itself. This strategy allowed the Council to manage down its internal-borrowing position and the risk this position brought.

However, following this strategy when coupled with the near £100m underspend on the capital programme meant that the Council had large sums of cash on deposit throughout the year. These deposits were placed with an array of AAA-rated instant-access money market funds, and a fixed-term deposit was

placed with a part-nationalised bank. This investment policy meant that our deposits were very safe, but deposit returns were low.

Affordability Indicators

The authorised limit - the authorised limit is the “affordable borrowing limit” required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Council does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that during 2012/13 the Council has maintained gross borrowing within its authorised limit.

The operational boundary – the operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary is acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

Actual financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream - this indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income) against the net revenue stream.

	2012/13
Authorised limit	£1,100m
Maximum gross borrowing position	£1,003m
Operational boundary	£1,000m
Average gross debt position	£989m

Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	31 March 2012 actual	2012/13 original limits	31 March 2013 actual
General Fund	14.66%	14.77%	13.54%
HRA	35.00%	15.26%	10.22%

Incremental impact of capital investment decisions	31 March 2012 actual	2012/13 original limits	31 March 2013 actual
Increase in council tax (band D) per annum *	-	£18.77	£1.26
Increase in average housing rent per week (housing authorities only)	-	£0.27	£0.00

TABLE 1	31 March 2012 Principal	Rate/Return	Average Life yrs	31 March 2013 Principal	Rate/Return	Average Life yrs
Fixed rate funding:						
PWLB	£182m	7%	26	£328m	5%	32
Market	£140m	5%	52	£140m	5%	52
Local Authorities	£96m		1	£52m		1
Variable rate funding:						
PWLB	£0m	0%		£0m	0%	
Market	£173m	4%	49	£178m	4%	49
Credit liabilities :						
PFI liabilities	£227m	11%		£291m	11%	
Total debt	£818m	6%	38	£989m	6%	38
CFR	£1,043m			£1,097m		
Over/ (under) borrowing	£225m			£108m		
Total investments	£46m	0.9%	<1	£138m	0.8%	<1
Net debt	£772m			£851m		

The maturity structure of the loan portfolio was as follows:

	31 March 2012 actual	2012/13 original limits	31 March 2013 actual
Under 12 months	39%	40%	32%*
12 months and within 24 months	8%	25%	13%
24 months and within 5 years	3%	35%	4%
5 years and within 10 years	4%	35%	21%
10 years and above	46%	95%	60%

*Included within this figure are bank loans that have a 'call option' that allows banks to either re-set the interest rate or allow us to repay the loan every six months. As this loan could be repayable in 6 months' time we show them as being due in under a year.

The maturity structure of the investment portfolio was as follows:

	2011/12 Actual £000	2012/13 Original £000	2012/13 Actual £000
Investments			
Longer than 1 year	0	0	20,000
Under 1 year	45,675	0	117,885
Total	45,675	0	137,885

The exposure to fixed and variable rates was as follows:

	31 March 2012 actual	2012/13 original limits	31 March 2013 actual
Fixed rate debt	£567m		£811m
Fixed rate investments	-£46m		-£138m
Net fixed rate exposure	£521m	£780m	£673m
Variable rate debt	£178m		£178m
Variable rate investments	£0m		£0m
Net variable rate exposure	£178m	£320m	£178m

Annex 2: Loans taken during the year

The following loans were taken for the General Fund during the year:

Lender	Principal	Type	Interest Rate	Maturity
PWLB	£4m	Fixed interest rate	3.90%	15
PWLB	£4m	Fixed interest rate	3.97%	16
PWLB	£4m	Fixed interest rate	4.04%	17
PWLB	£4m	Fixed interest rate	4.10%	18
PWLB	£4m	Fixed interest rate	4.15%	19
PWLB	£2m	Fixed interest rate	3.78%	16
PWLB	£3m	Fixed interest rate	3.92%	18
PWLB	£3m	Fixed interest rate	3.98%	19
PWLB	£3m	Fixed interest rate	4.04%	20
PWLB	£4m	Fixed interest rate	4.08%	21
PWLB	£6m	Fixed interest rate	4.16%	23
PWLB	£10m	Fixed interest rate	4.05%	48
PWLB	£9m	Fixed interest rate	4.05%	49
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	2.77%	10
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	2.90%	11
PWLB	£10m	Fixed interest rate	4.02%	32

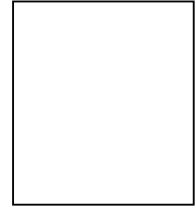
PWLB	£10m	Fixed interest rate	4.05%	36
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	4.05%	37
PWLB	£10m	Fixed interest rate	4.05%	47
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	3.19%	13
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	3.28%	14

The following loans were taken for the HRA during the year:

Lender	Principal	Type	Interest Rate	Maturity
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	4.33%	25
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	4.35%	26
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	4.25%	27
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	4.27%	28
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	1.76%	5
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	1.98%	6
PWLB	£3.5m	Fixed interest rate	3.83%	24
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	3.99%	30
PWLB	£5m	Fixed interest rate	4.00%	31
Hampshire County Council	£5m	Fixed interest rate	4.08%	22



SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report



Report of: Eugene Walker

Date: 19 June 2013

Subject: Sheffield City Trust's Financing Obligations

Author of Report: Anna Peysner; 34035

Summary: This report outlines the potential to change the way the Council funds Sheffield City Trust to meet its financing obligations.

Reasons for Recommendations To allow the Executive Director Resources to negotiate and enter into an agreement to alter the way the Council discharges its commitment to support Sheffield City Trust in meeting its financing obligations.

Recommendations:

Please refer to paragraph 17 of the main report for the recommendations.

Category of Report: OPEN/~~CLOSED~~

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial implications
YES/NO Cleared by: Eugene Walker
Legal implications
YES/NO Cleared by: David Hollis
Equality of Opportunity implications
YES/NO Cleared by:
Tackling Health Inequalities implications
YES/NO
Human rights implications
YES/NO :
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES/NO
Economic impact
YES/NO
Community safety implications
YES/NO
Human resources implications
YES/NO
Property implications
YES/NO
Area(s) affected
Relevant Scrutiny Board if decision called in
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council? NO
Press release
YES/NO

Sheffield City Trust's Financing Obligations

Summary

1. The City Council revenue budget currently includes £25m being the cost of financial support to Sheffield City Trust (SCT). This is to enable SCT to discharge their responsibility in respect of leasing arrangements.
2. An opportunity has become available to reschedule these arrangements with the potential to release annual savings of up to £7m for a defined period of time.

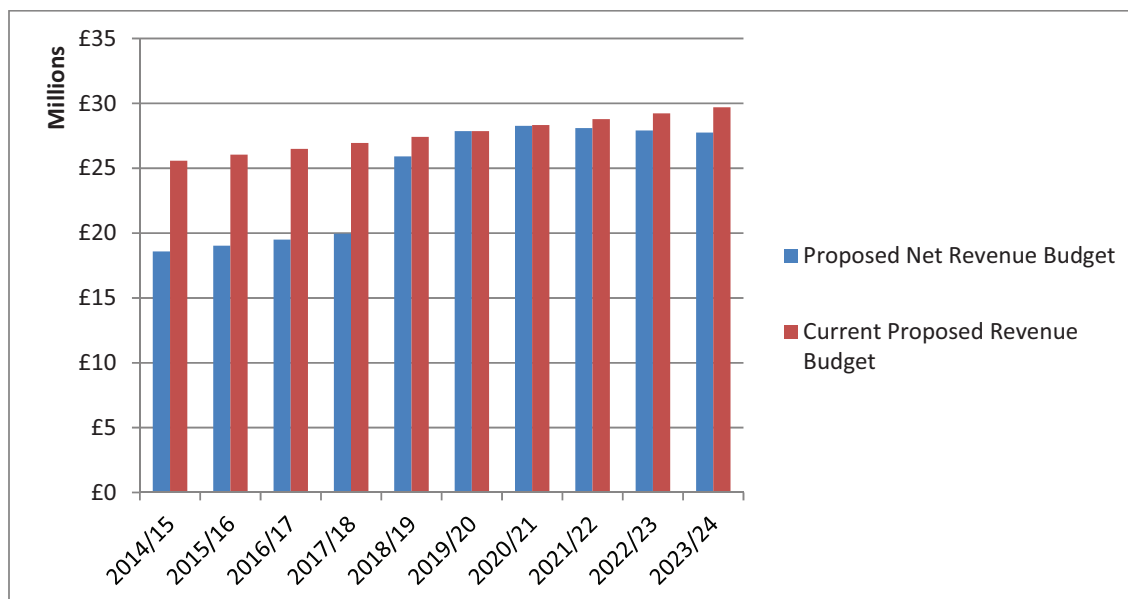
Background

3. Sheffield City Trust (SCT) is currently party to a £140m leasing arrangement with Lloyds Bank for several sporting facilities across the City. The Council guarantees SCT's involvement in this arrangement and funds SCT to make rental payments due under the lease. From 2013/14 the Council is also advancing SCT cash to meet principal payments that will allow SCT to repay to Lloyds all money owed by 2024.
4. The cost of support to SCT will increase over time as the principal amount payable increases: by 2024 the annual budgeted cost of support to SCT will have risen to almost £30m from £25m now. To mitigate this increase in cost a cash reserve has been built up over the last decade by the Council that will allow these costs to be smoothed.
5. To date, penalties on early repayments have meant that it has not been in the Council's or SCT's interest to look at repaying these obligations before the 2024 end date. However, following the banking crisis Lloyds have reviewed their asset portfolio and are now extremely keen to end the current arrangements and allow SCT to prematurely repay their obligations.
6. Lloyds' change in attitude towards these arrangements provides the Council with the opportunity to review the way it funds SCT to meet its obligations. Funding SCT to repay its obligations early could deliver significant savings.

Proposal

7. The Council has been working closely with Lloyds and SCT to establish the most cost effective restructure arrangement. Various options were identified but the majority of these posed insurmountable obstacles by way of changing existing legal arrangements that were not in control of the Council.
8. If the Council were to change the current arrangements in order for SCT to repay their obligations early, it would involve advancing SCT with approximately £99M now. Lloyds would then be completely removed from all arrangements, with SCT becoming a tenant of the Council rather than the bank. The Council would manage the advancement of this amount through its Treasury Management Strategy, with cash being found from existing balances and borrowing as required.
9. Over the entire period to 2024, this proposed arrangement would save a total of £33.5m overall:

	Total costs to 2024 £m
Current arrangement with Lloyds Bank	301.5
LESS Proposed arrangement	268.0
TOTAL SAVING	33.5



10. The proposal involves the Council advancing around £99m to SCT in order for them to break the current arrangements. The funds needed for this could be found from a variety of means, but for prudence purposes it is assumed that borrowing is used and the costs of servicing this are included within the savings figures detailed above. Charging the advancement to the revenue account will mean, however, that we raise cash to repay any borrowing used for the initial advancement. It is expected that any borrowing needed will be raised from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) which is an arm of HM Treasury. PWLB borrowing is generally more flexible and of a lower rate than loans from other organisations.

11. Using borrowing for this transaction will necessitate a revision of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy to take account of a new cash requirement and more up-to-date forecasts for our own cash balances and interest rates. A revised set of Prudential Indicators will also be provided to show the implications of raising cash from borrowing.

12. The revised Strategy and Indicators show that the Council expects to comfortably come in under its authorised limit for debt as previously approved by members. Revisions in the strategy also mean that there are no significant variations on the Prudential Indicators that were previously approved. The points to note about the impact on the Treasury Management Strategy are:
 - The proportion of the revenue budget that will be spent on SCC's and SCT's debt charges will fall overall

- The Council will remain within the authorised borrowing limit
13. Should the Council choose to enter into a transaction to allow SCT to repay its obligations early, statute will ensure that this transaction can never again be restructured or amended.

Legal Implications

14. The current legal arrangements are complex and unravelling them will need the consent and co-operation of Lloyds and SCT. The Council will need to ensure it is released from all obligations to Lloyds and that its interest as freeholder of the land will be not be unnecessarily diminished.
15. The Council will also need to ensure that any changes to the relationship with SCT continue to meet the legal obligation of fiduciary duty and financial prudence.
16. Revised arrangements will also need to be considered to comply with State Aid and Procurement laws. There are a number of powers the Council can or will need to rely upon to achieve the necessary changes. These will clarified as more detail is obtained through discussions with Lloyds and SCT, but Officers consider at the present that none of the proposals would lead to the Council acting ultra vires.

Recommendations

17. That Members
- a) Approve the principle of restructuring the funding arrangements with SCT to allow SCT to repay their obligations early;
 - b) Delegate the authority to finalise the agreement to the Executive Director, Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and delegate authority to approve a scheme for restructuring the funding arrangements, including without limitation any scheme that varies from the one recommended in this report;

- c) In consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance authority to negotiate, finalise and enter into any agreements considered appropriate to ensure the release of the Council's current obligations and liabilities to Lloyds;
- d) In consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance authority to negotiate, finalise and enter into any agreements considered appropriate to facilitate SCT to be released from its current obligations and liabilities to Lloyds, including without limitation by way of acquiring property; and,
- e) In consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance authority to negotiate, finalise and enter into any agreements considered appropriate in relation to the Council's on-going relationship with SCT; and,
- f) In consultation as the Executive Director considers appropriate take such steps as she considers appropriate to achieve any approved scheme for restructuring the funding arrangements with SCT, including without limitation the authority to borrow money and enter into new or revised property transactions.

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

Report of: Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families

Date: 19 June 2013

Subject: Home to School Transport Policy

Author of Report: John Bigley, Manager, Admissions & Access

Summary: This report provides a summary of the responses to the consultation process on the proposal to discontinue the discretionary free bus passes that are currently provided under the current Home to School Transport Policy for attendance at Catholic schools with effect from September 2013 and seeks approval on the preferred Option.

In the second consultation the Council consulted on three options numbered below

- Option 1** Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013.
- Option 2** Withdraw the current provision for funding discretionary transport on a phased basis starting with entry to Reception and Year 7 in September 2013 and each subsequent year. Under this option, pupils currently receiving a pass under discretionary criteria would continue to receive it until they finish at their current school.
- Option 3.** Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013 and offer the phased arrangements described below to assist families with the cost of travel for children in Years 10 and 11 during 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15. These arrangements are intended to help families that would experience difficulties with the affordability of travel to school if all free bus passes were to be discontinued. This is a **new** option and further details are given at 4.6 below.

Outcome of Consultation

On careful consideration of the responses in the second consultation a further option is now being put before cabinet at Option 4 below

Option 4 Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes to denominational schools from September 2013 except for those pupils in Years 10 and 11 during 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15 who meet the existing discretionary criteria namely attendance at a denominational school , adherence to a specific denomination and meeting the statutory distance criteria (see 4.2 below).

The key difference between Options 3 and 4 is that pupils do not need to satisfy the financial eligibility criteria to qualify for a free bus pass under Option 4.

Reasons for Recommendation

As a result of unprecedented Government cut-backs, the Council is facing extreme pressures on increasingly limited budgets. Over the past two years the Council has received heavy cuts to its funding from Government, and has had to find savings of around £140 million. Over the last two years the Council has found these savings whilst avoiding significant impact on visible frontline services.

This year the Council had to find a further £50 million of savings, with more cuts in the following years. Efficiency savings will not be sufficient and the Council consequently has to reduce the budgets of many frontline services.

Within these constraints, the Council's approach is to protect where possible those services provided for the most vulnerable people in our community and to examine where they spend on discretionary provision.

The Council's funding of discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the Home to School Transport policy must therefore be reviewed in the light of the need to reduce expenditure and balanced against the Council's responsibilities to maintain vital services for the most disadvantaged. Other Councils have taken similar action to discontinue their discretionary policies in the face of such budgetary pressures.

The addition of Option 3 in the current consultation clearly signalled the Council's intention to mitigate against the loss of a bus pass for those most prejudicially affected, namely those on lower incomes and those entering Years 10 and 11. Having listened carefully to the feedback from the consultation, the recommendation to Cabinet is to approve Option 4 (set out at 11.5 below).

This recommendation acknowledges the feedback from the consultation which showed strong support for Option 2 (83%) which was a phasing of withdrawal of the discretionary free bus passes. The proposal below is a phased approach as well as being an expansion of the original Option 3. It also acknowledges that

the majority of respondents (95%) thought that a transfer to another school would be disruptive and have a negative impact on educational outcomes. This proposal eliminates the need for any student entering Years 10 and 11 in 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15 to have to transfer to another school as a result of losing the bus pass.

The recommendation is made even though it represents a higher cost than Option 3 and reduced savings (see 11.7)

Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to:

Approve the phased withdrawal of discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013 in line with Option 4 which is:

To withdraw all discretionary free bus passes to denominational schools from September 2013 except for those pupils in Years 10 and 11 during 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15 who meet the existing discretionary criteria namely attendance at a denominational school , adherence to a specific denomination and meeting the statutory distance criteria.

Background Papers: Consultation Document

Category of Report: OPEN

If Closed add – ‘Not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph... of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).’

* Delete as appropriate

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES Cleared by Laura Pattman
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by Leigh Hall
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by Bashir Khan
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic impact
NO
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
NO
Area(s) affected
ALL
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Cllr. Jackie Drayton
Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in
Children, Young People and Families
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
YES

Children & Young People Cabinet Member Portfolio

REPORT TITLE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

1.0 Background

- 1.1 On 12 December 2012, Cabinet decided, following a consultation with all those affected, to discontinue all discretionary free bus passes for pupils to attend faith schools from September 2013. A number of respondents stated that the consultation period preceding the December decision was too short and that there was not enough time to respond properly. The Council carefully considered this feedback and as a result, the proposed changes to the provision of discretionary free bus passes for pupils to travel to and from faith schools are being considered afresh following a second consultation exercise.. This report provides details of the second consultation.
- 1.2 The proposal to amend the Home to School Policy to discontinue the provision of discretionary free bus passes for travel to faith schools is in response to the urgent requirement to reduce expenditure in light of the budget settlement from the coalition Government for the 2013/14 financial year and beyond.
- 1.3 If implemented it is anticipated that the proposal to discontinue discretionary transport with effect from September 2013/14 would save the Council expenditure of approximately £250K to £300K each year (depending on the number of students that would be eligible for a pass).
- 1.4 Sheffield City Council's Home to School Transport Policy sets out the circumstances in which it will provide free transport, in the form of a bus pass, to assist pupils to get to school. Under the current budgetary pressures and in order to ensure efficiency and equity in its use of resources, the Council has decided that it would like to consider making changes to the discretionary part of the policy to be brought in for the 2013/14 school year starting in September 2013.
- 1.5 The Council has consulted on three options, details of which are provided at paragraph 4.5.
- 1.6 Many other Authorities have or will be discontinuing the provision of discretionary free bus passes for attendance at denominational schools for the same reasons. This includes the other South Yorkshire Authorities - Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham.
- 1.7 Families who meet "Low Income" criteria have a statutory entitlement to free transport if they wish to attend a school on grounds of religion or belief that is between 2 and 15 miles from their home address. This entitlement is unaffected by this proposal. Further, as explained below, those children with special educational needs who have a statutory

entitlement to free school transport will not be affected by these proposals.

2.0 What does this mean for Sheffield people?

2.1 This proposed amendment does not impact on a parent's right to apply for their child to attend a faith school. Any such application will be considered under the individual school's admission policy. If adopted, the proposal will mean that the majority of children attending faith schools beyond the statutory walking distance will no longer be provided with free transport to and from school.

3.0 Outcome and sustainability

3.1 At a time when the Council has to make significant cuts to the services it provides, including to the most vulnerable in our community, the Local Authority is having to examine any discretionary funding they spend to ensure they can continue to provide their statutory duties. This change of policy will enable the Council to protect other services to the most vulnerable in our community.

4.0 Main report

4.1 The legislation which places a duty on the Council to provide free home to school transport is contained principally in the Education Act 1996 as amended by later legislation including the Education Act 2002 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Local authorities have a duty to provide free home to school transport for eligible children of compulsory school age living in the local authority's area. The law provides an extensive definition of what is deemed to be an "eligible" child.

4.2 Section 508B of the 1996 Act sets out the duty to provide free travel arrangements for 'eligible children' to 'qualifying schools'. The Authority will continue to make arrangements for free transport where there is a statutory duty to do so. Statutory criteria are:

- Children with special educational needs who have a disability or mobility problem.
- Children who live within the statutory walking distance to school, but there is no suitable available route.

The statutory walking distances are:

- (a) for a child under the age of 8 years - 2 miles;
- (b) for a child aged 8 years and over - 3 miles.

- Children who live outside the statutory walking distances and no suitable school place is available nearer to their home.
- Children entitled to free school meals, or whose parents are in

receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

- 4.3 In addition to its legal duties outlined above, section 508C of the 1996 Act allows Local Authorities to choose to provide free transport for a wider range of pupils. In considering whether or not to do so, section 9 of the 1996 Act requires Local Authorities to take into consideration, among other factors, the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure. Section 509AD of the 1996 Act requires local authorities to “have regard”, among other things, to the wish of the parent for their child to attend a school on the grounds of the parent’s religion or belief. Sheffield Local Authority has previously chosen to support families with travel to denominational schools, but there is no general statutory duty requiring local authorities to provide free transport to such schools. It is therefore open to the Council to consider whether such provision should be discontinued.

New guidance on “Home to School Travel and Transport” was issued by the Department for Education in March 2013. It states that:

*“Local authorities shall have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with their parents’ wishes, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable expenditure. **However, there is no general statutory duty requiring local authorities to provide free transport to faith schools.**”*

- 4.4 The total number currently receiving passes at All Saints is 369, This represents 39% of the Y7-Y11 population. At Notre Dame the total number receiving passes is 622. This represents 61% of the Y7 – Y11 population. A total of 43 passes are currently issued for primary school pupils.

4.5 **Options that the Council Consulted Upon**

The Council consulted on three options:

Option 1 Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013.

Option 2 Withdraw the current provision for funding discretionary transport on a phased basis starting with entry to Reception and Year 7 in September 2013 and each subsequent year. Under this option, pupils currently receiving a pass under discretionary criteria would continue to receive it until they finish at their current school.

Option 3. Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013 and offer the phased arrangements described below to assist families with the cost of travel for children in Years 10 and 11 during 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15. These arrangements are intended to help families that would experience difficulties with the affordability of travel to school if all free bus passes were to be discontinued. This is a **new** option and further details are given below.

4.6 **Phased arrangements for Pupils in Years 10 and 11 (Option 3)**

In response to the feedback that was received in the first consultation, a new option has been put forward which is to change the current policy so that it provides a wider level of protection for families on low incomes where their children are in Years 10 and 11 in the next two years. The proposal is to offer a discretionary free bus pass for pupils in Years 10 and 11 where all the following criteria are met and for the interim period specified below:

1. The family has a child or children in Y10 or Y11;
2. The pupil is in receipt of a free pass under the current discretionary policy arrangements but would lose it if the Council's proposals were implemented;
3. The family is in receipt of working tax credit below the maximum rate (if a family is in receipt of the maximum rate they are entitled to a free bus pass under the statutory criteria).

These arrangements would be for an **interim period** only. They would apply to pupils starting Years 10 and 11 from September 2013 for the 2013/14 academic year and those in Year 11 from September 2014 for the 2014/15 academic year. The arrangements would then cease.

4.7 **Home to School Transport Review/Appeals Process**

Parents who wish to challenge a decision about the transport arrangements offered to their child, including questions of their child's eligibility for travel support, will be entitled to seek a review of and, if necessary, an appeal to an independent appeal panel against the decision.

The current appeals procedure has been revised in accordance with the Department of Education's March 2013 Guidance on home to school travel and transport. Details of the new review/appeals procedure are attached as **Appendix 10**.

5.0 The Consultation Process

- 5.1 The consultation period ran initially from 25 March to 21 May. It was extended to 24 May to give further opportunity for comment upon the alleged historic agreement on funded transport to Catholic schools (see 6.4 below).

The consultation was targeted at parents, carers, young people and other stakeholders who might be directly affected by any change to the current policy. The people that were invited to respond to the consultation were parents and carers of all pupils attending Years 7 to 10 at All Saints and Notre Dame High Schools and parents of all Year 5 and Year 6 pupils attending Voluntary Aided Primary Schools. Parents of any Rec-Y4 pupils currently in receipt of a discretionary free pass. In addition to parents and carers the following were also consulted:

- All Secondary and Primary Headteachers and Chairs of Governors
- Young people
- Sheffield College
- Longley Park
- Sheffield Hallam Diocese
- Diocese of Sheffield
- South Yorkshire Transport Executive
- SACRE
- All Councillors
- All local Members of Parliament
- Parishes and Bishops

This group was considered to include those who are either directly affected by the proposal, key stakeholders or those who would have an interest in the outcome.

All of those consulted were invited to respond to the consultation document either in writing or by completing a questionnaire. The Council sent approximately 3000 consultation documents to all parents with children attending All Saints or Notre Dame (current Year 7 to Year 10) parents of all children currently in Years 5 and 6 at all Voluntary Aided (Faith Primary Schools) and Parents of any Rec-Y4 pupils currently in receipt of a discretionary free pass

The consultation document and an on-line questionnaire were also available on the Council website.

- 5.2 The Council was extremely keen to offer individual parents and children the opportunity to discuss their own circumstances in private. To facilitate that there were three drop in surgeries for parents and carers to discuss their situation confidentially. They were arranged as follows:

Surgery 1	Tuesday 30 April, 5.30-7.00 PM, The Artspace, Crystal Peaks Library, 1-3 Peak Square, Sheffield. S20 7PH
	One family attended to discuss their individual circumstances confidentially.
Surgery 2	Wednesday 8 May, 6.00-8.00 PM, Town Hall Reception Room, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, S1 2HH
	One family attended to discuss their individual circumstances confidentially.
Surgery 3	Thursday 16 May, 5.30–7.30 PM Chapelton Library Nether Ley Avenue, Sheffield, S35 1AE
	Seven families attended to receive general information about the proposals and their impact.

5.3 Responses to the consultation process

5.3.1 Note regarding small discrepancies in totals / percentages:

As none of the questions in the survey were mandatory, the numbers of respondents answering each question may differ slightly (i.e. if they skip a question either accidentally or deliberately) and may not add up to the total number of respondents by category (as in the case of 5.3.8 below where more people responded to the question about transfer than the number of respondents in receipt of a bus pass). Also, some questions allowed multiple choices, which means that counts and percentages will add up to more than 100% of the total in some cases.

5.3.2 The total number of responses received were as follows:

- 495 questionnaires received (16.4% return)
- 18 emails
- 2 Letters

All responses by email or letter are considered alongside those received through the questionnaire.

A report showing a summary of responses is attached at **Appendix 1**. A more detailed analysis of the responses by those currently in receipt of a bus pass, those not in receipt of a bus pass and other stakeholders is attached at **Appendix 4**.

5.3.3 Headline data is as follows:

Respondent:

Parent or Carer	431 (87.1%)
Young person	41 (8.3%)
Governor	4 (0.8%)
Headteacher	5 (1%)
School staff	2 (0.4%)
Other	12 (2.5%)

5.3.4 Do you currently receive a free bus pass?

Yes	307 (66.9%)
No	152 (33.1%)

5.3.5 To what extent do you agree that the Council should stop funding discretionary free bus passes for pupils attending denominational schools?

Strongly agree	(48) 9.8%
Agree	(17) 3.4%
Not sure	(11) 2.2%
Disagree	(53) 10.8%
Strongly disagree	(364) 73.8%

5.3.6 Please state which (if any) of the other options you would prefer:

There were 209 responses:

Option 2	173 (82.77%)
Option 3	24 (11.48%)
Both options	12 (5.75%)

A further 98 did not tick either box indicating that they supported neither Option 2 nor 3.

5.3.7 Do you think that removal of free transport would prevent children and young people from accessing places at faith schools in future?

Strongly agree	326 (65.9%)
Agree	73 (14.6%)
Not sure	42 (8.5%)
Disagree	28 (5.7%)
Strongly disagree	26 (5.3%)

5.3.8 If free transport was withdrawn would you need to consider a transfer to another school?

Yes	151 (35.2%)
No	193 (45%)

Not sure 86 (19.8%)

5.3.9 If you did need to transfer to another school would you prefer your local catchment school?

Yes 69 (46.3%)

No 64 (43%)

Not sure 16 (10.7%)

5.3.10 Do you think a transfer to another school would have a negative impact?

Yes 185 (94.9%)

No 4 (2.0%)

Not sure 6 (3.1)

Please state what you think the negative effects could be?

Tick any that apply (multiple response)

Educational outcomes 171 (92.9%)

Religious ethos 175 (95.1%)

Curriculum match 138 (75%)

Friendship groups 171 (92.9%)

Disruption 170 (92.4%)

Other 13 (7.1%)

5.3.11 Would you/your family meet the criteria for Y10 and Y11 students?
(See 4.6 Option 3 above)

Yes 111 (26.9%)

No 302 (73.1%)

5.3.12 How would you describe your ethnicity (where indicated)?

White (387) 82.5%

Asian or Asian British (21) 4.5%

Other Ethnic Group (8) 1.7%

Mixed/Dual Heritage (24) 5.1%

Black African Caribbean or Black British (29) 6.2%

5.3.13 Do you practice a regular faith or religion?

Christian (379) 94%

Atheist (15) 3.7%

Islam (6) 1.5%

Other (3) .7%

6.0 Further responses and issues raised

6.1 The Sheffield Hallam Diocese

The full response is attached at **Appendix 2**. The issue of the “historical agreement” to which the response refers is addressed at paragraph 6.4 below. The final paragraph of the letter refers to the “absence of any consultation whatsoever on this important matter between Officers of the Local Authority and Officers of the Diocese of Hallam.” Contrary to that statement, the Local Authority recognised at the outset that the Diocese was a key stakeholder with regard to this issue. Hence the Authority has actively sought the views of the Diocese on this matter, initially in the first consultation in Autumn 2012 and subsequently in the current consultation. A full consultation pack was issued to the Diocese on 20 March ahead of the actual launch on 25 March. Officers also offered to meet with representatives of the Diocese to discuss the proposals in more detail if required.

6.2 South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive

The full response is attached at **Appendix 3**.

6.3 Summary of the key issues raised in the consultation:

Full responses are too numerous to provide in the main body of the report but further more detailed analysis is provided at **Appendices 4 and 5**. All letters and emails have been provided to the Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Families and are provided for other Cabinet Members to review in the Leader’s Office. A summary of the main themes raised by respondents is provided below. Where appropriate officer comments and perspectives are given below the view of respondents.

6.4 Issue 1 - Historic Agreement

During the first consultation, a number of respondents told us that they believed that in the 1970s and 1980s, following the closure of three Catholic Secondary Schools in Sheffield, the Council had made an agreement to continue to provide free school travel for children attending the remaining denominational schools more than 3 miles from their homes.

At that stage, as noted at page 9 of the consultation document dated 25 March 2013, the Council did not have evidence of such an agreement. During the course of the second consultation launched on 25 March 2013, the Council has been shown letters addressed in late 1984 to parents of pupils who would be transferring from primary to secondary school following the closure of St Peter’s Roman Catholic Secondary Schools in July 1985. The letters include a paragraph which state:

“ Special arrangements have been made with regard to free travel for Roman Catholic pupils from the North of the City who will attend either Notre Dame or All Saints schools and who reside over three miles from whichever of these schools is attended. The Education Committee have agreed to waive their new policy on free travel until new catchment areas have been agreed for the remaining two Roman Catholic Secondary Schools. This means whichever of the two schools your child attends, provided you reside over three miles from that school your child will be entitled to free travel until they leave the school, subject only to any further general policy change by the Education Committee.” (these letters are shown at **Appendix 6**).

The letters were shown to the Council officers in the course of the second consultation process, and the Council thought it appropriate to invite specific comments or submissions on the letters from the key stakeholders in the consultation. To this end, the Council sent letters to Headteachers of all Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools inviting comments on the letters. The Council consultation website also invited comments on the letters to be received by 24 May. A copy of the letter inviting responses is attached at **Appendix 7**. One response was received about these issues from the Headteacher at St. Marie’s Primary School. A copy of this letter is at **Appendix 8**.

As stated above, the Council has been aware since the first consultation that many parents and some key stakeholders thought that the Council had made a long-standing agreement to continue to fund school bus passes for children attending All Saints and Notre Dame following closure of three other Catholic Secondary Schools in the 1980s. The Council does not consider that the letters show that the Council agreed that it would always in future continue to provide funding to Catholic pupils attending Catholic Schools more than three miles from their homes, or that there was any agreement with respect to primary school children. The Council accepts that it has, as a matter of discretion, continued to fund free school travel for Catholic pupils attending Notre Dame and All Saints for many years, and that such funding was a benefit which the Council now proposes to discontinue. For that reason, the Council has been taken particular care to ensure that all who are affected by the proposal have had the opportunity to respond to it. The second consultation, which ran from 25 March to 24 May 2013, was launched in response to issues that emerged from the first consultation, and as a result of which the proposals before the Council were modified. It is acknowledged that there is strong opposition amongst those directly affected to the proposal to discontinue discretionary funding. The Council, considers, however, that maintaining the on-going expense of funding the discretionary free bus passes is no longer reasonable in the light of the severe financial circumstances now facing the Council, the need to implement savings by cutting back on discretionary Council services across the board while continuing to fulfil its wide-ranging statutory duties – including that of a balanced budget – and the need to ensure that Council services for

the most vulnerable members of the community are, to the best of our ability in the present circumstances protected and maintained.

The letter from St Marie's raises two issues in relation to the letters addressed to parents in late 1984:

- a) The letters state that "The Education Committee have agreed to waive their new policy on free travel "until new catchment areas have been agreed for the remaining two Roman Catholic Secondary Schools."; whereas it appears that catchment areas have never been agreed for those schools.

Because of the passage of time since the letters were sent, the Council has found no record as to what was intended with respect to "the new policy on free travel" or the proposed agreement on "catchment areas" at the time. The letters suggest that there was at the time an intention to designate a new catchment areas for All Saints and Notre Dame in the light of the closure of St Peter's (which followed the closure of another Catholic Secondary School in 1981). Given the passage of time and the lack of records covering this period, it is not clear why these catchment areas were never implemented. The current position (which has been in place for very many years) is that the Local Authority Policy makes provision for children who attend their catchment area school to receive free transport where the school in question is beyond statutory walking distance. These catchment areas are a network of geographic boundaries that cover every residential address in Sheffield and form the basis of the Sheffield Admissions Policy. The purpose is to identify a catchment primary and secondary school for every resident so as to determine their priority for a school place within the Admissions Policy.

All Saints and Notre Dame High Schools operate their own admission policies which give priority to children attending their feeder primary schools. Some of those consulted have maintained that these feeder schools should be treated in the same way as the Council's catchment areas meaning that any Catholic child attending a Catholic Feeder School, and who lives beyond the statutory walking distance from Notre Dame or All Saints should be considered as attending their "catchment area school" and therefore be entitled to free school transport under the Local Authority Transport policy. The Council does not accept that that the feeder school system adopted by the two Catholic Secondary Schools is equivalent to the catchment area system operated by the Council, or that the same considerations should apply.

- b) Agreements as to the funding of school transport for Catholic primary school children may have been reached when St Marie's relocated to its present site in around 1971/72, or around the time that St Vincent's Primary School was closed around 1989.

The Council has been unable to find any documentation relating to any

agreements as to the funding of primary school children, and no documentation has been provided to it during the consultation. The Council accepts that the proposal to discontinue the funding of school transport for Catholic children attending Catholic schools beyond statutory walking distance from their homes involves the withdrawal of a benefit, and has therefore given those affected the opportunity to make representations on this issue. In considering whether to adopt the proposal at this stage, the Council must give serious consideration to the views expressed by those affected in the course of the consultation exercise.

6.5 Issue 2 - Catchment Areas

Neither All Saints nor Notre Dame operate catchment areas. It is clear from the oversubscription criteria for each of the schools that they have feeder school arrangements instead of criteria related to catchment area.

6.6 Issue 3 – Transport Provision at Hinde House Secondary School

A number of respondents have asked why free transport is currently provided for some students who attend Hinde House Secondary School.

In the mid 1990s Park House Secondary School at Tinsley was closed. Pupils residing at Tinsley and Darnall who attended Park House were redesignated to Hinde House Secondary. There was no direct commercial bus service linking the two areas with the school and the walking route was not considered to be safe. Free transport was provided to ensure that these communities could access their new school.

This provision is currently under review and will be subject to full consultation with the local communities.

6.7 Issue 4 – Timing/ Implementation

Option 1 of the proposals would implement a full withdrawal of passes in all year groups from September 2013. This means that parents/carers with children already at our schools will need to fund transport costs that they were not aware of when they originally applied for a place at a Catholic School.

In the second consultation, of those who expressed a preference the highest proportion of respondents (88%) preferred Option 2 which would introduce the withdrawal of passes on a phased basis starting in Year 7 in September 2013 (see 5.3.6 above). Under this option, pupils currently in receipt of a bus pass under discretionary criteria would retain it until completion of Year 11. The change in policy would only apply to pupils starting at school from September 2013.

Some parents make the point that other Authorities that have discontinued discretionary provision have done so on a phased basis, ensuring that those who already attending faith schools, for whom free transport was available at the time can complete their education. If withdrawal were to be phased, parents would make an informed decision when applying for a Catholic secondary school.

The original consultation in October 2012 did alert parents to the fact that the Council was considering withdrawing the discretionary free bus passes for attendance at denominational schools. Parents of children about to transfer to secondary school were given the option of amending their preferences for a place in Year 7 in the light of this possibility.

6.8 Issue 5 - Breach of the right to education in conformity with the religious and philosophical convictions of the parents

During the first consultation parents told us that they felt that by proposing to remove the free school travel passes we were acting unlawfully as to do so would amount to a breach of their Human Rights to have their children educated in the Catholic faith.

The proposal to discontinue free transport does not prevent any parent from applying for and attending a Catholic school, or any other voluntary aided school.

Article 2 of Protocol 1 to the European Convention states:

“No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.”

This confers a right to education; it does not confer a guarantee of study at a specific school. The requirement to respect the right of parents to educate their children in conformity with their religious beliefs does not import an obligation on the state to supply or to fund faith-based education. Case law confirms that Article 2 of Protocol 1 is not infringed simply by a refusal to provide free school transport and that there would be no infringement of this Article if the reason for not providing transport was the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.

The Government issued new Home to school Transport Guidance in March 2013. It confirms that *“there is no general statutory duty requiring local authorities to provide free transport to faith schools”*

6.9 **Issue 6 – Social mobility/Diversity and Difference**

It has been suggested that the proposal is at odds with the Local Authority and Government's desire to improve parental choice and accessibility. Some respondents have said that Catholic parents from deprived areas seeking to send their children to Catholic schools beyond statutory walking distance will not be able to afford to choose to send their children to Catholic schools. Concern has been expressed that the policy may create schools that are elitist, i.e. the Catholic schools will serve only those families who can afford to send their families there. It has also been suggested that the proposal goes against the City Council's environmental targets as it will force more families into using their cars to transport their children to school.

The Authority will continue to provide free bus passes to the children of parents who qualify under the statutory low income criteria. It is acknowledged that there will be financial implications for families who do not meet the statutory low income criteria.

6.10 **Issue 7 – Financial Impact**

In the first consultation parents and stakeholders told us that those most in need (financially) would be hardest hit.

As pointed out above, those most financially in need will generally fall within the statutory "low income" criteria, and are therefore not affected by the proposal. The Council accepts, however, that parents whose income are just above the statutory "low income" threshold will be most adversely affected by the proposals.

The Council has therefore responded by introducing a new 3rd option which provides for a continuation of free school travel for pupils currently (as of September 2013) are in Y10 and Y11 who are currently in receipt of a free bus pass and whose family receives the working tax credit below the maximum rate (bearing in mind that the statutory entitlement kicks in at the maximum rate.

The response to the second consultation indicated that of the two other options (excluding option 1 – complete removal from September 2013) 82.77 % said that they preferred a phased withdrawal (option 2) and only 11.48 % preferred option 3. A total of 98 respondents did not tick either option and 12 ticked both.

In the second consultation parents told us they did not agree with our costing of bus fares.

From September 2013 the cost of a single bus journey will be 70p. The cost of catching two buses a day would equate to £14 per week. Based upon a 39 week school year that would cost £546 per year for a single pupil.

It must be noted that the proposed changes to discretionary transport do not change the current services to Notre Dame and All Saints which are run on a commercial basis (“green buses”). Children attending these schools could still access these buses which undertake a single journey to and from school. On this basis the potential cost per child would be £273 per year.

6.11 **Issue 8 – Impact on educational attainment/continuity**

In the second consultation when parents were asked if they would need to consider a transfer to another school if free transport was discontinued 35.2% said YES , 45% said NO and 19.8% were not sure.

Of those responding 46.3% said that they would prefer a local catchment school and 43% said that they would not want a local catchment school (10.7% were not sure)

In the second consultation a very high proportion (94.9%) of those responding said that a transfer to another school would have a negative impact. When asked what those effects would be parents stated that educational outcomes; religious ethos; friendship groups and disruption all ranked very highly (over 90%) with curriculum match lower at 75% and friendship groups at 92.9%.

In circumstances where a parent has to consider a transfer to another school the Council would make every effort to help parents and carers get a place for their child in their catchment school or a school within the locality, although a place at the catchment school or a school within the locality cannot be guaranteed.

In the event that any parent/carer felt that they had exceptional circumstances they would be entitled to have recourse to the review and appeals procedure (see 4. 8 above)

6.12 **Issue 9 – In support of the proposal**

Of the total responses 48 (9.7%) strongly agreed with the proposed changes and 17 (3.4%) agreed.

Common themes in these responses were:

Parents of children who are not Catholic but attend a Catholic School did not feel that it was fair that some children received free transport and others did not. Others commented that parents make informed decisions. If they choose to send their child to a Catholic School they should accept the fact that they will have to fund their transport.

Others remarked that all children should receive free passes or none at all.

7.0 Financial Implications for the Council

- 7.1 The cost of providing free transport to denominational schools for the 2011/12 academic year was £275K. Of this £21K was statutory provision for children from Low Income families. Net discretionary expenditure was therefore £254K. For the 2012/13 academic year the total spent on providing free transport to date is £315K, again £21K of this supports low income families leaving net expenditure of £294K.
- 7.2 This represents a significant saving in terms of the overall budget position for the Council which Members must consider in light of the need to find a further £50M of savings in 2013/14.
- 7.3 If Option 2 were to be agreed, phasing in for new Year 7 from September 2013, based on current expenditure this would save approximately £60K in the first year. This saving would increase over the next four years until the current Year 7 leaves school at the end of the 2017 academic year. On current projections leading to an ultimate saving of approximately £300K from 2017. This does not take into account subsequent raises in the cost of bus passes.
- 7.4 There would also be a cost to option 2. For the 2013/14 academic year, estimated cost would be £240K for funding passes for what would be the Year 8 to Year 11 cohort. This would reduce by £60K each subsequent year until the current Year 7 leaves the school in 2017. The estimated full cost of Option 2 to 2017 would be £600K.
- 7.5 The cost of Option 3 cannot be determined accurately until the number of families qualifying under the criteria is known. However in response to the questionnaire 26.7% of respondents have indicated that they would qualify for a pass under the criteria outlined in Option 3. If that response is profiled across the Year 10 and Year 11 cohorts for 2013/14 currently in receipt of passes there would be an estimated cost in 2013/14 of £32K. For the remaining Year 11 cohort in 2014/15 the estimated cost would be £15K. A total estimated cost for Option 3 of £47K. Given that current expenditure is approximately £300K Option 3 would achieve a saving of approximately £270K in the 2013/14 and £285K in 2014/15.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 During the consultation process a number of arguments have been advanced as to why the Council would be acting unlawfully if it were to exercise its discretion by varying its policy as proposed in the consultation. As stated in earlier paragraphs of this report, neither the Education Act 1996 nor the Secretary of State's Guidance provides that a person choosing a denominational school is entitled to free school transport. (See in particular, paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3 above).
- 8.2 The recommendations outlined in this report provide for the

consideration of a number of possible options relating to the proposed changes to the discretionary home to school transport arrangements. When making changes to these arrangements the Council as part of their consideration of the possible options must have regard to the statutory provisions set out in the Education Act 1996 and the relevant guidance, as set out in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.3 above.

- 8.3 In addition, section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity between different protected groups, and to foster good relations between those who share the protected characteristics, and others who do not. Religion or belief are protected characteristics.
- 8.4 As pointed out at paragraph 6.8 above, Protocol 1, Article 2 of the European Convention does not oblige a State to provide free transport to faith schools.
- 8.5 As explained above, the Council does not consider that there are historic agreements which prevent it from ceasing to provide free bus passes to children attending Catholic schools beyond statutory walking distance from their homes. The Council accepts, however, that it has been funding the transport of such pupils for many years, and that it is necessary to consult those affected before taking any decision to withdraw that benefit.
- 8.6 Before making any changes to the current discretionary home to school transport arrangements, therefore, proper consideration must be given to the feedback provided in response to the consultation and the equalities impact assessment attached to this report. The Council must also take account of the requirements of disabled parents and children in the application of the changes and make reasonable adjustments where required by individual circumstances.
- 8.7 The Council will also put in place a review/appeals procedure for parents who wish to challenge a decision about:
- The transport arrangements offered;
 - Their child's eligibility;
 - The distance measurement; and
 - The safety of the route.
- 8.8 Details of the home to school transport appeals process are attached as **Appendix 10**.

9.0 Equalities Implications

- 9.1 With reference to section 149 of the Equality Act an Equalities Impact assessment has been carried out and is attached at **Appendix 9**. As there are three options being considered the potential impact will vary depending on which option is approved. It is important for Cabinet

members to read and consider this document together with the results of the consultation before any decision is taken.

- 9.2 The present policy accrues predominantly to the benefit of Catholic families, and so it is clear that it is Catholic families who will primarily be affected by the proposal to discontinue free home to school transport to denominational schools beyond statutory walking distance from a child's home. By definition, the pupils who will be affected by the proposals are children between the ages of 5 and 16.
- 9.3 The Authority has considered the circumstances of all students who currently receive discretionary free bus passes. Specifically all have been plotted on a map to establish whether the withdrawal of passes would impact greatly on any areas of the City. Students currently in receipt of travel passes reside predominantly in the North, North East and South East of the City.
- 9.4 An assessment of the ethnic background of students has also been undertaken. For those attending secondary schools, the majority of students are identified as "White British" (75%) and the next highest group "Other Black African" at 7%.
- 9.5 Any student that has been formally assessed to require assisted transport as a result of their disability will not be affected by these proposals.

10.0 Summary of the Consultation

- 10.1 This second consultation has provided the opportunity for those directly affected and key stakeholders to give their views about the Council's options for change to the provision of discretionary free bus passes for travel to faith schools. The confidential drop-in surgeries have provided the opportunity for individual families to discuss how the proposals may affect them directly. The questionnaire responses have provided clear and direct feedback about options presented and the potential impact on families. It has also offered the opportunity for stakeholders to set out their concerns in relation to historic agreements and the issue of catchment areas.
- 10.2 In the first consultation process held in the Autumn Term 2012 the Authority sent consultation packs to all parents of children attending Voluntary Aided Primary and Secondary Schools, approximately 7000 in total. A total of 326 (4.6%) responses were received. Many parents contacted the Authority to enquire why they had been involved in the process as they said they would not be affected by any change to the policy.
- 10.3 For the second consultation the Authority aimed to engage better with those parents who might be directly affected by the proposed changes. The Authority consulted with parents of all children attending Years 7 to

11 at All Saints and Notre Dame, parents of all Year 5 and 6 pupils at Primary Aided Schools and parents of any child attending Reception to Year 4 who is currently receipt of a free bus pass.

- 10.4 The Authority also provided a more detailed consultation document and an extensive questionnaire both in paper copy and on line. The questionnaire has enabled the Authority to undertake a wider and more comprehensive analysis of all responses.
- 10.5 A total of 515 responses were received. This represents 17% of the 3000 consultation packs that were distributed a significant increase to the 4.6% that responded to the first consultation. It is normally considered that a 10% response to any consultation is significant. Of these, 307 were from those in receipt of a bus pass, which equates to 67% of the responses received.
- 10.6 Very careful consideration has been given to all of the views expressed in the consultation and this evidence has been used to propose a way forward as set out in the recommendation below.

11.0 Reasons for the Recommendation

- 11.1 The Council's position remains that it is facing extreme pressure on limited budgets and must make efficiencies to find £50 million of savings in this financial year with more savings to be found in future years. Within these constraints, the Council's approach is to protect where possible those services provided for the most vulnerable people in our community and to examine where they spend on discretionary provision.
- 11.2 The Council's funding of discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the Home to School Transport policy must therefore be reviewed in the light of the need to reduce expenditure and balanced against the Council's responsibilities to maintain vital services for the most disadvantaged. Other Councils have taken similar action to discontinue their discretionary policies in the face of such budgetary pressures.
- 11.3 The addition of Option 3 in the current consultation clearly signalled the Council's intention to mitigate against the loss of a bus pass for those most prejudicially affected, namely those on lower incomes and those entering Years 10 and 11. Having listened carefully to the feedback from the consultation, the recommendation to Cabinet is to reject all 3 options and to approve the new Option 4 (set out at 11.5 below).
- 11.4 This recommendation acknowledges the feedback from the consultation which showed strong support for option 2 (83%) which was a phasing of withdrawal of the discretionary free bus passes. The proposal below is a phased approach as well as being an expansion of the original Option 3. It also acknowledges that the majority of

respondents (95%) thought that a transfer to another school would be disruptive and have a negative impact on educational outcomes. This proposal eliminates the need for any student entering Years 10 and 11 in 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15 to have to transfer to another school as a result of losing the bus pass.

11.5 **Option 4**

- To continue to fund a discretionary free bus pass for those pupils entering Y10 and Year 11 in 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15 who currently meet the discretionary criteria namely that the pupil attends a denominational school, adheres to the specific denomination of that school and meets the statutory distance criteria (see 4.2 above). Those pupils would be required to reapply for their bus pass in advance of the next academic year.
- An appeals procedure will be available to families whose children would not qualify under Option 4. Any parent that wishes to challenge a decision about the transport arrangements offered to their child, including questions of their child's eligibility for travel support, will be entitled to seek a review of and, if necessary, an appeal to an independent appeal panel against the decision. That Council will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that appeals are heard before the new school year. The appeals procedure is set out in **Appendix 10**

11.6 This proposal would have a direct cost and would therefore impact directly on the savings that the Council will be able to make in 2013/14 and 2014/15. Based upon those currently in receipt of free discretionary passes the total anticipated cost of funding Year 10 and Year 11 students in 2013/14 would be £132K. The anticipated cost for the Year 11 students in 2014/15 would be £62K. This includes an anticipated increase in the price of a pass of 10%. The anticipated saving in 2013/14 would be £168K and £238K in 2014/15.

12.0 **Reasons for Exemption** (if a Closed report)

12.1 None

13.0 **Recommendations**

13.1 Cabinet is requested to:

Approve the phased withdrawal of discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013 in line with Option 4 which is:

To withdraw all discretionary free bus passes to denominational

schools from September 2013 except for those pupils in Years 10 and 11 during 2013/14 and Year 11 in 2014/15 who meet the existing discretionary criteria namely attendance at a denominational school , adherence to a specific denomination and meeting the statutory distance criteria.

Author	Jayne Ludlam
Job Title	Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families
Date	19 June 2013.

Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Provision of

Sheffield

City Council



Appendix 1

Discretionary Free Bus Passes for Pupils to Travel to Faith Schools to be Introduced from September 2013

We would welcome your views on this proposal. It would be helpful to have the Consultation document to hand while completing the questionnaire as some questions refer to it.

All responses are anonymous.

1. Are you answering these questions as a...? Please tick one answer only.

- 431 (87.1%) Parent or carer
- 41 (8.3%) Young person
- 4 (0.8%) Governor
- 5 (1.0%) Headteacher
- 2 (0.4%) Member of school staff
- 0 (0.0%) Councillor
- 0 (0.0%) MP
- 12 (2.4%) Other

2. Please state. Type in the box

10 (100.0%)

3. Do you currently receive a free bus pass?

307 (66.9%) Yes

152 (33.1%) No

4. To what extent do you agree that the Council should stop funding discretionary free bus passes for pupils attending denominational schools (Option 1 in the Consultation document)?

48 (9.7%) Strongly agree

17 (3.4%) Agree

11 (2.2%) Not sure

53 (10.8%) Disagree

364 (73.8%) Strongly disagree

5. Please tell us why you answered this way. Type in the box.

124 (100.0%)

6. Please state which (if any) of the other options you would prefer (please refer to Section 3 of the consultation document). Tick all that apply.

226 (88.3%) Option 2

48 (18.8%) Option 3

7. Please tell us why you would prefer this/these option(s). Type in the box.

57 (100.0%)

8. Do you think that removal of free transport would prevent children and young people from accessing places at Faith Schools in the future?

- 326 (65.9%) Strongly agree
- 73 (14.7%) Agree
- 42 (8.5%) Not sure
- 28 (5.7%) Disagree
- 26 (5.3%) Strongly disagree

9. Please tell us why you answered this way. Type in the box

121 (100.0%)

10. If free transport was withdrawn, would you need to consider a transfer to another school?

151 (35.0%) Yes

195 (45.1%) No

86 (19.9%) Not sure

11. If you did need to transfer to another school, would you prefer your local catchment school?

69 (46.3%) Yes

64 (43.0%) No

16 (10.7%) Not sure

12. Do you think a transfer to another school would have a negative impact?

- 186 (94.9%) Yes
- 4 (2.0%) No
- 6 (3.1%) Not sure

13. Please state what you think the negative effects could be. Tick all that apply.

- 172 (93.0%) Educational outcomes
- 176 (95.1%) Religious ethos
- 139 (75.1%) Curriculum match
- 172 (93.0%) Friendship groups
- 171 (92.4%) Disruption
- 13 (7.0%) Other?

14. Please tell us what you think the negative effects of a school transfer could be. Type in the box.

- 12 (100.0%)

In order to qualify for Temporary Assistance for Pupils in Years 10 and 11 (Option 3), families must meet all of the following conditions:

1) Have a child in Y10 or Y11; 2) The child currently receives a free bus pass under the current discretionary policy but would lose it if the Council's proposals were implemented; and 3) The family is in receipt of working tax credit below the maximum rate (if you get the maximum rate you are entitled to a free bus pass under the statutory criteria).

15. Would you / your family meet the above criteria?

111 (26.7%) Yes

305 (73.3%) No

Equality Issues?

In assessing the proposals under consultation, the Council has a duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (the 8 relevant protected characteristics).

We are aware that the proposals impact primarily on families who wish their children to attend Catholic schools. Our assessment is that these proposals may also impact on other faith groups and people who are disabled and we would also like to know if any particular ethnic group is likely to be disadvantaged by these proposals.

We are therefore asking you to give us information about your relevant characteristics in order to help us to consider what the effect of the proposals on different groups may be.

16. How would you describe your ethnicity?

- 390 (82.6%) White
- 21 (4.4%) Asian or Asian British
- 8 (1.7%) Other Ethnic Group
- 24 (5.1%) Mixed / Dual Heritage
- 29 (6.1%) Black / African / Caribbean or Black British

17. Are you...

- 368 (95.3%) English / Welsh / Scottish / British / Northern Irish
- 10 (2.6%) Irish
- 0 (0.0%) Gypsy / Irish Traveller
- 0 (0.0%) Roma
- 4 (1.0%) Other European
- 4 (1.0%) Other white background

18. Are you...

- 12 (57.1%) Indian
- 1 (4.8%) Pakistani
- 2 (9.5%) Bangladeshi
- 0 (0.0%) Chinese
- 6 (28.6%) Other Asian background

19. Are you...

- 2 (28.6%) Yemeni
- 0 (0.0%) Other Arab
- 5 (71.4%) Other Ethnic group

20. Are you...

- 13 (54.2%) White and Black Caribbean
- 3 (12.5%) White and Black African
- 6 (25.0%) White and Asian
- 2 (8.3%) Other mixed background

21. Are you...

- 8 (27.6%) Caribbean
- 1 (3.4%) Somali
- 4 (13.8%) Other African background
- 2 (6.9%) Other Black background
- 14 (48.3%) Black / African / Caribbean or Black British

22. Do you practise a particular faith or religion?

15 (3.7%)	Atheist / None
0 (0.0%)	Bahai
0 (0.0%)	Buddhism
0 (0.0%)	Hinduism
0 (0.0%)	Humanism
382 (94.1%)	Christianity (including Church of England, Catholic and other Christian denominations)
6 (1.5%)	Islam
0 (0.0%)	Judaism
0 (0.0%)	Sikhism
3 (0.7%)	Other

23. Which other faith or religion do you practise? Type in the box.

3 (100.0%)

24. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? i.e. do you have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities?

37 (7.9%) Yes

432 (92.1%) No

25. Do you think that the proposed changes are likely to advance or to impede equality of opportunity and good relations between persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic and others?

207 (53.8%) Yes

46 (11.9%) No

132 (34.3%) Not sure

26. Please tell us why you answered this way.

94 (100.0%)

27. Do you think that the proposed changes are likely to remove or minimise disadvantage to any person having any of the 8 relevant protected characteristics listed above?

99 (24.9%) Yes

159 (40.1%) No

139 (35.0%) Not sure

28. Please tell us why you answered this way.

75 (100.0%)

Your responses will be taken into account when we carry out an Equality Impact Assessment which will form part of the decision-making on these proposals.

29. **Please use the space below if you would like to make any other comments about the proposal. Alternatively, you can email comments to us at admissionsconsultation@sheffield.gov.uk.**

60 (100.0%)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your views will be used to inform a decision.

Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department

Diocese of Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU

Tel: 0114 2566440 Fax: 0114 2562673

E-mail: schools@hallam-diocese.com

Website: <http://www.hallam-diocese.com/schools>

Registered Charity 512021

Mr J Bigley
 Manager for Access and Admissions
 Inclusion & Learning Services
 Floor 3, Howden House
 Union Street
 Sheffield
 S1 2SH

23rd May 2013

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of 16th May 2013 inviting a response by 24th May. We are aware that John Martin of Notre Dame High School and Alan Dewhurst of St Marie's School have both submitted evidence in relation to the issues of catchment areas and the 'historical agreement' in relation to subsidised denominational transport.

The responses from schools does indicate the deep unhappiness of the wider Catholic community to the proposed removal of the denominational transport subsidy. The responses provide evidence of the working practices and assumptions of both Local Authority Officers and representatives of schools and the Diocese of Hallam in relation to the catchment areas of our schools. The definition of 'catchment areas' in Sheffield in a way which disadvantages the Catholic Schools is deeply regrettable.

It has long been recognised that the painful and difficult decision to reduce the number of Catholic Secondary Schools serving the City of Sheffield was only possible because of the commitment of the council to subsidised transport. Again, the proposal to end the subsidy and, by definition, the agreement is deeply regrettable. The initial failure to acknowledge the existence of the agreement despite John Martin's offer to provide documentary evidence is difficult to understand. We fail to see how a consultation process which is supposed to be fair and transparent can fail to respond to the offer of the provision of evidence.

Officers of the Diocese of Hallam have always sought to maintain effective communication with Local Authority Officers over matters of common interest in the education system. In our experience, this relationship has worked well when there has been early consultation on matters of importance to Catholic Schools. The absence of any consultation whatsoever on this important matter between

"... an enthusiasm for the things of God."

Officers of the Local Authority and Officers of the Diocese of Hallam is also a matter of deep regret as many of the Officers involved have previously enjoyed close and productive working relationships.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. M. Conway'.

J. M. Conway
Director of Schools' – Secondary

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Cape'.

J. Cape
Director of Schools' - Primary

Pupils' Admissions
Inclusion and Learning Services
Floor 3
Howden House
Union Street
Sheffield
S1 2SH

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 17-02

Ask For: David Young

Direct Line: 0114 2211 327

E-mail: david.young@sypte.co.uk

26 April 2013

Dear Sirs

**CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: PROPOSED CHANGES TO
DISCRETIONARY TRANSPORT**

Thank you for inviting South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTe) to comment on the revised proposals to the withdrawal of free transport to denominational schools for those currently qualifying under the Sheffield City Council's current home to school transport policy. Our comments in respect of each of the options on which you are seeking views are set out below:

• **Option 1:**

Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013.

SYPTe remain concerned for the additional pressure for those families who will lose the established benefit as detailed in my letter of 22 November 2012.

• **Option 2:**

Withdraw the current provision for funding discretionary transport on a phased basis starting with entry to reception and year 7 from September 2013.

SYPTe support this approach as set out in my response to the initial consultation, as detailed in my letter of 22 November 2012.

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE PASSENGER
TRANSPORT EXECUTIVE**

11 Howden Street West
SHEFFIELD S1 2SH

Enquiries: 0114 2211 327
Facsimile: 0114 2211 328

sypte.co.uk

Director General
David Brown

Director of Strategy
Ben Still

Director of Transport & Education
David Young

Principal School for and Services Unit
Steve Davonport

WT Reg No: 59992764



- **New Proposal Option 3:**

Offer a discretionary free bus pass for pupils from families on low income where children are in exam years in the next two academic years

SYLTE recognise that this proposal will remove the risk to children of low income families having to potentially change schools at a critical point in their education. However our preferred option remains Option 2.

Should you wish to discuss our response in more detail please contact either myself or my colleague Roy Mitchell on 0114 2211356. Please also find attached a copy of my letter of 22 November 2012.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Young', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**DAVID YOUNG
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

Denominational Transport Consultation – Summary of Survey Results

This summary report breaks down the survey responses by the following three categories:

Group 1: Parents/carers and young people who **are** currently in receipt of a free travel pass.

- **Page 2**

Group 2: Parents/carers and young people who are **not** currently in receipt of a free travel pass.

- **Page 17**

Group 3: Other stakeholders.

- **Page 30**

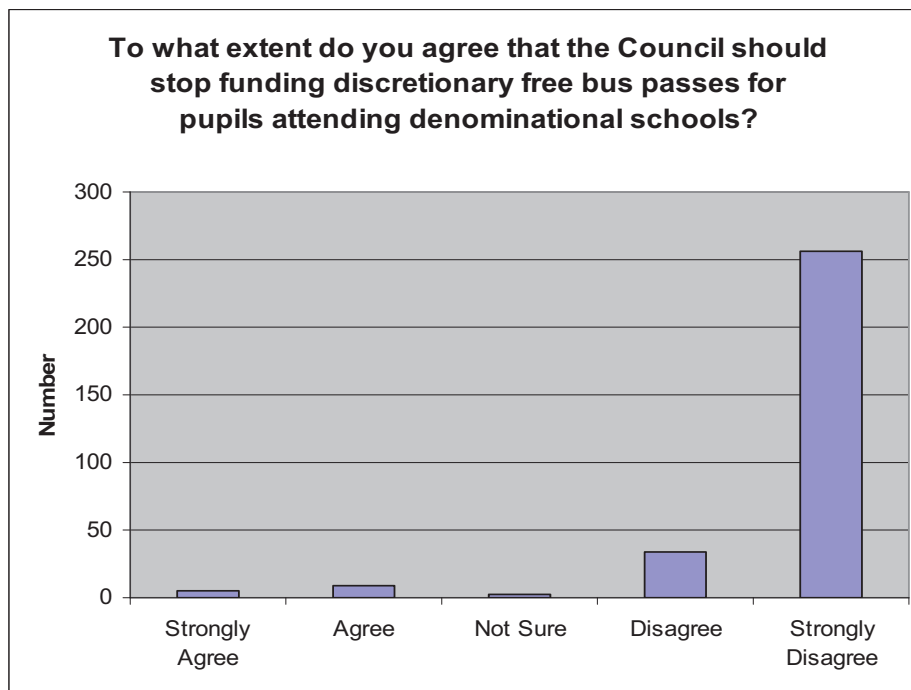
Overview of Responses for parents / carers and young people who **are** currently receiving a free bus pass (Group 1).

If a respondent indicated that they were a parent / carer or a young person, they were asked whether they currently receive a free bus pass to travel to a denominational school.

Of the 472 parents / carers and young people who completed the survey, 307 of these **do** currently receive a free bus pass.

1) Views on the Proposal

The questionnaire asked to what extent people agreed with the Council's proposal to stop funding discretionary free bus passes for pupils attending denominational schools.



- 256 of those currently receiving a bus pass strongly disagreed and 34 disagreed with the proposal.
- 14 of these 307 strongly agreed and 9 agreed with the proposal.
- 2 were not sure.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

68 respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did. The following make up a selection of the most representative comments and these have been grouped under some key headings.

Agree

Unfair to fund passes to faith schools

“Free bus passes for families who choose to send their children to a school other than the local one, cannot really be considered to be a funding priority.”

Disagree

Location and number of Catholic schools / distance to travel

“I still believe that this may have an impact on some families who may send their children to the nearest school instead of the nearest faith school, thereby removing choice.”

Financial implications / effect on choice

“I, like many parents, chose to send my child before this proposal occurred and thus was not able to make an informed choice regarding the financial impact at that time and am currently faced the additional costs that will have an impact on my tight budget.”

Strongly disagree

Discrimination against Catholic families

“Discrimination against faith.”

“It is discriminatory against faith schools.”

“A pupil should not be penalised for wanting to be educated and enjoy their faith at the same time.”

“Our Christian faith is important to us and feel that by taking away our free bus pass the council is forcing some parents to send our children to a local non faith school that do not have the same faith value we many Christians feel are extremely important.”

“It is unfair - it discriminates based upon faith.”

Financial implications / effect on choice

“... the impact it will have on those families who are already overstretched because of other cuts, pension contribution increases and general price increases for food, utilities, etc.”

“This is an added expense which was not there when choosing a school.”

“With two children already at the school we would be several hundred pounds a year worse off.

Location and number of Catholic schools / distance to travel

“Local schools cannot provide the same level of religious education that the faith school can.”

“...as a practising Catholic in a large city with only two Catholic secondary schools children often have to travel more than 3 miles to attend school and are therefore entitled to a free pass.”

“There are no nearer Catholic Schools for my children to attend.”

“There isn't a Catholic school on this side of the city using the free school bus is the only way I can get my children to school.”

Effect on those who had previously made the decision to educate their child in a faith school

“Unjust to remove this from pupils already attending a Catholic School and in receipt of the zero fare pass.

“When we sent our children to the school it was on the understanding that we would have free travel - it is wrong to withdraw at this stage.”

“We were told that we would qualify for free travel. Had we realised that that would not be the case throughout, it would have changed our choice of school.”

“I feel that it is unfair to change policy on this AFTER my children have begun their education at Notre Dame High School. Had I known that the free bus passes were to be withdrawn, this might have altered my decision to send them to that school in the first place.”

Council's prior agreement to fund travel to faith schools

“The council made an agreement when St Peter's and St John Fisher's were closed, so that council money could be saved, that they would

ensure that pupils would not have to pay for transport to attend further afield Catholic schools... The council has a moral obligation to honour its promise.”

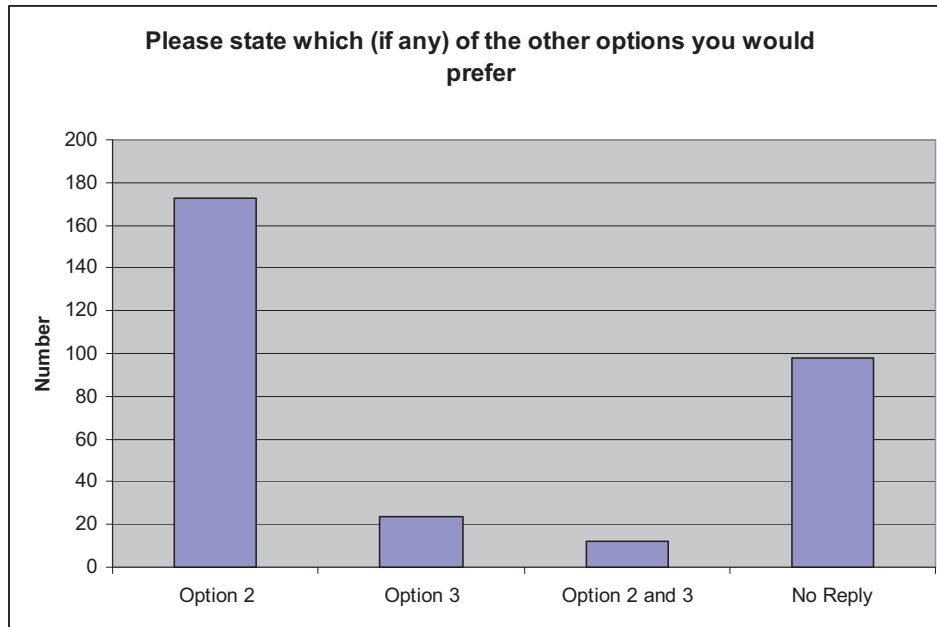
“... after the closure of St Peter’s School in the mid-1980’s... there was an agreement that Catholic families would receive discretionary transport subsidy.”

Feel that Catholic schools provide a better education

“One of the most positive features of faith schools is the diversity of pupils from different backgrounds and this is going to be highly impacted by this decision. It is divisive and discriminates against poorer pupils.”

2) Views on other options outlined in the consultation document

Those who expressed that they disagreed / strongly disagreed with the proposal, were also asked which (if any) of the other options detailed in the consultation document they would prefer.



- 209 respondents answered this question. This means that a further 98 who disagreed / strongly disagreed with the proposal did not express a preference for any other option.
- 173 respondents selected Option 2, 24 selected Option 3 and 12 ticked both options.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

50 respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did.

Option 2

“This would give parents time to change preference for school choice if need to, and would also help with children already at school and maybe exam years.”

“Of the 3 options this one at least doesn't penalise families who have already made their decision to send children to a faith school, but it should only be introduced to reception / Y7 in September 2014. As for

Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,

children starting school in September 2013 the decision as to which school they go to has already been made, before this change was agreed. It will still have the effect of potentially prohibiting the attendance of a faith school by some pupils.”

“Parents will be aware that the costs will be phased in over time. They can therefore prepare for changes and make contingencies.”

“Because this is fairer. We made the decision also based on the free transport. Some parents may have made other decisions based on this. At least with my second child I will be aware I will have to pay.”

“I would not have to move my children to another school.

“If parents were aware of the additional requirement to pay the bus fare from the outset when applying for a school then this is fair and just. To introduce this when children are already attending the school is not right.”

“My eldest daughter would still receive a pass whilst my youngest would have to pay.”

“Option 2 is the only fair option - those who have already been allocated a place at Notre Dame / All Saints did not know this was going to happen.”

“The lesser of two evils for my family, personally. I do not prefer either option in reality though.”

“This is the only option which would allow me to have a free bus pass and continue with my education at the nearest faith school which supports my religious beliefs.”

“I think it only fair to continue with the subsidy which has already been granted.”

Option 3

“This seems the fairest option proposed if this is to go ahead.”

“Option 2 shouldn't be an option. It's just a slower process in removing the passes.”

Option 2 and Option 3

“It isn't fair to move the goal posts for children already at the school.

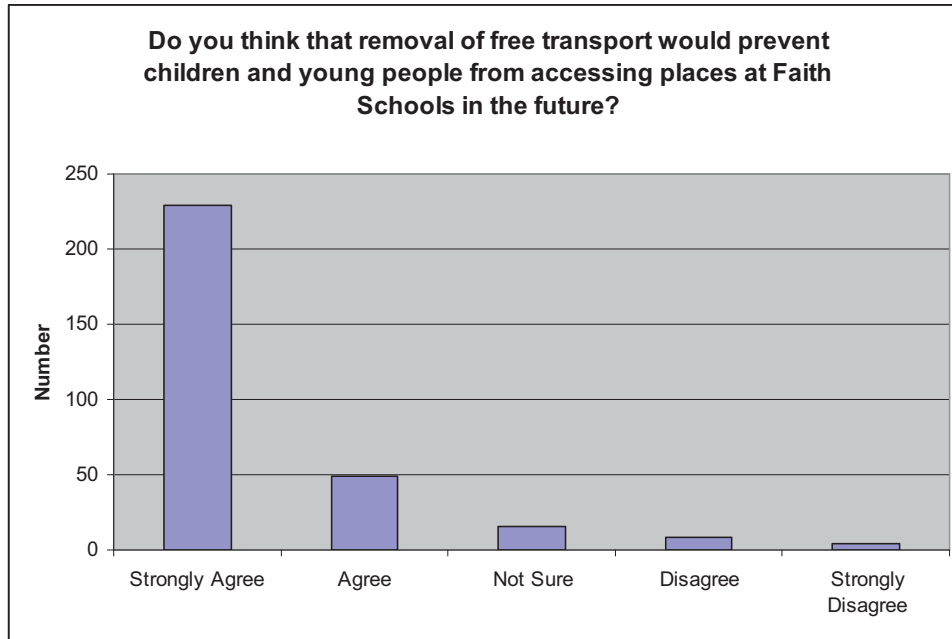
Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,

I think Option 3 should be applied to all children starting Year 7 from September 2013 onwards, not only Years 10 and 11. It would help the current Years 10 and 11, but what about low income families currently in Years 7 to 9?

“Taking this line of action, would bring in some revenue, because those who could afford it, would pay, whilst protecting those who would really struggle to pay. I still think there should be an appeals process, whatever the outcome, for cases like the family I am helping.”

3) Views on how the proposal may affect accessing places at faith schools

Respondents were asked whether they thought removal of free transport would prevent children from accessing places at faith schools in the future.



- 306 people answered this question.
- 229 strongly agreed and 49 agreed that this would happen.
- 4 strongly disagreed and 8 disagreed that this would happen.
- 8 were not sure.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

69 of these respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did.

Strongly agree

“I want my children to have access to not only an academically high achieving school but one which supports our religion, socially and spiritually, upholding good morals with which they are brought up.”

“No matter how you look at this it is discriminating.”

Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,

“I know some students that live 15 miles away! Of course they aren't going to be able to pay for that.”

“The cost of transport for some families would be too much of a financial burden.”

“Not everyone can afford the extra expense. This would lead to only the wealthiest families being able to access the places at faith schools.”

“We can't afford extra costs every week and it's unfair that we can't send our children to a faith school because we can't afford the travel costs.”

“...the number of children in faith schools would decline and only the richest families would be able to attend them which are discrimination against poorer families and their religion.”

“I fear some families will struggle financially to meet their faith obligations.”

“There isn't a Catholic secondary school on this side of the city. Removing the free school bus will stop families getting to school.”

Agree

“If people can't afford it then they can't afford it - end of argument!”

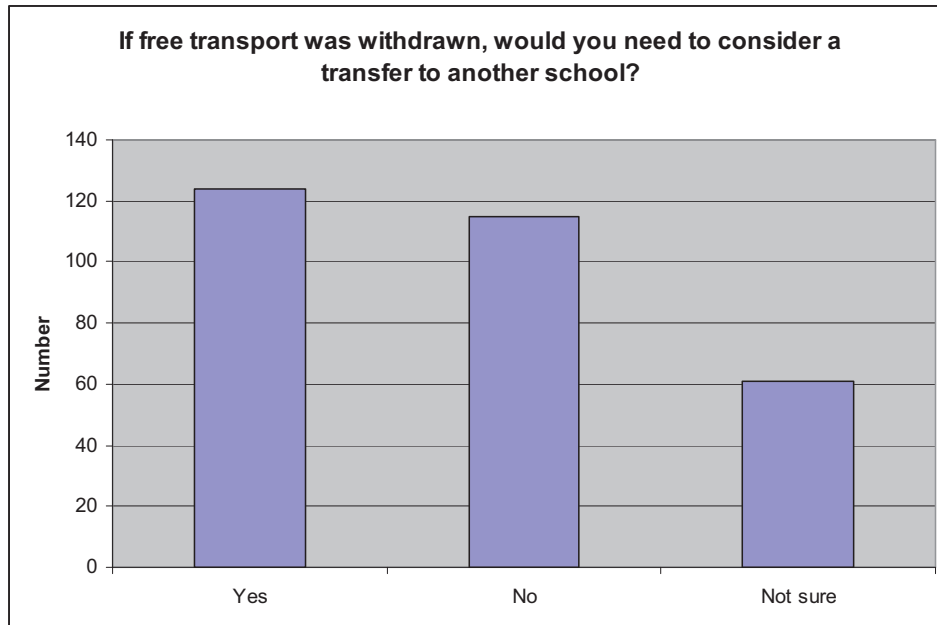
Not sure

“There may be families on lower incomes and with multiple children for whom the removal of free transport may be a problem.”

“Not if an affordable solution replaced it.”

4) Views on how the proposal may result in the need for a school transfer

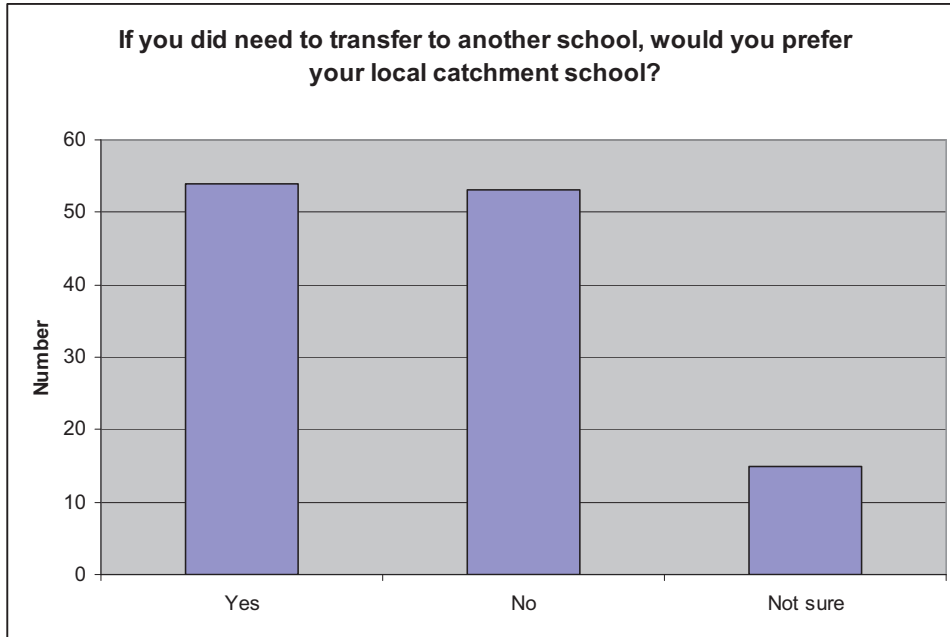
The questionnaire asked whether people would need to consider a transfer to another school if free transport was withdrawn.



- 300 responded to this question.
- 124 answered yes, 115 answered no and 61 were not sure.

5) Views on whether local catchment school would be preferred

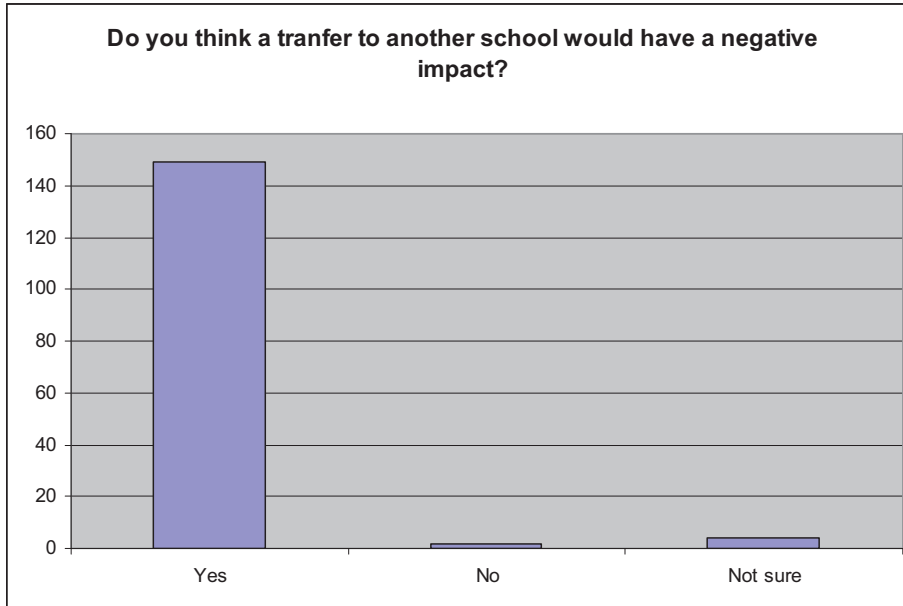
Those who had indicated that they would need to consider a transfer to another school were asked whether they would prefer their local catchment school.



- 124 answered this question.
- 54 said they would prefer their local catchment school, 53 said they would **not** prefer their local catchment school and 15 were not sure.

6) Views on whether a transfer to another school would have a negative impact

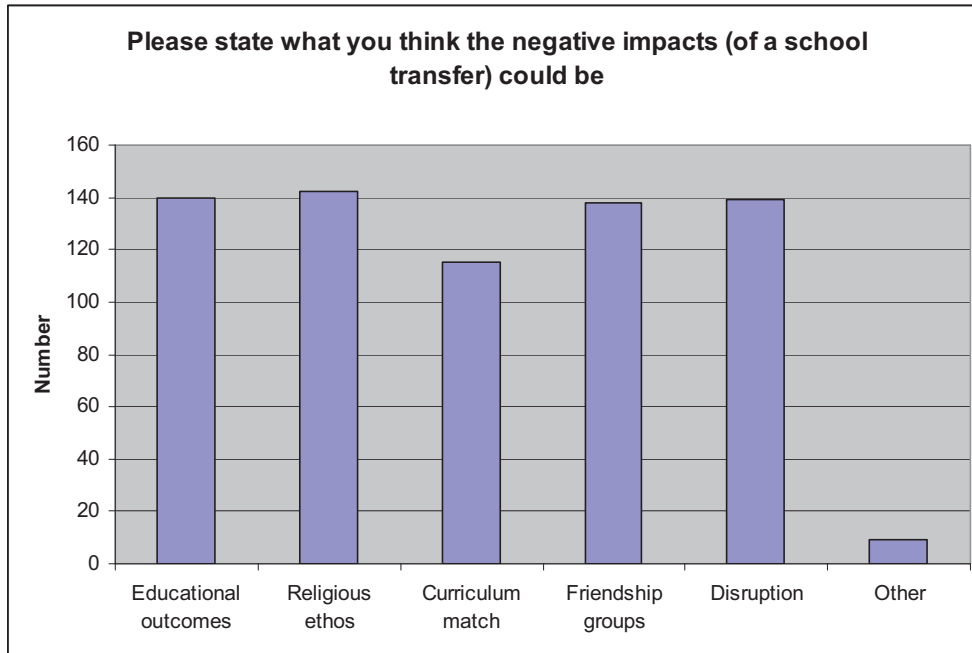
Respondents were asked whether they thought a transfer to another school would have a negative impact.



- 155 answered this question.
- 149 felt that a school transfer **would** have a negative impact.
- 2 felt that a school transfer **would not** have a negative impact.
- 4 were not sure.

Those who did feel a school transfer would have a negative impact were asked in what specific areas the effects might be. Respondents could tick more than one answer. The graph below shows that all the pre-set options received a response rate of over 90%, with the exception of 'curriculum match' (78%).

Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,



Comments from the 9 people who ticked 'other' included:

"Not accepted, as pupils would know reasons for transfer. My daughter is very quiet and would struggle both mentally and socially."

"Transferring to another school would impact negatively on my children as starting at a new school is daunting enough in Y7 but to do this half way through Y8 would be disruptive."

"Well my local catchment school is dreadful. Poor results. Poor educational outcomes. My parents originally moved here safe in the knowledge they could afford to send me to my faith school. If they couldn't afford that, they were going to move to an area where a good catchment school was. But withdrawing the free passes is not what they anticipated."

The questionnaire asked whether parents / carers and young people currently in receipt of a bus pass would meet the criteria for temporary assistance for pupils in years 10 and 11 (Option 3).

In order to qualify, families would need to meet *all* of the following criteria:

1. Have a child in Y10 or Y11
2. The child currently receives a free bus pass under the current discretionary policy but would lose it if the Council's proposals were implemented
3. The family is in receipt of Working Tax Credit below the maximum rate.

Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,

Responses are shown in the graph below.



7) General comments

Respondents were asked if they would like to make any other comments about the proposal. A selection of these can be found below:

“As a single mother who is already under enormous financial constraint and who however does not qualify for any form of benefit I feel that the proposed changes are unfair to say the least.”

“It impinges on my rights based on my faith/religion to send my child to a faith based school of my choice where I feel that my child’s educational and faith needs will be met.”

“If these changes go ahead, it will result in families having to send their children to local schools - this will put pressure on those schools that probably will not have enough places to offer. Local primary schools have had to expand and double capacity and are still now having to increase their numbers going over the legal class size of 30 because there are just not enough places available for children in the area.”

“...for children currently in Y6, the open evenings for all other potential schools have now passed so neither children or parents have any idea what other schools are like. Children currently in Y6 have, along with parents, decided which is the best school for them to apply to and how will it affect children to now be told they may not be going to the school of their choice and may be going to a school they have never even visited?”

“For the cash saved by the Council you have put 'huge strain' on us who would like their children educated in a Christian way with an ethos of looking after those with ill health/supporting the vulnerable and those in great need.”

“I feel that this proposal will also impact on the environment as it will encourage more car usage and will clog up the already congested roads of the city. In addition the location of the two Catholic schools is on some of the busiest routes in Sheffield.”

“These questions have been deliberately worded to confuse people.”

Overview of Responses for parents / carers and young people who are **not** currently receiving a free bus pass (Group 2).

If a respondent indicated that they were a parent / carer or a young person, they were asked whether they currently receive a free bus pass to travel to a denominational school.

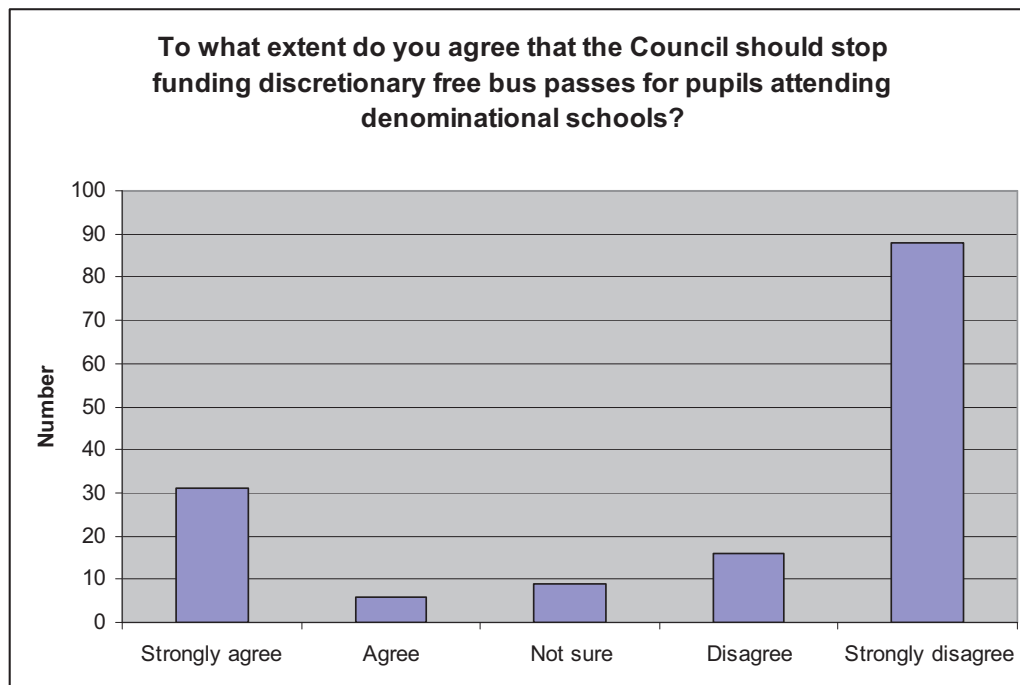
Of the 472 parents / carers and young people who completed the survey, 152 of these do **not** currently receive a free bus pass.

However, 104 of these respondents identified their religion as 'Christian' and, from many of the comments made, it was evident that, despite not currently receiving a free bus pass, this proposal could adversely affect them in the future (several talked about their children currently being at feeder schools for the Catholic secondary schools).

Overview of Responses

1) Views on the Proposal

The questionnaire asked to what extent people agreed with the Council's proposal to stop funding discretionary free bus passes for pupils attending denominational schools.



- 88 of the 152 currently **not** receiving a bus pass strongly disagreed and 16 disagreed with the proposal to remove free bus passes.

Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,

- 31 of the 152 strongly agreed and 6 agreed with the proposal.
- 9 were not sure.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

37 respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did. The following make up a selection of the most representative comments and these have been grouped under some key headings.

Strongly agree

Discrimination against non-Catholic families

“Discriminating against non-Catholic families. I have to pay for my son to catch the bus to school. Disgusted that my Council Tax pays for this to happen.”

Unfair to fund passes for faith schools

“I cannot comprehend why the Council has funded free travel for faith school pupils only in the past. This is unfair and needs to stop now that funds are so scarce.”

“Parents are making an informed choice to send their child to a school outside their usual catchment. Why should other council tax payers fund their transport just because of their religion?”

Waste of resources

“Because it’s a wasteful expenditure, and in these difficult times all resources should be directed on only essential front line services, whilst at the same time keeping council tax down.”

Strongly disagree

Discrimination against Catholic families

“I wonder if you would do this to people of non Christian faiths as it seems very discriminating.”

“...a blatant discrimination to our faith.”

“This will be unfair to, and discriminate against, parents and families who wish to send their child to a faith school.”

Financial implications / effect on choice

“I will not be able to send my children to a school of their faith.”

“I think you are penalising people’s choice to offer their children continued education in their chosen faith school.”

“This is a direct attack by Sheffield City Council on freedom to observe a faith or religion.”

“Students from less advantaged backgrounds...won’t get the opportunity to grow in the Catholic faith.”

“All pupils, whatever their financial circumstances and wherever they live should be eligible to attend a denominational school.”

“Many Catholic pupils have to travel long distances to their Catholic primary or secondary school and the removal of this grant would seriously affect parents’ ability to choose a Catholic school for their children.”

Council saves money by children going to VA schools

“The Council benefits a great deal more by the savings that are made by children attending VA schools and I believe this will cost the Council more in real terms in the long run.”

“If the religious organisation stopped providing the school, the Council would have to take over at a higher cost to the taxpayer.”

“These schools provide a public service, this should be appreciated. If the religious organisation stopped providing the school the council would have to take over at a higher cost to the taxpayer.”

Feel that Catholic schools provide a better education in the context of faith

“The denominational schools provide excellent education.”

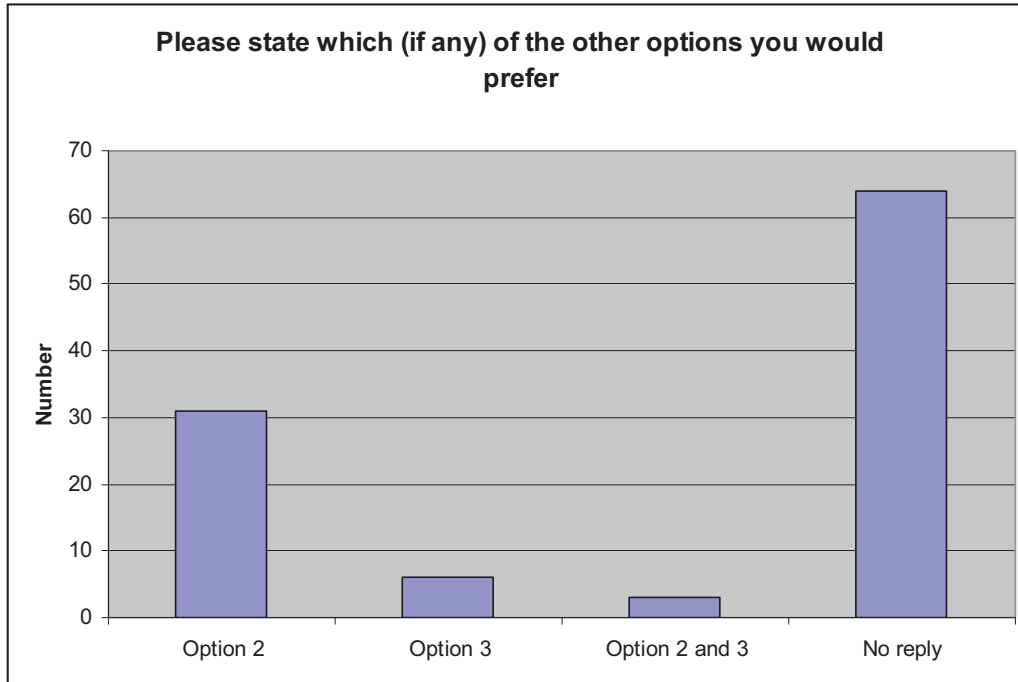
“What the Council considers a nearest ‘suitable’ school may differ considerably from what a Catholic parent considers suitable.”

Location and numbers of Catholic schools / distance to travel

“If there were Catholic schools that were easily accessible from all parts of town, then there would be an argument for removing this grant, but...there are few Catholic schools and they serve very large catchments. It is essential to use public transport for students to get to the schools.”

2) Views on other options outlined in the consultation document

Those who expressed that they disagreed / strongly disagreed with the proposal, were also asked which (if any) of the other options detailed in the consultation document they would prefer.



- 40 respondents answered this question. This means that a further 64 who disagreed / strongly disagreed with the proposal did not express a preference for any other option.
- 31 respondents selected Option 2 and 6 selected Option 3.
- 3 ticked both options.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

7 respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did.

Option 2

“Families with children already in receipt of the discount will have taken this into account before sending their children to the chosen school. Families of future years’ children will be able to make their decision of school choice based upon them knowing they will have to pay for bus fares.”

“Parents need to be aware from the beginning of school of financial commitments. This would allow transition.”

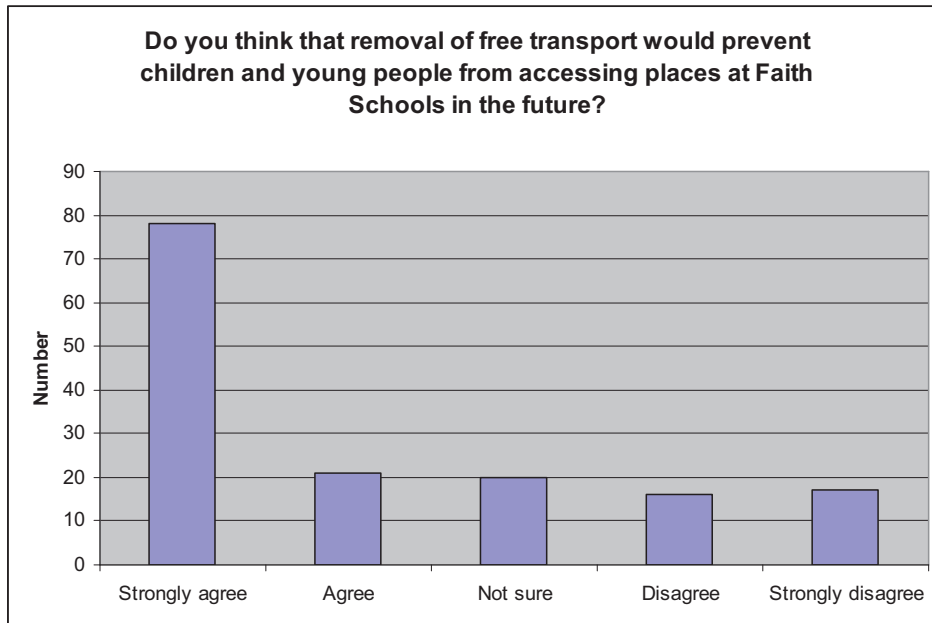
“I have 3 children taking two buses to Notre Dame. At 70p per trip, this means £2.80 per child per day which is £14 per child per week which works out to £56 per week. Even though it would be difficult to manage these fares, I wouldn't take my children to another school because I was brought up Catholic and I want my children to have the same values. Changing schools would also affect their performance and I wouldn't want to put their futures at risk.”

Option 3

“This would give some assistance to current Y10 and Y11 pupils.”

3) Views on how the proposal may affect accessing places at faith schools

Respondents were asked whether they thought removal of free transport would prevent children from accessing places at Faith Schools in the future.



- 152 people answered this question.
- 78 strongly agreed and 21 agreed that this would happen.
- 17 strongly disagreed and 16 disagreed that this would happen.
- 20 were not sure.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

32 of these respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did.

Strongly agree

“The cost of public transport is so expensive now. Even for families like us who work all the hours we can there is no money left at the end of the month after paying all the bills and we simply cannot afford the bus fares. We both work full time and we do not ask for or receive any help from the Government. I will fight for my children’s right to attend a Catholic school and get there on a free bus pass. We are being punished for working and wanting our children to attend a Catholic school.”

“It would divide people based on wealth rather than beliefs/faith. This is not acceptable for state funded schools that should not be determined by affordability. The less affluent / poor Catholic parents and their children would suffer and this is wrong. Also if the decision was made to begin charging bus fares it should be made effective from the children who are beginning their school life stage, so that parents can make an informed decision rather than when they are already in Catholic education.”

“Many parents who do not receive benefits may still need to take into account the cost of the fares when choosing a school for their child. The fares for young people in Sheffield are unduly high as it is and are likely to increase during the years the child is in education. The rising costs will undoubtedly have an influence on the choice of schools.”

“Yes, parents frequently have more than one child in the school at the same time and would struggle to find £7 for each per week. Household bills continue to soar when incomes are staying the same. This is an extra amount that many families have not expected and may not be able to find.”

“Obviously. How could it not?? For the reasons stated in the first section. It targets people who are not eligible for FSM etc. the already 'squeezed middle'. We already walk 1.5 miles to school because we cannot afford the bus for 3 children every day and are not eligible for any government handouts except a child benefit. We have been fortunate in securing a house just in walking distance because we have a reasonable household income; these proposals discriminate against those who are lower-middle income earners. Incidentally, had our circumstances been different and had we been further afield and therefore reliant on school buses your suggestion to accommodate changes of school to a nondenominational one is not a viable option, we would sooner home educate.”

Agree

The responses from those who ticked and commented on this option indicate that respondents may have ticked 'Agree' by mistake or misunderstood the question as their comments seem to reflect their disagreement with the proposal.

Disagree

“I am aware that a lot of pupils want to attend faith schools but because there are not enough spaces they don't get in. For those who cant afford transport to faith schools they still can attend the local school close to them giving access to those who live close to the faith schools

Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,

to just walk down there as there would now be spaces for them. I know of a lady who lives close to a faith school but has to go further away to take her child to school simply because she could not secure a space there.”

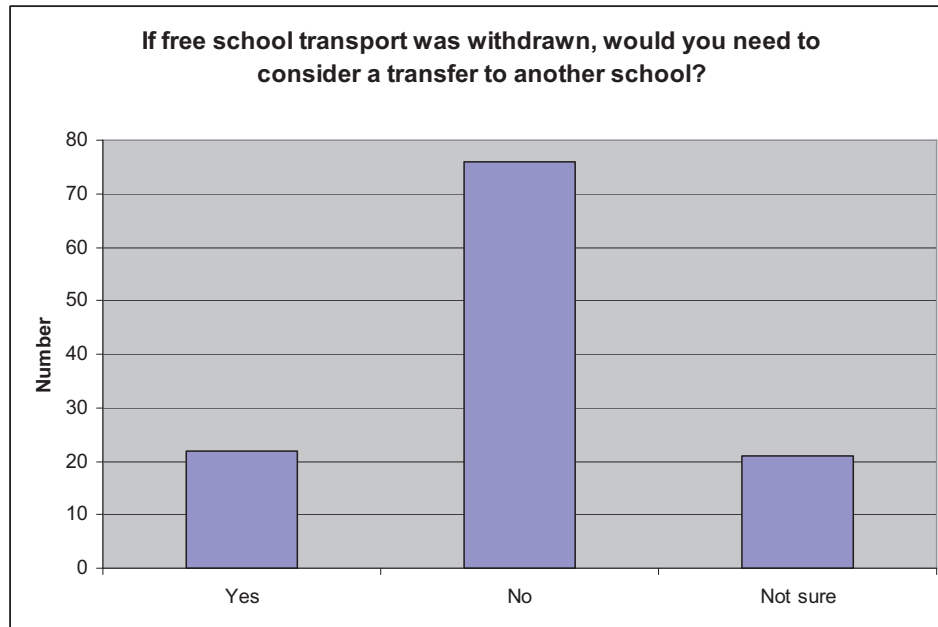
Strongly disagree

“If parents wish their child to attend a faith school then they will still send them and travel will not come into play as its parental choice. If a parent cannot afford the travel costs then their choice could be to send their child to their catchment school.”

“They can still catch bus if needed but they should be made to pay like all other children have to.”

4) Views on how the proposal may result in the need for a school transfer

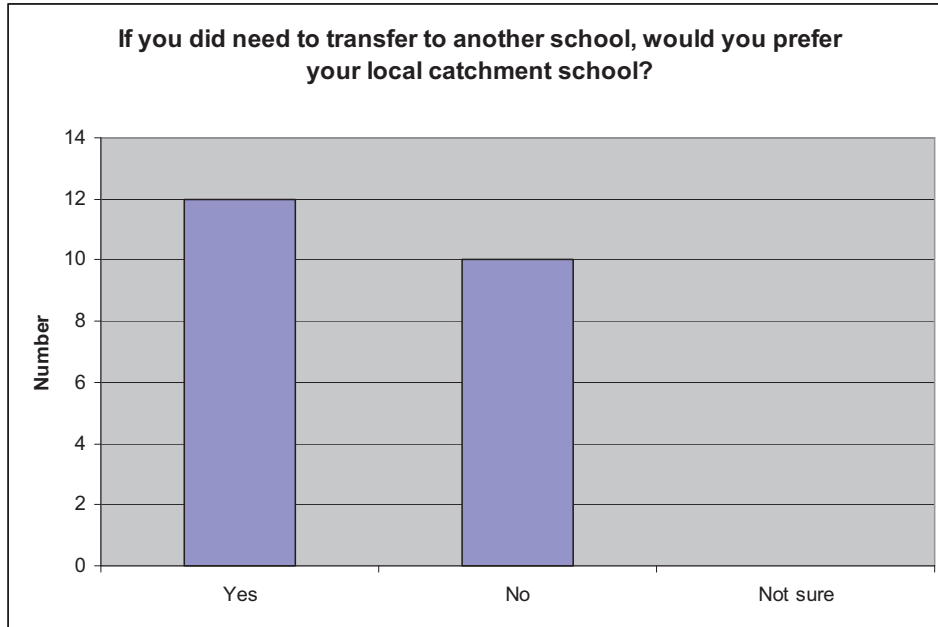
The questionnaire asked whether people would need to transfer to another school if free transport was withdrawn.



- 119 responded to this question.
- 22 said yes, 76 said no and 21 were not sure.

5) Views on whether local catchment school would be preferred

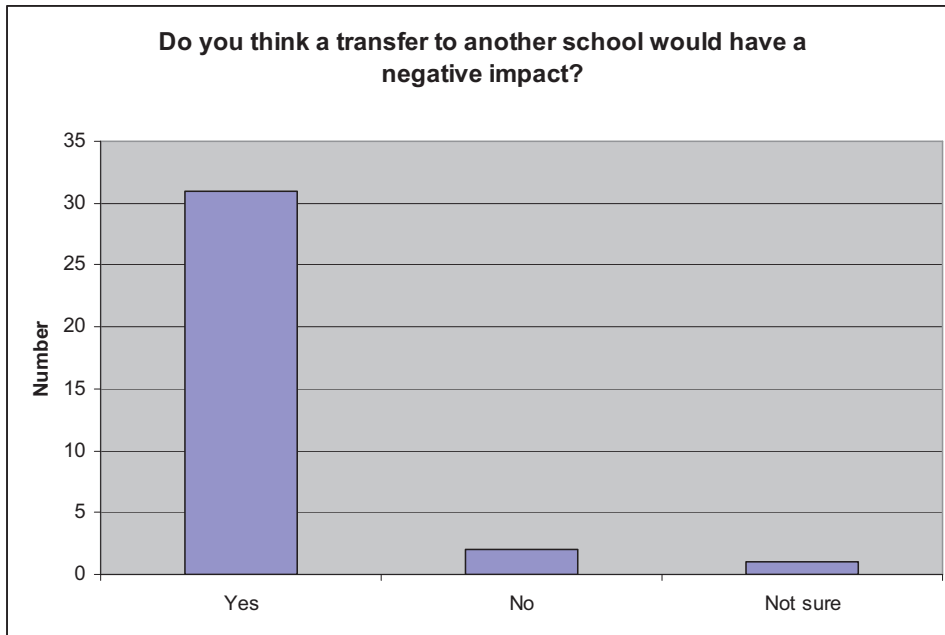
Those who had indicated that they would need to consider a transfer to another school were asked whether they would prefer their local catchment school.



- 22 answered this question.
- 12 said they would prefer their local catchment school.
- 10 said they would not prefer their local catchment school.

6) Views on whether a transfer to another school would have a negative impact

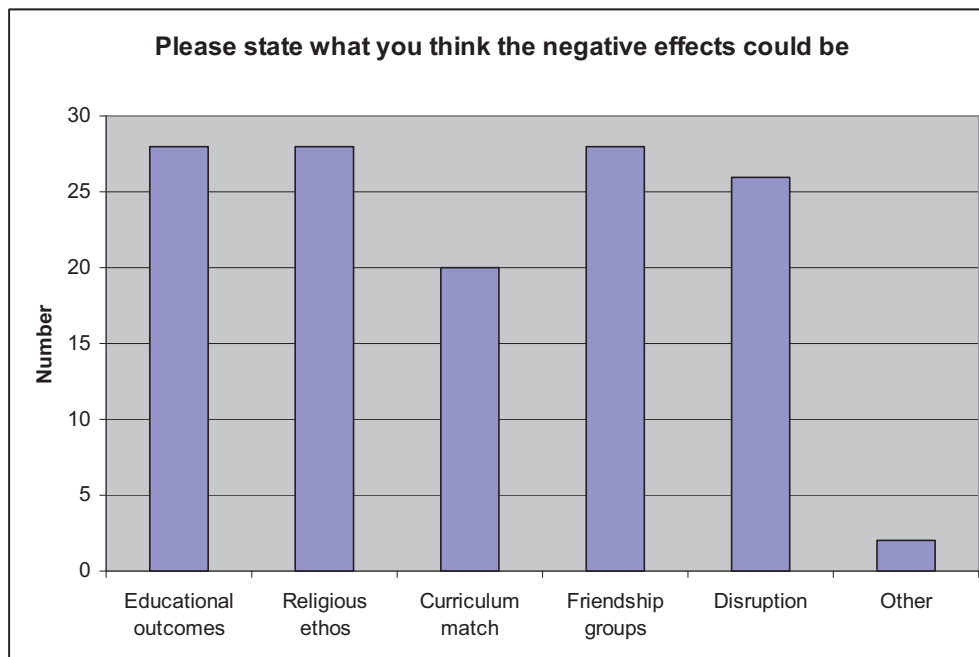
Respondents were asked whether they thought a transfer to another school would have a negative impact.



- 34 answered this question.
- 31 felt that a school transfer **would** have a negative impact.
- 2 felt that a school transfer **would not** have a negative impact.
- 1 was not sure.

Those who did feel a school transfer would have a negative impact were asked in what specific areas the effects might be. Respondents could tick more than one answer. The graph below shows how respondents answered. The three top concerns were educational outcomes, religious ethos and friendship groups (all over 90%).

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The one other comment made regarding possible negative effects was:

“Not getting the Catholic education we deserve.”

* 20 parents / carers and young people who said they do **not** currently receive a free bus pass thought they would qualify under the Temporary Assistance Scheme. This means that some people did not understand the criteria as explained in the questionnaire as one of the specified conditions was ‘your child currently receives a bus pass under the current discretionary policy...’

7) General comments

Respondents were asked if they would like to make any other comments about the proposal. A selection of these can be found below:

“I hope this has been sent to all schools and not just Catholics as before, otherwise the answers will be the same. People of Sheffield do not know this is happening. People I have spoken to did not realise this was happening.”

“The questions are constructed to give limited scope for a view in opposition to the council's intentions, for example there is no option to retain the status quo which may force some people to choose one of the options given which necessarily gives a false result; it is therefore inherently unfair. the question on whether the proposals will impede or advance equality is ambiguous and will undoubtedly generate false results which should be taken into consideration.”

“There seems to be a flawed assumption in this whole process. It assumes that all those who want to go to faith schools do so for religious reasons. This is simply not true. Often parents want to send their children to a certain faith school not because of its religious persuasions but simply because it is seen as the best school. My son goes to a faith school yet neither he nor I are religious and his mother is only in the vaguest way possible. We sent him to a Catholic school because we saw it as the best school, not because it was Catholic. When he was bullied at school (related to a disability) the school dealt with it swiftly and firmly and it's never been a problem since. This is what is important to us, not the religious side of his schooling. I think most families will happily trade one little white lie, “Yes we're a staunch Catholic family,” if it means a better education for their children. So I think a more honest question is whether free bus pass funding should continue to help give families a wider choice of schools.”

“Even though the council is under no obligation to continue with the agreement, it would be unfair to remove the free bus passes. The fact that the council can not commit themselves to what they agreed on in this past means that there is going to be a lot of mistrust between the council and the community that the council is supposed to serve.”

“The Council is clearly facing big budget cuts but should do everything it can to continue to provide any child who receives a free bus pass under the current discretionary system for as long as it can. The council should also recognise that in the past certain Catholic schools were closed and there was an understanding that free transport would be provided for those pupils who would have to travel to the remaining school when such a distance was excessive. As such, the council should not break that understanding.”

Overview of Responses for other stakeholders (Group 3).

The vast majority of respondents to the survey were parents / carers and young people (95%). The other 5% of respondents identified themselves as:

- 4 x Governor
- 5 x Headteacher
- 2 x Member of School Staff
- 12 x 'other'

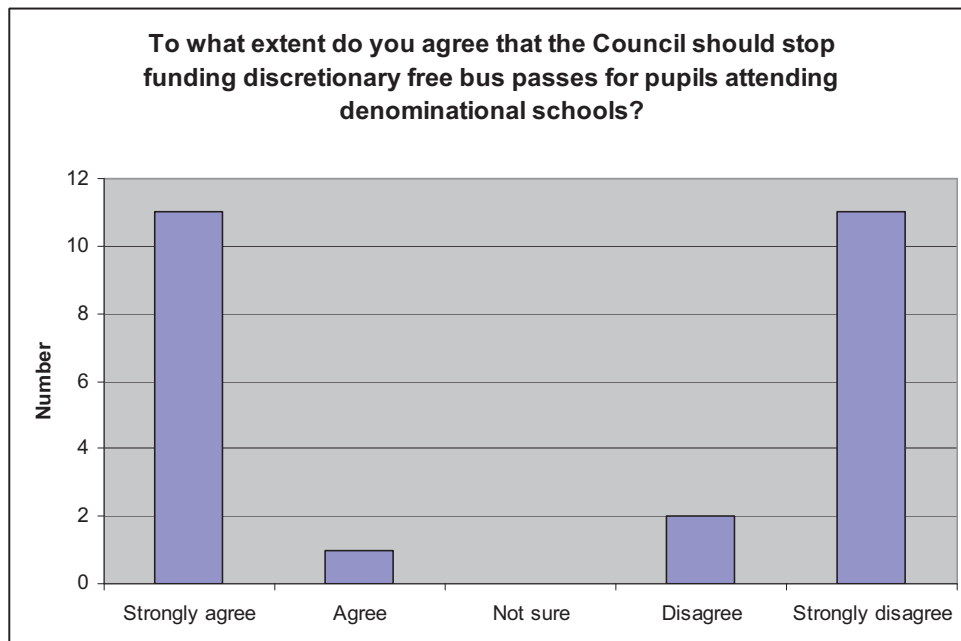
We have defined this group as 'other stakeholders' for the purpose of the report.

Those in the 'other' category included respondents who identified themselves as students and members of the general public (e.g. 'Council Tax Payer', 'Citizen'). One person identified themselves as a 'Christian living in Sheffield' and one as a representative of a refugee family.

These other stakeholders were asked fewer questions as some parts of the questionnaire would not be relevant to them (e.g. do you receive a free bus pass?, would your child need to transfer school?, etc).

1) Views on the Proposal

The questionnaire asked to what extent they agreed with the Council's proposal to stop funding discretionary free bus passes for pupils attending denominational schools.



Appendix 4 – Responses Group 1,2,3,

- 11 strongly agreed and 1 agreed with the proposal.
- 11 strongly disagreed and 2 disagreed with the proposal.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

15 respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did. Given the relatively low number of other stakeholders, all of these responses have been included.

Strongly Agree

“It is discriminatory to fund free passes for children on the condition that they are part of a religion. As far as I know it is not part of any religious doctrine that a child must be educated within a religious school, if it is they should still not receive special treatment at the expense of the rest of society. There are non denominational schools that these children can attend if a school of their denomination is not within close proximity.”

“Schools are for education, not religion. The education system should be completely religion-free.”

“Those of no-faith or who do not attend a denominational school are not provided with free bus passes, so I do not see why those who choose to go to a denominational school should.”

“All school Children should be treated equally. If you choose a school outside the area then that is your choice.”

“Because there has to be cut backs in the council. If parents really want their children to go to a particular school then I'm sure they will find the money to provide bus fare.”

“Because faith is a choice - and attending a faith school is a choice not a requirement even for a member of a faith.”

Disagree

“Some would be able to afford the bus fare, but many would find £7 or even £14, if they have to change in the city centre, very difficult. If there were a school bus the cost would be restricted to £7. The family I am helping is already facing benefit capping, which will mean them finding £52 per week more towards the rent. They also have to pay council tax for the first time and may even later fall foul of the bedroom tax.”

“Whilst I understand the financial pressures why have faith schools been singled out?”

Strongly Disagree

“Because it will impact the significantly less well off families that can't afford to live in e.g. S10, but would none-the-less like their children to have an education that includes their faith. On many ways, faith is a great 'leveller', and I believe all the children benefit from being educated alongside children of many different ethic & socioeconomic backgrounds.”

“Many families we serve come from deprived areas and wish to travel to attend their desired school. Without subsidised travel they would not be able to afford to attend the school of their choice. The free bus passes support parental choice in line with national policy - removing this support is detrimental to a parent's right to choose.”

“Families should have the freedom of choice of school for their child and by stopping the funding for the discretionary free bus pass will mean that the freedom of choice is removed for some families as they may not be able to afford the bus fares.”

“This would disadvantage pupils already attending our school. Their parents have chosen this school as their designated Catholic school, since they belong to our catchment area, as defined by the geographical boundaries of the Catholic parishes. Removing these discretionary bus passes does not equate to other community schools in Sheffield who are currently given discretionary transport assistance because of historical agreements. Historical agreements with Catholic schools should be honoured by the council.”

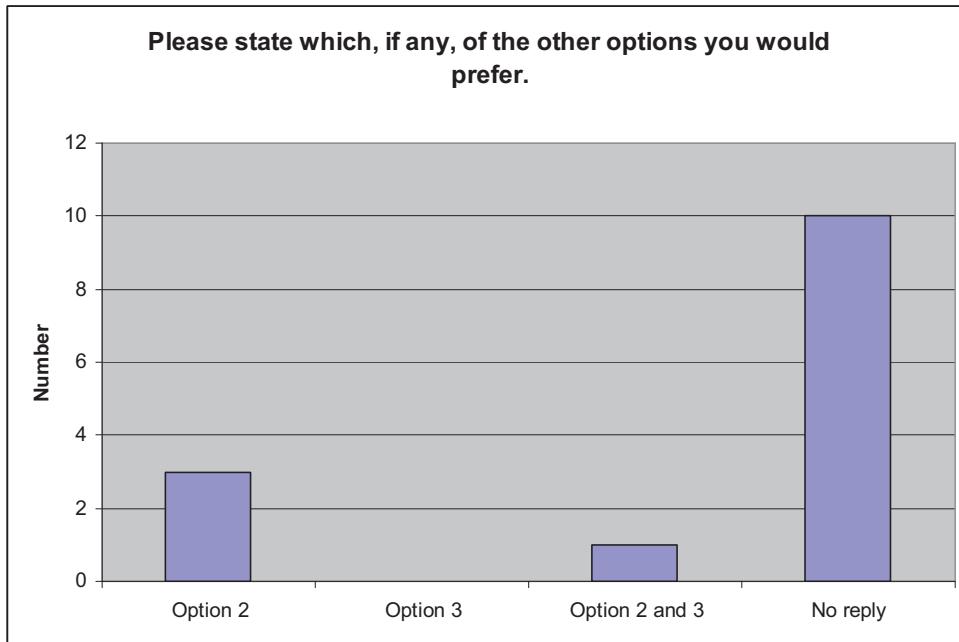
“This is discriminatory and divisive.”

“Parents will not have free choice. Our schools serve families from all over Sheffield, including less affluent areas. The socio-economic mix is hugely advantages for all families in addition to bonding same faiths across the community.”

“It is going to put extra pressure on our parents.”

2) Views on other options outlined in the consultation document

Those who expressed that they disagreed / strongly disagreed with the proposal were also asked which (if any) of the other options detailed in the consultation document they would prefer.



- 3 respondents answered this question. This means a further 10 who disagreed / strongly disagreed with the proposal did not express a preference for any other option.
- 2 respondents selected Option 2 and one selected both options (Option 2 and 3).
- Nobody ticked just Option 3.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

2 respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did.

Option 2

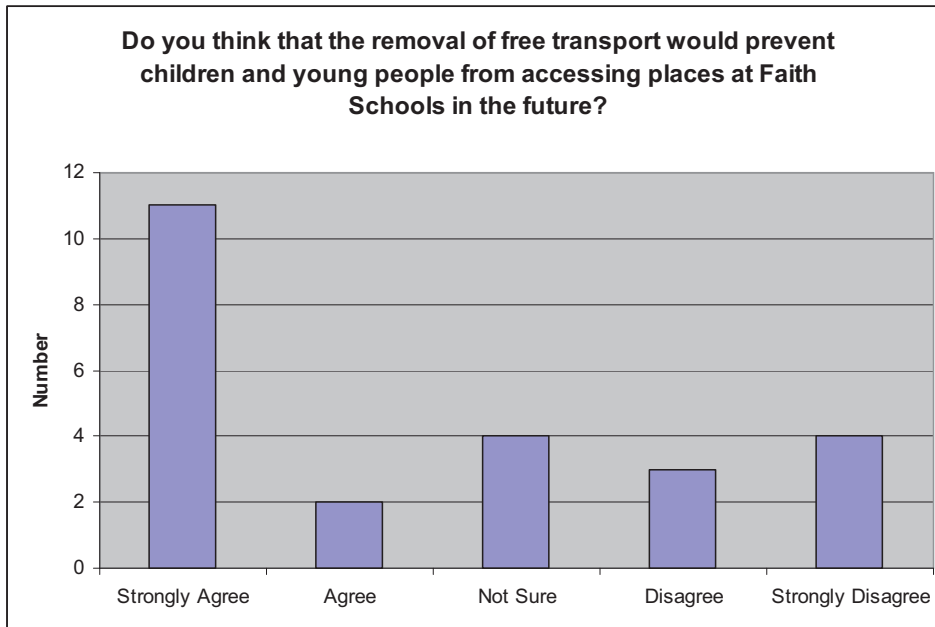
“It protects the pupils currently at our school. However, I am concerned that there is no “Option 4” - not to remove discretionary bus transport assistance, and there is no way of recording this on your consultation.”

Option 2 and Option 3

“In Option 2 children, who already receive a pass should continue with it until they finish at their current school. It isn't fair to move the goal posts for children already at the school. Bus passes would be phased out for Reception pupils and Year 7 entrants from Sept 2013 onwards. I think Option 3 should be applied to all children starting Year 7 from Sept 2013 onwards, not only Years 10 and 11. It would help the current Years 10 and 11, but what about low income families currently in Years 7 to 9? It would be unfair to put children into the situation of having to change schools, it would be unfair to Pupil Admissions, nor would it be fair to the two Denominational schools caught up in this situation. Taking this line of action, would bring in some revenue, because those who could afford it would pay, whilst protecting those who would really struggle to pay. I still think there should be an appeals process, whatever the outcome, for cases like the family I am helping. This family, after suffering persecution in S.E. Asia, was settled in Arbourthorne, where they suffered racial harassment from secondary pupils from two local catchment schools. It would obviously not be appropriate to attend one of these schools. The family are practising Christians who want their son to go to a Catholic school. He has been given a place, but without the free bus pass this would be impossible on their very much reduced income.”

3) Views on how the proposal may affect accessing places at faith schools

Respondents were asked whether they thought removal of free transport would prevent children from accessing places at Faith Schools in the future.



- 24 people answered this question.
- 11 strongly agreed and 2 agreed that this would happen.
- 4 strongly disagreed and 3 disagreed that this would happen.
- 4 were not sure.

Reasons / additional comments given for response

18 of these respondents added comments explaining why they had answered the way they did.

Strongly agree

“Parents already make sacrifices to send their children some distance to our school. With most parents having more than one school-age child this is a significant financial burden at a time of difficulty for many families. The families most affected would be those just above the threshold for statutory free transport: hard-working, working-class families - traditional labour supporters!”

“Parents who have a strong Christian faith should have the option to send their children to a faith school if they are in the catchment area of a parish that traditionally and currently sends children to a particular faith school and should not be prevented from so doing because the withdrawal of free school bus passes means they cannot afford to do so. SCC is disadvantaging Christian parents and pupils for secular and distasteful reasons.”

“Because the families that this will affect are the sorts of families that don't have two cars, who don't have the option to just bundle everyone into a car to do the school run (because the main money earner requires the use of it), and who literally couldn't afford the costs of coming by bus, especially if they have more than one child. And suddenly, they won't be able to afford a faith option. Ironically, this will also put a strain on their local community schools. Finally, the gift of faith to your child does require quite a lot of education and discussion. Without the opportunity to go to a faith school, it does make it less likely that a child will get to learn enough about that faith. And from my perspective, the gift of faith is the best gift I can give my children, to help them through the ups and downs of life.”

“See previous answer. Many families will not be able to afford to attend the school of their choice due to the high levels of deprivation that many of our families have.”

“Many children, particularly those who want to attend faith high schools, have to travel further to do this and will therefore be penalised if the removal of free transport goes ahead and this may mean that they are unable to afford to access places at Faith schools. Surely this isn't offering equal opportunities to all?”

“Bus fares would be prohibitive.”

“Families in poorer areas will not be able to afford the fares. They have told us this and are very worried about this. Many families have children catching 2 buses to school and 2 buses from school because they firmly believe in the right for religious education.”

“Sometimes I may have to think instead of giving pressure to my parents to go to nearby schools. But I have been to local school and I prefer my faith school. I value my religious beliefs and I believe that what I learn as a small child will last for ever.”

4) Additional Comments

Respondents were asked if they would like to make any other comments about the proposal. 4 comments were made.

“You state that you want to know the impact of these proposals on particular groups: In our school there are 249 pupils. 35.5% of pupils come from ethnic minority groups. There are 44 pupils who regularly use the dedicated school buses, of which 25 (56.8%) are from minority ethnic groups, with black African the most common. One can deduce from this that the proposal will disproportionately affect pupils from minority ethnic groups.”

“I think the proposal is excellent. It is about time we stood up to these so-called 'faith' schools. There should be no religion in the education system.”

“Whilst this proposal may look as if it saves money in the short term, I doubt this will prove the case in the reality of the longer term.”

“Need to improve questionnaire clarity, too wording making the question inaccessible to the majority.”

Complete list of comments made in the survey

Please note that the following represent views as expressed verbatim by individual respondents.

*These aren't broken down by **respondent** (i.e. by group) but by responses to each question.*

4. To what extent do you agree that the Council should stop funding discretionary free bus passes for pupils attending denominational schools (Option 1 in the Consultation document)?

5. Please tell us why you answered this way.

Strongly agree

1. All school Children should be treated equally. If you choose a school outside the area then that is your choice
2. Because faith is a choice - and attending a faith school is a choice not a requirement even for a member of a faith
3. Because it is only available for children of that faith.
4. Because its a wasteful expenditure, and in these difficult times all resources should be directed on only essential front line services, whilst at the same time keeping council tax down
5. Because there has to be cut backs in the council. If parents really want their children to go to a particular school then I'm sure they will find the money to provide bus fare.
6. Discriminating against non catholic family's , I have to pay for my son to catch the bus to school , disgusted that my council tax pays for this to happen ... All children should get free bus fares or all should have to pay !!
7. Getting your child into one of the best schools in Sheffield (i.e. All Saints/Notre Dame) is made easier by adopting the catholic way. I have been amazed by parents who quite openly admit to doing this just to improve their chances of securing a place even changing primary schools and suddenly changing faith. This is shown especially after leaving in y6 and these parents no longer go to church and simply forget their commitments made to the church. In some cases if the child did not get into the catholic secondary schools they would have to pay bus fares to the local secondary, not everyone lives within walking distance. I don't know of anyone in that situation that hasn't been able to pay the fares.
8. I agree because there is no reason to suspect people of faith are any poorer than anyone else. Indeed many are quite wealthy. To an average family the cost of a bus pass is not a barrier to going to a certain school. To a low income family it is and I think income should be the basis of discretionary bus passes, not one religious beliefs.
9. I cannot comprehend why the Council has funded free travel for faith school pupils only in the past. This is unfair and needs to stop no that funds are so scarce.

Appendix 5 – All Responses

10. It is discriminatory to fund free passes for children on the condition that they are part of a religion. As far as I know it is not part of any religious doctrine that a child must be educated within a religious school, if it is they should still not receive special treatment at the expense of the rest of society. There are non denominational schools that these children can attend if a school of their denomination is not within close proximity.
11. It is not the business of local government to promote religion. Improve all schools to a decent standard and the demand for religious education will fall dramatically.
12. Parents are making an informed choice to send heir child to a school outside their usual catchment. Why should other council tax payers fund their transport just because of their religion?
13. Schools are for education, not religion. The education system should be completely religion-free.
14. Those of no-faith or who do not attend a denominational school are not provided with free bus passes, so I do not see why those who choose to go to a denominational school should.
15. Unfair system. Should be income based. Aware of parents earning £40k + and live 3.1 miles who get a free pass. But what about someone who gets WTC(just below max rate earning £16200), earns a fraction, lives 2.9 miles away has to pay. Both go to church. What's fair about that?

Agree

1. I appreciate that in the current economic climate hard decisions regarding funding have to be made. Free bus passes for families who choose to send their children to a school other than the local one, cannot really be considered to be a funding priority.
2. I feel this way because if you can afford to pay for tuition for a faith school then you should not be on the welfare system.

Not sure

1. Affordable transport should be available to all children i.e. - 20p per journey not 70p. If the pass could be withdrawn in order to provide cheaper transport for all rather than just free to some then this is a fairer way of doing things. I would think this would save on the administration costs surrounding the pass. However if you do not reduce the cost of child travel then the pass should be phased out rather than just withdrawn, it is unfair to pupils already at the school to just take it away.
2. For info, we currently live just under 3 miles from the school and pay for 2 "free" bus passes each year so our children can travel on the bus daily.
3. I can't open the document and so have not read the doc as requested. Are other pupils that do not attend denominational school given the same privilege? If no then it's fair enough. If not then why not. If any young person is entitled to a free bus pass they should all be given it not some given it and some not given it because of the school they attend. It's not their fault they do not attend denominational school.

They may have liked to attend but there was no space available for them. Given pupils that attend denominational school free bus passes and not others is like rubbing in the salt. No it's not fair. To be fair give free bus passes to PUPIL or STOP IT entirely

Disagree

1. Although I do have to pay for my bus pass at the beginning of every year, it is still much easier than having to find the exact change twice a day. Also, bus journey times would be significantly increased as each person boarding the bus would have to find the correct change, hand it to the driver and wait for the driver to check the money before being able to sit down!
2. As people are already struggling at the moment with jobs and finding enough money this is going to be made more difficult as children are sent to faith schools for a reason and most are one or two buses away from where people live and should not be made to compromise on this due to the council making cuts.
3. I disagree because that just means that you don't care about people who have no father living with barely no money to get transport or buy anything expensive so i think its a good idea just to leave everything as it was.
4. I still believe that this may have an impact on some families who may send their children to the nearest school instead of the nearest faith school, thereby removing choice.
5. I understand the need for the need for the council to make cuts. However with the price of children's fares increasing then this going to put a big strain on family budgets.
6. if the council wants to scrap all free travel for school pupils very well not just faith schools
7. Option 1 makes no allowance for children already attending a faith school and in receipt of a free bus pass, who will lose it, which may have serious detrimental effect on the finances of some families. Families just above the low income threshold will probably have to reassess whether they are able to afford to send their children to their first choice of a faith school.
8. Some would be able to afford the bus fare, but many would find £7 or even £14, if they have to change in the city centre, very difficult. If there were a school bus the cost would be restricted to £7. The family I am helping is already facing benefit capping, which will mean them finding £52 per week more towards the rent. They also have to pay council tax for the first time and may even later fall foul of the bedroom tax.
9. to continue with education at denominational school transport is essential and parents & pupils should not be deterred from this
10. Whilst I appreciate savings need to be made, I, like many parents, chose to send my child before this proposal occurred and thus was not able to make an informed choice regarding the financial impact at that time and am currently faced the additional costs that will have an impact on my tight budget.

11. Whilst I understand the financial pressures why have faith schools been singled out?

Strongly disagree

1. A clear case of religious discrimination 2. Fabricated and uncosted proposal based on No actual facts (see next point) 3. No actual cost saving to the council since students would have to be bussed to other far lying schools due to over subscription of other schools in the locality should parents wish to transfer 4. Disenfranchisement of Parent and pupils right to choose 5. Deception - parents and students have not been given the opportunity to visit other schools and go though the open evenings/days to make an alternative choice despite assurances that this would be facilitated for personally by the leader of the council, in a public meeting, please refer to actual council records 6. Misinformation given to the public by the council and council members in the public hearing and in the press which if deliberate amounts to deception 7. The deliberate refusal by the council to acknowledge the historic and agreed catchment areas of the Catholic schools enshrined in actual council records and mapping. I have evidence of these records and again the council and council members refusal to acknowledge this in the public meeting amounted to deception 8. Retrograde withdrawal of funding arrangements for transport by the council for all students in yrs7-11 already accepted by the council and given places amounts to breach of faith. This proposal should at best only be proposed for current y5 who have not made applications yet so informed choices can be made 9. The disproportionate impact on families with multiple children at the faith schools 10. Undue impact on other Sheffield schools and their ability to offer places and within 3 years there is going to be a baby boom coming through the school secondary sector

Financial reasons - My son catches 2 buses each way totalling £546 per school. 2. I would have to take him to school by car instead meaning that he or my other child (who attends a different school) would be late each day. 3. If he went to his local catchment area school (Bradfield) he would still qualify for a zero fare pass. Therefore he is being discriminated against.

1. I do not consider it an unreasonable expectation for the provision of a discretionary transport subsidy to be for the duration of a child's education up to year 11. 2. I think the Council should honour the historical agreement re transport subsidy for Catholic children, initiated on the closure of three secondary Catholic Schools. 3. I consider the most suitable school for a Catholic child to be a Catholic school and should not relate to residential catchment areas which appear to be manipulated by the Council to achieve their own ends.
2. A number of reasons. a) It singles out the catholic community for removal of funding, no other form of discretionary funding is being targeted in this way. This is inequitable. Catholics are tax payers too. You are essentially asking Catholics to support other discretionary funding arrangements whilst removing any that they may have

recourse to. b) Sheffield Council are reneging on a promise made to the catholic community, when Sheffield needed to reduce the number of secondary schools, that provision would be made to ensure children in catholic primary schools across the city would retain the choice of attending catholic secondary regardless of where they lived. The proposed revisions limit the freedom of choice to those families with the money to pay the bus fares or travel costs. c) Removing the discretionary funding may lead to a longer term ghettoising of catholic communities and will probably destabilise the current social mix and integration which are strength found in our catholic schools, risking elitism. d) This proposal, and others like it, demonstrate a lack of tolerance for alternate value structures and belief systems. e) there is woeful ignorance of what faith is and why it is important for those of a faith background to seek education in a faith setting. The attempt to equate seeking a specialist technology or language school with a faith school clearly demonstrates this ignorance (Council's letter to parents October 2012). As does your excerpt 'Transport to Schools' on pg 8 of the current consultation document. The latter implies the key consideration for parents is accurate provision of the national curriculum. The key consideration for a catholic parent is to find a school which provides a value structure in keeping with the teachings of the catholic church which permeates not only all areas of the curriculum but all school life. A school which continues the values taught at home and in the parish. A school which values every individual in their community regardless of academic ability. What the council considers a nearest 'suitable' school may differ considerably from what a catholic parent considers suitable. Further, as you do not provide the option yourselves, I would like to state an option 4: retain discretionary bus passes for denominational schools. Your survey is going to give skewed results because of the questions you haven't asked and the way in which you have posed the remainder.

3. A pupil should not be penalized for wanting to be educated and enjoy their faith at the same time
4. a. with two children already at the school we would be several hundred pounds a year worse off b. when we sent our children to the school it was on the understanding that we would have free travel - it is wrong to withdraw at this stage c. it is discriminatory against faith schools
5. All pupils whatever their financial circumstances and wherever they live should be eligible to attend a denominational school. The denominational schools provide excellent education, access to which would undoubtedly improve the standards of education throughout the city. The free bus passes for pupils attending these schools ensures that access is not reserved for those pupils fortunate to live in the areas where the schools are.
6. as a point of principle I feel ALL schoolchildren should have free home to school transport but as a practising Catholic in a large city with only two Catholic secondary schools children often have to travel more than 3miles to attend school & are therefore entitled to a free pass
7. As All Saints and Notre Dame are the only catholic schools in the city, most children attending these schools as their nearest suitable school,

- will live over three miles away. Any child who lives over this distance from any school should be entitled to a free bus pass.
8. As I have chosen the catholic school because of my belief and I want my four children to be taught in a catholic environment the decision to stop the founding will definitely be against my family.
 9. As it is important to us that our children go to a faith school, as we are regular church goers but to pay for the bus fares on a daily basis starts to add up.
 10. As there is not a Faith School in the local distance, as a single parent I am stretched to be able to then find £273 for the school year, the other option is I terminate my employment apply for Job Seekers Allowance and get Free School Meals and all other benefits but I do not want to - I want to show my daughter you have to work in life and have a faith upbringing/education but at what cost ??? - I will have to look at the family budget to cover this could be as extreme as losing a family meal per day it is that concerning
 11. Because a child brought up in the catholic faith should have a right to a catholic education without being penalised financially
 12. Because I think it would put unfair economic burdens on struggling families also I don't think it should be limited to faith schools.
 13. Because it will be hard for lots of people to afford the travel costs to the faith school of their choice, which they have the right to attend. It might lead to more people using cars which will negatively impact the environment and the safety of our city. If more people start using cars, passengers on school buses will decline altogether.
 14. Because it will impact the significantly less well off families that can't afford to live in e.g. S10, but would none-the-less like their children to have an education that includes their faith. On many ways, faith is a great 'leveller', and I believe all the children benefit from being educated alongside children of many different ethnic & socioeconomic backgrounds.
 15. Because it would be discrimination against children attending a school of their faith based on their religious beliefs when the faith school is not in their local catchment area.
 16. Catholic families were promised free bus passes when the local secondary school was closed; unilaterally reversing the promise is undemocratic and discriminates against Catholics and their chance of attending a faith school.
 17. Catholic schools are being penalised. My children travel a long way to get to their Catholic School which is our only choice of school for them. They depend on the bus service and their free bus pass. We believe that we are being discriminated against because of our religious choice.
 18. Children from faith communities have specific needs which will not be met in some circumstances if this goes through
 19. Choice is part of my right as a tax payer and I wish to send my child to the School where his faith is part of his education process.
 20. Denominational schools should not be discriminated against. All pupils in Sheffield should be treated the same regardless of race, colour or creed. Also, parents who can't afford bus passes for several children

- may therefore leave their school, or choose a different one initially. This will put more pressure on other schools and leave church schools with empty places.
21. Discrimination against faith but also the impact it will have on those families who are already overstretched because of other cuts, pension contribution increases and general price increases for food, utilities, etc.
 22. Due to the fact children / families are being financially penalised for wishing to obtain a Catholic education. Schools were previously closed with the promise of funding for travel for future generations. It now seems shameful of the council that they cannot now find documentary evidence of this promise.
 23. Families should have the freedom of choice of school for their child and by stopping the funding for the discretionary free bus pass will mean that the freedom of choice is removed for some families as they may not be able to afford the bus fares.
 24. Historically the Council agreed to keep up the subsidy of school fares when denominational school were closed. Faith schools are now very limited and taking away this provision is taking away parental choice and discriminating against our chosen religion.
I feel that it is unfair to change policy on this AFTER my children have begun their education at Notre Dame High School. Had I known that the free bus passes were to be withdrawn, this might have altered my decision to send them to that school in the first place. Now they have started & are happy at Notre Dame, It would not be reasonable to unsettle them by changing schools purely for financial reasons dictated by withdrawal of the free bus passes
 25. I feel that to stop funding is extremely harsh, especially when some are only just scraping by and don't qualify to be included in the lower income bracket because we work full time and earn too much to fall in the boundaries
 26. I have 4 young children who will be attending a catholic high school and due to this I will not be able to afford to send them to the school of our faith.
 27. I have submitted a written submission that details my reasons.
 28. I strongly disagree because catholic children should continue to receive free buss passes because this was promised by the labour council in 1985 when St Peters school was closed
 29. I strongly disagree with the proposal to stop funding free bus passes for pupils attending denominational schools. I would like to contribute to the consultation regarding the proposal to remove the discretionary that helps children with transports costs to that they can go to a Catholic School. I am strongly objecting to this proposal as I believe it discriminates unfairly against students on the basis of their religion. If there were Catholic Schools that were easily accessible from all parts of town then there would be an argument for removing this grant, but as you are aware there are few Catholic Schools and they serve very large catchments and it is essential to use public transport for students to get to the schools. Many Catholic pupils have to travel long distances to their Catholic Primary or Secondary school and the

- removal of this grant would seriously affect parents' ability to choose a Catholic school for their children. I also believe this proposal discriminates against students and families based on their social and economical status. This proposal would particularly affect families who are hard stretched to meet their living costs and who live in areas that are less-advantaged. Therefore I strongly urge the council to withdraw this proposal. This proposal will increase the gap between the more well off and the less well off as students from less advantaged backgrounds will be forced to go to schools that are not their first choice and there they won't get the opportunity to grow in the Catholic faith.
30. I strongly disagree. We receive £20.00 per week for child benefit, if it costs £7.00 a week travel as well at £10.00 a week to cover lunch at £2.00 a day this leaves £3.00 a week to cover other costs. Why should I and my husband be penalised because we have chosen to work all our lives and support our children. We pay tax, national insurance etc as well as paying a pension. I am fed up with having to support other minorities that scrounge off the state and have never worked. We are a family of 5, as stated above myself and my husband have worked for over 28 years. My eldest son is supporting himself through University but lives at home so we provide a home and food etc, my second son is working part-time whilst attending college so I believe that my family provides for itself without having to lose my sons travel pass. If we all took the decision not to work and sponge off the state this country would be in a worse state than it currently is. The government and council are always targeting families that work, it is about time the benefit system was overhauled.
31. I strongly disagree with the councils stopping free bus passes for pupils attending faith schools, as in my opinion it is like being discriminated against for my faith, as I want my children to go to a Catholic school. I also worry that we also lose our current green bus service as if we did it would mean my children will travel on four buses to and from school
32. I think that it discriminates against my wish to have my children educated in a Catholic secondary school as it places a substantial financial burden on our family. With two sons in a Catholic Primary school, my expectation was that I would naturally send them to one of the Catholic secondary schools. However, this would include twice daily bus fares to either school.
33. I think you are penalising people's choice to offer their children continued education in their chosen faith school. My youngest daughter currently attends a feeder school and is due to move up to secondary next September, where her elder sister goes at this moment. Her not getting a free pass to impact our income extremely hard, plus with the increase in public transport fares and the fact that there isn't a direct bus to the school would mean me spending an awful lot on public transport. The only other alternative would be for me to take them to school in my car before I go to work, creating more traffic on the surrounding roads around the school which I'm sure are already pretty congested, surely another reason why the buses are a good idea!

Appendix 5 – All Responses

34. I understand that the council has to meet budget cuts but considering the large amounts of money that it already wastes (and as a lifelong citizen I have witnessed many occasions) this relatively small amount of money is penalizing a small amount of people. It will also impact on our family budgeting and make us worse off. I know we all have to take the strain but I think it very unfair when people who never work are always benefiting regardless. I also wonder if you would do this to people of non Christian faiths as it seems very discriminating. I and my wife both work but this cut would make it even harder for us.
35. I would not be able to get to school if you got rid of my bus pass.
36. In September 2013 I will have two children attending Notre Dame School this means it will cost me £14 a week to get them to school. Although I do not receive benefits this is a lot of extra money for me to find each week.
37. it is discriminatory towards pupils attending faith schools
38. It is discriminative against Catholics
39. it is going to put extra pressure on our parents
40. It is unfair - it discriminates based upon faith. Especially after the closure of St Peters School in the mid 1980's (done to help the Council reduce the cost of its Secondary provision) when there was an agreement that Catholic Families would receive discretionary transport subsidy
41. It is unfair to remove the free bus pass to those who are currently in receipt of the free bus pass. There are many other ways the council can save monies without attacking school children - cut the amount of useless and meaningless meetings and committees for a start. There are also school children who are into exam years and this is an additional stress they can do without at a critical time in their education. The council also agreed to this free bus pass after 2 catholic schools were closed, this therefore, is a gross display by the council of going back on their word to the catholic community, a position which suggests the council is totally untrustworthy.
42. It is unfair to students who have to travel more than three miles to school.
43. It puts pressure on parents in terms of finances. There's been so many cutbacks already and general house hold bills are not getting any lower. Am quite glad that one of my children may still get the benefit as he will be in Y11 from September. And my daughter will be leaving to start college. If this age bracket didn't apply (y7-y9) it would more money per academic year just to get your children educated at a desirable school, or because you want a certain type of education or a level of good education? Where do parents get a break from all this pressure. Bus fares were just one less thing to worry about. Now it joins the list of specific uniform and school trips. What kind of future will this country have? I choose to educate my children out of the area they live in, to try and give them a better start. Schools are already over subscribed wont this make things worse? We have to think about the knock on effects of this. It's not fair. I have a son that's not due to go to go to secondary school as yet as he's only 6, but I hope that my finances will be in a better position when the time comes. Am sure that

- by the time he goes to secondary school the bus fares will be more than 70p! I feel all this needs careful consideration.
44. It would be unfair to remove the free bus passes especially to children that are already in these schools. Relocating children to near schools is not an option since this will greatly affect children's education. As a result, a lot of families are going to be left in poverty.
 45. It's a matter of sending your child/children to a faith school as you feel that is what your right should be to follow your faith in the school system. The school where you child attends is not always in your catchment area as the church where you worship may be in a different catchment area.
 46. It's unfair that my child with not receive a free bus pass when she has to travel to the other side of the city to attend the only catholic school in the area. It's discriminating against our faith.
 47. Its very hard for people with less money to pay for bus fair
 48. Local schools cannot provide the same level of Religious education that the faith school can
 49. Many Catholic pupils live very far away from the nearest Catholic school
 50. Many children who attend faith schools have to catch 2 buses to school and 2 home again, not the 1 bus each way as stated in your consultant document. This, for myself and many others means over £500 per school year per child. When I chose to send my children to a faith school I took into consideration the fact that they would qualify for a zero fare pass and therefore I felt that, with the Christian ethos of the school and the high standard of education this was the best place for my children's education. Our local catchment school is Bradfield which is over 3 miles away from my house. If my children were to move school they would qualify for a zero fare pass!! This I feel discriminates against my children. Why should my neighbours children receive a zero fare pass and mine not? If you are going to withdraw passes for faith schools it should be done across the board.
 51. Many families we serve come from deprived areas and wish to travel to attend their desired school. Without subsidised travel they would not be able to afford to attend the school of their choice. The free bus passes support parental choice in line with national policy - removing this support is detrimental to a parent's right to choose.
 52. Many families will suffer financially if the bus passes are withdrawn. Some families will be unable to fund their children's travel to school. This will mean that the students may have to leave the school which will be detrimental to their education
 53. My child attends Notre Dame and will be in yr 10 this Sep. Until now we didn't qualify for a free zero pass but since moving we now do, only to find you are trying to stop them! At 70p per journey, this really does add up over the week. For parents who are able to work full time and earn a considerable amount of money, this isn't a worry, to everyone else, it is! Why are we being penalised for our faith!
 54. My children have been in the Catholic education system since they attended nursery. When they were moving to Y7 we never considered any other school than Notre Dame which their primary was a feeder

- for. We had no worries about cost of travel as we knew as a Catholic family we would be entitled to a zero fare pass. Any Catholic child should be entitled to a Catholic education no matter which area of Sheffield they live in. We understand that when the other Catholic secondary schools were closed it was agreed that families would receive free transport so that all catholic children would be able to attend Notre Dame or All Saints.
55. My daughter is y7 at Notre Dame. The bus pass was a consideration when choosing a secondary school. I am a single parent with 4 girls & do not have sufficient income to cover bus fares for the coming years. It's an outrage! Promising something then taking it away!!!!!!!!!!!!
56. Notre Dame school as a catholic family is our CATCHMENT school. Not Stocksbridge high school. We would not receive this faith education at stocksbridge high school. My children have feed in from catholic primary school. I could understand if we attended the Catholic school All Saints as this is further away. We do live out on a limb and it is well over the three mile limit. This is direct discrimination on the grounds of faith.
57. Parents will not have free choice. Our schools serve families from all over Sheffield, including less affluent areas. The socio-economic mix is hugely advantages for all families in addition to bonding same faiths across the community.
58. Religious choice is being affected. Catholic families live in different places. They do not live in one locality. It is unrealistic to say they should attend a local school which is not of their faith.
59. Section 1.3 Objective 2 of the Smarter Choices for Travel to School Strategy 2012-2013 document states 'to provide travel choice and ensure transport is not a barrier to educational choice and attainment'. In 2012 the target to reduce car-based school journeys was missed, car-based school journeys increased. Removal of free school bus passes is not in line with the aims and targets within the Smarter Choices Strategy. Many of the children attending the two Catholic secondary schools in Sheffield live further than 3 miles from their school (due to the location of both schools being in the south of the city and the closure of the Catholic school to the north) and as such should be entitled to free transport.
60. the council benefit a great deal more by the savings that are made by these children attending VA schools and I believe this will cost the council more in real terms in the long run as many more children will need to educated at full cost to the council.
61. The council made an agreement when St Peter's and St John Fisher's were closed, so that council money could be saved, that they would ensure that pupils would not have to pay for transport to attend further afield catholic schools. As an ex pupil of St Peters, I was most upset at its closure. The council has a moral obligation to honour its promise. This was a wonderful local school, which could have been filled with local children of many denominations.
62. The council provides free transport, through law, to children to the nearest suitable school (if that school is 3 miles away for 8 year olds). In our case All Saints is the nearest suitable school withdrawing free

- transport is religious discrimination. Neither option 2 or 3 are acceptable.
63. There are only two catholic high schools in Sheffield, neither of which are in my catchment area. As such my child would have to travel by bus to either one of them. As a practicing Catholic and one who feels strongly about their child attending a Catholic school, (as he has done since primary school) and indeed as our whole family has done, I feel we are being discriminated against. I also feel that as a single parent who is not entitled to any form of benefits I am being placed at a disadvantage.
64. There is no "local" Catholic school available. This could be seen as discrimination against a person's faith. The current cost of bus fares will make this very expensive. If families stop sending their children to faith schools then the buses may be eventually withdrawn as uneconomical. The south of the city already has the "best" schools in Sheffield and this will further divide the city by withdrawing very good faith schools as an option for some parents.
65. There is no local school within walking distance which offers a catholic education
66. There isn't a catholic school on this side of the city using the free school bus is the only way I can get my children to school.
67. These schools provide a public service, this should be appreciated. If the religious organisation stopped providing the school the council would have to take over at a higher cost to the taxpayer.
68. This is discriminating against pupils who wish to attend faith schools as this is the only faith school in the catchment area. I also believe that this would cause great hardship to families in the present economical climate.
69. This is discriminatory and divisive.
70. This is not fair as i send my child to a school especially catered to their religious beliefs (Catholic) and live more than 3 miles away from the school. The children in the same position as mine should also be given the opportunity of a free pass too and from school.
71. This policy will severely pressurise the budgets in Catholic homes across the city
72. This will be unfair to, and will discriminate against, parents and families who wish to send their child to a faith school. This is a direct attack by Sheffield City Council on freedom to observe a faith or religion.
73. This will lead to a 2 tier system with children from poorer areas being unable to attend a faith school. One of the most positive features of faith schools is the diversity of pupils from different backgrounds and this is going to be highly impacted by this decision. It is divisive and discriminates against poorer pupils. Notre Dame is in the top 100 schools in England for improving attainment and it feels as though this fact is being completely disregarded.
74. This would disadvantage pupils already attending our school. Their parents have chosen this school as their designated Catholic school, since they belong to our catchment area, as defined by the geographical boundaries of the catholic parishes. Removing these discretionary bus passes does not equate to other community schools

- in Sheffield who are currently given discretionary transport assistance because of historical agreements. Historical agreements with Catholic schools should be humoured by the council.
75. to remove the discretionary free bus pass immediately without warning would mean children changing schools as the costs for multi-pupil households (like ours) would be too great
 76. Unfair process status quo not an option. Reneging on agreements made previously to protect catholic schools transport
 77. Unfair to withdraw in the middle of a child's education.
 78. Unjust to remove this from pupils already attending a Catholic School and in receipt of the zero fare pass. This is an added expense which was not there when choosing a school. There are no nearer Catholic Schools for my children to attend.
 79. We are a Catholic Family, a church-attending family, and my children must attend a Catholic school. As Catholics we cannot attend our local Secondary provision.
 80. We are a practising Catholic family and it is extremely important to us that our children receive a Catholic education as well as a Catholic upbringing. We could not consider changing our choice of school for our children. To even suggest this is blatant discrimination to our faith. To compensate for the loss of local Catholic schools it was agreed with the City council that Catholic families sending their children to the more distant Catholic high schools would receive a discretionary transport subsidy.
 81. We decided to place our child at St John Fisher Catholic School after making a fully informed decision about their education right through to secondary school. This decision had to be made at that time to ensure consistency for his specific needs having Autism and need for continuity and minimal disruption. Senco are heavily involved together with Psychologists to ensure smooth transition from the feeder school. I therefore feel I do not have a choice to change the secondary school at this late stage so am tied to having to send him to this school whether the costs are there or not. We are also Catholic and therefore wish him to receive a continual catholic school upbringing without being penalised at this late stage in his education. Had we known about the fare charges our decision would have been affected but at primary school decision time not senior school.
 82. We got the free bus pass because we live more than 3 miles away from the school. Why should this be any different now?
 83. We opted for a faith school to ensure our child received an education supported by our beliefs and values. There are no faith schools within the designated walking distance, our only option is public transport across the city.
 84. We send our child to a faith school for the religious values that faith school's stand for. Our christian faith is important to us and feel that by taking away our free bus pass the council is forcing some parents to send our children to a local non faith school that do not have the same faith value we many christians feel are extremely important.

85. we were not given warning when choosing the school- now we are in a situation where i can't afford to send my child to school but am afraid that changing school will disrupt her education
86. We were told that we would qualify for free travel. Had we realised that that would not be the case throughout, it would have changed our choice of school.
87. Well, I go to my school for my faith. My local school/s don't support my faith. In order to go to my closest choice of faith school, I have to travel across the City. It requires at least two methods of public transport each way. That's 70px4=£2.80 a day. I don't even get that much for lunch money. Sometimes struggle to get any lunch money at all as it is. That's ridiculous. No family can pay that 5x a week 40x a year. That comes to a total cost of £14 per week, which is £560 per school year! Oh, I also have a younger brother which totals it to £1120 a year. If national average salary is about £26,500 (before tax) then a family (2 parents still) average income will be £53,000 (before tax)so therefore the fare will take up a large sum of the family's income. Oh and by the way, my parents earn beneath the national average, so it's an even bigger chunk out of our income. Then think about other students, who might only have 1 parent so the chunk taken out of their income is 2x as much. Then think about those who have no choice than more than 4 methods of transport a day. THEN think of all those with MORE siblings who have to travel too. THEN think of the fare increase next April that the council want to impose (and the increases in years following). Combine ALL OF THOSE and before you know it, you're going to have many more families living in relative poverty. I thought the government was trying to tackle this problem, not increase the statistics?
88. Whilst I am currently employed, I would find it difficult as a lone parent of 3 dependent young people to swallow yet another loss to our family funds. Our essential outgoings such as heating and food costs continue to increase after my family has lost tax credits and I have not had a pay rise in 8 years. I believe I am typical of many parents in our locality.
89. You should be cutting the funding from mobility pass from people who can walk, and not from children who should have an education, which will benefit the country in the near future.
90. when I applied for my three children to attend notre- dame high school there was no mention or consultation on having to pay for school transport, the free bus pass was one of the main criteria which allowed me to make the choice of school for their further education,

6. Please state which (if any) of the other options you would prefer (please refer to Section 3 of the consultation document).

7. Please tell us why you would prefer this/these option(s).

Option 2

Appendix 5 – All Responses

1. I would not have to move my children to another school. They could continue with their studies with teachers they know in familiar surroundings with their friends with whom they have known since age 5. If parents were aware of the additional requirement to pay the bus fare from the outset when applying for a school then this is fair and just. To introduce this when children are already attending the school is not right. Some families who are not in receipt of tax credits and would not be exempt could still struggle with the extra expense and may have to remove their children from school. This could have catastrophic consequences to the children involved.
2. As a single parent who is not entitled to any form of benefits I feel that the changes would place me at a disadvantage and as stated in question 3, as a parent who feels strongly about their child attending a Catholic school I feel that the changes would adversely affect me not to mention they are discriminatory against those who want their children to attend a faith based school given that there are limited faith based high schools in Sheffield.
3. I have 3 children taking two buses to Notre Dame. At 70p per trip, this means £2.80 per child per day which is £14 per child per week which works out to £56 per week. Even though it would be difficult to manage these fares, I wouldn't take my children to another school because I was brought up catholic and I want my children to have the same values. Changing schools would also affect their performance and I wouldn't want to put their futures at risk
4. options 1 and 3 are clearly unfair to existing students
5. It is unfair to change the goalposts for those who are currently in receipt of the free bus pass during their school career i.e. currently those in year 7 or above.
6. Although I would rather the passes continued, at least option 2 does not penalize those families who have already made a choice to send their child to a faith school based on their beliefs but also based on the fact that passes were provided. At least families in the future can take this into consideration as they are armed with all the facts. Option 2 would also prevent most families from moving schools and this would cause less disruption to their education.
7. This would give parents time to change preference for school choice if need to, and would also help with children already at school and maybe exam years
8. At my children's school Year 9 children also take GCSE examinations so they would also be disrupted if you were to implement option 3. Also, any change of school due to the bus pass being withdrawn would be disruptive for any child at any age.
9. This allows continuation without any issues for those already used to having the pass + also reduces the burden for families who have more than one sibling at the school or about to start at the school.
10. This is the only option which would allow me to have a free bus pass and continue with my education at the nearest faith school which supports my religious beliefs.
11. My children take the Notre Dame bus to/from school each day. It will cost me £14 a week for my children to get to school and back. I cannot

- afford this. Bus fares will inevitably rise each year and if not enough children are using the Notre Dame bus because of cost it will probably be removed and so my children would have to take 2 buses across town at a cost of £28 a week. Option 2 is the only fair option - those who have already been allocated a place at Notre Dame/All Saints did not know this was going to happen. "Exam years" at Notre Dame start in Y9 - my Y8 child has already taken her options and will take her first GCSE exam this time next year.
12. It is unfair to expect parents to find the extra funds to pay for the bus fares now that the children already attend the school. This is an additional expense that has to be budgeted for. If parents were already aware of this before selecting the school then that is much fairer. To ask someone to start paying when they already attend the school is morally wrong. Other councils which have implemented charging have done so for pupils new to the school NOT for existing pupils.
 13. we didn't know
 14. If necessary parents could then opt to send their children to the closest local state school at the time of introduction to the school instead of having to consider moving schools halfway through their academic life.
 1. My son will be in Year 9 at Notre Dame in September and a long with the majority of the other Year 9s, will take his first GCSE at the end of the school year. So he and his peers will also be disrupted not just Y10 & 11.
 2. Financial reasons - however I would still struggle to find the extra money when my younger child moves to secondary school.
 15. I don't prefer any of the options. Travel to Faith schools should be free. My family were made a promise that they would not be financially discriminated against for wanting a catholic education. We have pursued a catholic primary education and now my children are at All Saints School. Yet from September 2013 a Catholic education can only be provided at a cost.
 16. Because it makes more sense than the other options.
 17. Because it's the best option for most families from those given. No option for status quo.
 18. Because this is fairer. We made the decision also based on the free transport. Some parents may have made other decisions based on this. At least with my second child I will be aware i will have to pay.
 19. This would be the only option where my child would be eligible for a discretionary free bus pass until finishing education. A lot of families may not earn high incomes and they would not qualify for Option 3 and to stop funding the bus pass would put additional strain on finances.
 20. My eldest daughter would still receive a pass whilst my youngest would have to pay. Although we receive benefits we wouldn't qualify with the other options and have too many outgoings to afford extra expenses every month.
 21. At least one of my child will continue to have a free pass till he finishes his school
 22. It protects the pupils currently at our school. However, I am concerned that there is no "Option 4" - not to remove discretionary bus transport assistance, and there is no way of recording this on your consultation.

Appendix 5 – All Responses

23. It's a fairer system whereby parents will be aware that the costs will be phased in over time. They can therefore prepare for changes and make contingencies
24. Although I disagree with withdrawal of the passes, I suspect that the council will withdraw them anyway regardless of what this survey tells you. This option will at least help us and our two children.
25. a. If free travel is to be withdrawn it should only be for new entrants. it is wrong to disrupt children's' learning once they have entered the school b. one of our children is entering Y9 in September and will be undertaking GCSE exams so he is no different to our son entering Y11 c. Option 3 is effectively encouraging us to move our 2nd child from Notre Dame whilst leaving is elder sibling their to enter Y11 - we do not wish to separate them
26. Families with children already in receipt of the discount will have taken this into account before sending their children to the chosen school. Families of future years children will be able to make their decision of school choice based upon them knowing they will have to pay for bus fares.
27. To move a child part way through their time at a school is disruptive and means they would no longer receive a faith based education. Parents who have yet to decide which school to send their child to can factor the cost of transport into their decision as most families attending a faith school fall outside the catchment area for that school.
28. I'd prefer for the proposal not to be so, but I find that if my first child has already qualified for a pass then she should be able to use this until her education has completely finished. I also have another child who is currently in a feeder school so under this proposal, will have to fund her transportation to and from school, but at least if one of my children continues to get free travel, then this wouldn't impact our finances as hard
29. I'd prefer for the proposal not to happen at all as this would mean my youngest not qualifying for a pass but I already have a child attending secondary school receiving a free pass and therefore, this is the only reason as she'd continue to be able to use it
30. it seems a fairer thing to do
31. I don't prefer this option but you didn't give me a choice to say NEITHER. By not giving this choice, it seems you have already made your decision to some level of withdrawing of funds.
32. then you know what you are choosing also- our income is LOWER than the income support level but because we are self employed, we do not get income support- we are POORER than many on income support
33. Because if the child is still at primary school and the parent is aware that free travel to the faith school will not be provided well in advance, they can make an informed decision of whether to send their child or make alternative arrangements to their education - my child is already in school I just cannot upset her at the age of 12-13 and move her to the local comprehensive she is settled.
34. Of the 3 options this one at least doesn't penalise families who have already made their decision to send children to a faith school, but it should only be introduced to reception / Y7 in September 2014 as for

- children starting school in September 2013 the decision as to which school they go to has already been made, before this change was agreed. It will still have the effect of potentially prohibiting the attendance of a faith school by some pupils.
35. As my child attends a catholic primary school which is more than 2 miles away from our home.
 36. Parents need to be aware from the beginning of school of financial commitments, this would allow transition.
 37. This would mean the new entrants could choose if they wish for their child to progress to that school and make the choice whilst in the position of know what to expect. Making these changes to a current pupil could cause financial stress to some families and even result in good current students doing well to leave the school and this would be extremely disruptive to their education.
 38. This would at least help some parents with another child/children due to go to Notre Dame in the coming years.
 39. The lesser of two evils for my family, personally. I do not prefer either option in reality though.
 40. Fairer for those who are already at the school
 41. This would be more equitable since parents would know BEFORE sending their children to faith schools, the full financial implication of doing so.
 42. This seems the fairest way to bring in this change. Though I do not agree with the removal of free passes, it is inline with steps taken by other councils and helps many parents who though not entitled to free meals, would still find the additional expense a hardship to prevent the upheaval of moving a child already settled in school
 43. I think it only fair to continue with the subsidy which has already been granted.

Option 3

1. This seems the fairest option proposed if this is to go ahead
2. Option 2 shouldn't be an option. It's just a slower process in removing the passes.
3. With little money coming into this working family, this additional pressure on tight resources has never been considered when children received places in this faith school; now this proposal is wrecking the educational aspirations for our children
4. I don't think it would be fair to pick and choose years in which to stop the free transport.
5. I have a child who comes under the criteria for Option 3 i.e. entering Y10 in Sept 2013
6. This option will mean that my son will get a travel pass for his final year at school, he has a career path mapped out for him and will be working part-time like his brothers when he turns 16. My children appreciate that although myself and my husband work that if they want to go to the pictures, or any other extra curricular activities they had pay for them themselves. We spend £600+ a month of food alone, it isn't cheap feeding three healthy boys.

7. It would help save money, but at the same time assist those who can least afford it
8. This would give some assistance to current Y10 and Y11 pupils.

Option 2 and Option 3

1. I prefer my child to continue his education in the present school
2. At least it is some financial help toward the cost of school travel.
3. Any financial help toward travel costs is better than nothing. I have another daughter due to start in sept 2014 so I am taking all the help I can get. Otherwise, due to cost, how am I expected to keep 2 girls at Notre Dame Catholic High School?
4. Just can't decide between the two. Either way my younger son will loose out. But as for other people currently worried about their finances I guess option 2 would be better as they will be worry free until their leaves secondary school.
5. In Option 2 children, who already receive a pass should continue with it until they finish at their current school. It isn't fair to move the goal posts for children already at the school. Bus passes would be phased out for Reception pupils and Year 7 entrants from Sept 2013 onwards. I think Option 3 should be applied to all children starting Year 7 from Sept 2013 onwards, not only Years 10 and 11. It would help the current Years 10 and 11, but what about low income families currently in Years 7 to 9? It would be unfair to put children into the situation of having to change schools, it would be unfair to Pupil Admissions, nor would it be fair to the two Denominational schools caught up in this situation. Taking this line of action, would bring in some revenue, because those who could afford it, would pay, whilst protecting those who would really struggle to pay. I still think there should be an appeals process, whatever the outcome, for cases like the family I am helping. This family, after suffering persecution in S.E. Asia, was settled in Arborthorne, where they suffered racial harassment from secondary pupils from two local catchment schools. It would obviously not be appropriate to attend one of these schools. The family are practising Christians, who want their son to go to a Catholic. he has been given a place, but without the free bus pass this would be impossible on their very much reduced income.

8. Do you think that removal of free transport would prevent children and young people from accessing places at Faith Schools in the future?

9. Please tell us why you answered this way.

Strongly agree

1. Catholics must be allowed freedom to express their faith and educate their children IN that faith. I fear some families will struggle financially to meet their faith obligations. I believe it was the Council that CLOSED Catholic schools years ago, saying it would provide free transport to the remaining Catholic Secondary schools!!!

Appendix 5 – All Responses

2. As parents that are really struggling will have to make compromises that may be a choice between this other necessities
3. Your average family who do not qualify for any of the benefits listed but struggle to make ends meet because of all the other price increases/cuts, will struggle to find the necessary funds to pay for the fares and will therefore send their child to their catchment school rather than their faith school. I have 2 children who catch 2 buses to school and 2 buses home. I am currently worried about the impact this will have on my families finances.
4. Clearly families might be forced into these choices due to budgetary constraints
5. Because parents would have to take into consideration the extra cost that they would incur and many families don't claim benefits and are just managing to get by as it is.
6. I strongly agree because if the free bus passes were removed there would be more chance of young people not coming to school and there family eventually would not be able to pay for there bus fares this usually happens to young people like me who's father is not with them
7. A lot of people wouldn't be able to afford to send them there.
8. We only have 2 Catholic secondary schools in Sheffield covering wide catchment areas, this added expense for parents would deter them from applying for their first choice school
9. This money is not around.
10. it will effect families who cant afford the extra outlay
11. It all boils down to personal finances. No house hold is the same. Having to afford to send your child to school may cause a clear divide in education in Sheffield. Better schools tend to be on the wealthier side of Sheffield. Which means buses are needed to get their. Faith schools tend to be desirable for parents seeking a good faith and academic education. Some may have to choose a school closer without that option.
12. Parents who have a strong Christian faith should have the option to send their children to a faith school if they are in the catchment area of a parish that traditionally and currently sends children to a particular faith school and should not be prevented from so doing because the withdrawal of free school bus passes means they cannot afford to do so. SCC is disadvantaging Christian parents and pupils for secular and distasteful reasons.
13. Not everyone can afford to pay £273.00 per child, per year and if you have more than one child this becomes dearer again. It is like paying for your education.
14. Not everyone can afford the extra expense. This would lead to only the wealthiest families being able to access the places at faith schools.
15. As stated previously this could have an impact and bearing on whether a family could afford to send their children to the school of their choice based on religious belief.
16. a. because it will discourage parents unable to afford the several hundred pounds a year required for buses to send them there b. this will in turn leave All Saints and Notre Dame with less Catholic and Christian children entering their schools

Appendix 5 – All Responses

17. Because most families attending faith schools don't live in the catchment area due to the lack of secondary faith schools in the city. The cost of transport will be significant for them
18. Because it will stop me being able to send my four children to our faith school in the future as I can not afford the transport costs.
19. In some cases children will need to catch two buses each way to get to a faith school and as the fares have increased again, some families will need to take this expense into account when deciding which school to choose
20. See previous answer. Many families will not be able to afford to attend the school of their choice due to the high levels of deprivation that many of our families have.
21. the cost of transport for some families would be too much of a financial burden
22. Many children, particularly those who want to attend faith high schools, have to travel further to do this and will therefore be penalised if the removal of free transport goes ahead and this may mean that they are unable to afford to access places at Faith schools. Surely this isn't offering equal opportunities to all?
23. Lack of finance, only the privileged will get the entitlement to a faith school of their choice. Moving or renting in the catchment would be too expensive.
24. I want my children to have access to not only an academically high achieving school but one which supports our religion, socially & spiritually, upholding good morals with which they are brought up. The catholic feeder school has been like an extended family, friends, loads of support. All the children look forward to starting their new school together. It will disadvantage my child & alienate her from her friends if the free travel is taken away. I already have a y7 at Notre Dame. It is so unfair that I would not be able to afford bus fares for 2 children.
25. It would divide people based on wealth rather than beliefs/faith. This is not acceptable for state funded schools that should not be determined by affordability. The less affluent/poor Catholic parents and their children would suffer and this is wrong. Also if the decision was made to begin charging bus fares it should be made effective from the children who are beginning their school life stage, so that parents can make an informed decision rather than when they are already in catholic education.
26. I think the cost of transport to faith schools would prevent a lot of children being able to attend faith schools and in time this could have a detrimental effect on our faith schools.
27. The unique Catholic ethos is very important for our family life. However, despite both parents working, it creates a really substantial burden on our family as we are not highly paid but work hard to support our family. We are not entitled to Free School Meals as we work. It seems unfair - if one of us stopped working then they would be entitled to the bus pass. I really don't know if we could afford it.
28. Some families will have to decide for financial reasons that they cannot afford to send their children to a faith school. This will lead to further

- divide between the education being offered in the north and south of the city.
29. Obviously the cost would have to be taken into account when applying for a place in a Catholic school for a lot of people. The removal of free transport could be seen as the Council discriminating against some religions.
 30. As stated before faith school places are limited and parents which are on low income and have more than one child wishing to take a place will have to now consider the extra cost of sending their child to the school of their choice. No matter how you look at this it is discriminating.
 31. they won't be able to afford it
 32. We cannot afford to pay the ridiculous bus prices as it is so how are we going to attend our feeder schools. I choose to be a catholic and my children go to a catholic school my choice you are slowly taking all our choices away. We got the pass because our feeder school was more than 3 miles away. Nothing has changed expect that Sheffield council want to fleece parents it is wrong and you should be ashamed of yourselves. I do not know how you sleep at night. If struggle to pay the bus fares for my younger daughter at present so we have no chance when she attends a secondary school. None of your options suit me none of them.
 33. Every household are facing hard times with bills going up and wages coming down. We can't afford extra costs every week and it's unfair that we can't send our children to a faith school because we can't afford the travel costs.
 34. Many parents who do not receive benefits may still need to take into account the cost of the fares when choosing a school for their child. The fares for young people in Sheffield are unduly high as it is and are likely to increase during the years the child is in education. The rising costs will undoubtedly have an influence on the choice of schools.
 35. I have submitted a detailed explanation for my reasons directly to the Pupil Admissions team
 36. As said before, parents can only choose between 2 secondary faith schools and if you don't live on their doorstep, its tough, is what you are trying to say!
 37. Yes, parents frequently have more than one child in the school at the same time and would struggle to find £7 for each per week. Household bills continue to soar when incomes are staying the same. This is an extra amount that many families have not expected and may not be able to find.
 38. Some catholic families will live a distance from the catholic schools but may be unable to afford to send their child to the school of their choice because of financial constraints. Many catholic families will have two, three or four children and the annual cost of sending them all by bus would be extortionate. If someone has a strong catholic faith it is inappropriate for money to play such a deciding factor in their choice of education.

39. Low income families will not be able to afford the travel costs. The council is fully aware of this but chooses to discriminate against low income families.
40. Parents already make sacrifices to send their children some distance to our school. With most parents having more than one school-age child this is a significant financial burden at a time of difficulty for many families. The families most affected would be those just above the threshold for statutory free transport: hard-working, working-class families - traditional labour supporters!
41. Yes definitely especially those who are just above the low income threshold.
42. Even though the parents or the student wants to attend a faith school some of the parents may not be able to afford to do so.
43. Sometimes I may have to think instead of giving pressure to my parents to go to nearby schools. But I have been to local school and I prefer my faith school. I value my religious beliefs and I believe that what I learn as a small child will last for ever.
44. Yes because Faith schools are limited, which most times requires long journeys. So if parents is on a low income, they will be force to abandon there beliefs in order to make ends meet and with bus fares going up every year parents would not be able to afford more expense. PEOPLE'S RELIGION SHOULDN'T HAVE TO BE A CHOICE.
45. Because £273 on a family/single parent is a huge amount to find and if a family/single parent has more than one child that will be a huge burden also and in most cases non affordable - only a small percentage of people have very financially secure families/grandparents that could help towards the cost - some compromise on the household would have to be made and in most cases it would be the food/consumable budget if a family wants their child to have a faith education which in this society of few morals I personally find is very important
46. the cost of the bus fares would not allow individuals a choice, but would force parent to send their children to the nearest school
47. The cost of travel will mean some families who would have sent their children to faith schools will have to look at alternatives closer to home, to reduce / remove the travel costs.
48. I know some students that live 15 miles away! Of course they aren't going to be able to pay for that.
49. Generally catholic family are large and to stop founding the transport means the family will choose a different closer school which is not catholic
50. If parents are faced with an additional bill to send their school to an 'excellent' school i.e. Notre Dame they may not be able to afford it if they fall in the category that falls just outside the criteria for qualifying for free bus passes, and that would make them choose a closer school to where they live, but one that does not have the catholic ethos that they would want their children to be educated in, which is vital. Most schools today have no religious ethos at all due to the seemingly establishment obsession with attacking the Christian faith in all areas - now children. An example is of this is the ridiculous Christmas shows at

- non Christian or non catholic schools that feature rubbish such as the X Factor and Elvis Presley - since when have they got anything to do with Christmas. There a million reasons why a catholic child SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO BE EDUCATED IN AN ENVIRONMENT IN AGREEMENT WITH THEIR FAITH, and that is why its unfair for the council to even think about removing this free bus pass for catholic children. There are not enough catholic schools in Sheffield, therefore, we and our kids have to travel to get the best education they can, and that means they should get a free bus pass as agreed with the council when at least 2 catholic schools were closed down - TRUST!!!!
51. The cost of the travel will have an impact on each family's budget.
 52. bus fares would be prohibitive
 53. Absolutely. People are struggling to manage their finances in most areas but this is felt most keenly in deprived area such as the one I reside in.
 54. People cannot afford increasing travel costs. Again this would be shameful. Families on low income would be the only people who could ultimately send their children to Faith schools. What a bizarre situation for a council who claims to oppose discrimination.
 55. strongly agree because the right to have a faith education should be upheld
 56. Faith is a choice, it does not discriminate against how wealthy the person is, I do not believe only wealthy Christians/Catholics should receive a good education and be the only ones to combine their faith and education.
 57. For parents with more than 1 child the cost of the bus fares may be too much. Many catholic families have more than 2 children.
 58. Yes, it would, particularly in these times of austerity
 59. Only those who are able to afford the cost of travel will be able to attend or who live within walking distance. I believe this is discrimination against families who want a Catholic education but don't live in the South of Sheffield. Notre Dame currently has a mix of children from all over the city and from different ethnicities and backgrounds - this will not be possible if free bus passes are removed.
 60. Many parents are struggling during this economic climate and it will be huge expenses for parents with more than one child to provide travel expenses for, leading to only the advantaged families been able to have a choice to send their children to a chosen faith school.
 61. The financial cost of transport would influence the choice of some parents who would feel that they could not afford it.
 62. Because the families that this will affect are the sorts of families that don't have two cars, who don't have the option to just bundle everyone into a car to do the school run (because the main money earner requires the use of it), and who literally couldn't afford the costs of coming by bus, especially if they have more than one child. And suddenly, they won't be able to afford a faith option. Ironically, this will also put a strain on their local community schools. Finally, the gift of faith to your child does require quite a lot of education and discussion. Without the opportunity to go to a faith school, it does make it less likely that a child will get to learn enough about that faith. And from my

- perspective, the gift of faith is the best gift I can give my children, to help them through the ups and downs of life.
63. There isn't a catholic secondary school on this side of the city. Removing the free school bus will stop families getting to school.
 64. The closure of the Catholic school to the north of the city means that children must travel long distances in order to access Catholic education, these journeys can only be made by many families because of the provision of free transport. The difficulties with transport faced by families living in the north of the city was acknowledged at the time of the school closure and so an agreement was made that children would be provided with free bus passes in order to be able to continue their education within their faith school. The removal of free transport will be a barrier to many children resulting in only those families who live on the south of the city, or have the means to provide transport to school, being able to access Catholic secondary education.
 65. Financial implication on families. It assumes that if you are a Catholic you can afford to pay for bus fares! There are fewer Catholic Schools compared to numbers in the past. These schools are the heart of the catholic community. Parents will not have the same choice options if they are financially stretched.
 66. Because - like the Council - families also have to budget with an every decreasing income. For some parents this would have a significant impact on a family's budget.
 67. Families in poorer areas will not be able to afford the fares. They have told us this and are very worried about this. Many families have children catching 2 bussed to school and 2 buses from school because they firmly believe in the right for religious education.
 68. If you can't afford to get to the school after the removal of free transport you are prevented from going. Removal of free transport will prevent children accessing places at faith schools.
 69. Cost implications for families
 70. Because faith schools are very important for the upbringing of children in today's society.
 71. Financial considerations.
 72. Because some children would not be able to afford the travel expenses and they would be forced to go to another school which does not support their religious beliefs. Also the number of children in faith schools would decline and only the richest families would be able to attend them which are discrimination against poorer families and their religion.
 73. Obviously. How could it not?? For the reasons stated in the first section. It targets people who are not eligible for FSM etc. the already 'squeezed middle'. We already walk 1.5 miles to school because we cannot afford the bus for 3 children every day and are not eligible for any government handouts except a child benefit. We have been fortunate in securing a house just in walking distance because we have a reasonable household income; these proposals discriminate against those who are lower-middle income earners. Incidentally, had our circumstances been different and had we been further afield and therefore reliant on school buses your suggestion to accommodate

- changes of school to a nondenominational one is not a viable option, we would sooner home educate.
74. Because some children may not be able to afford the travel expenses and might be forced to attend a school which doesn't support their religious beliefs. It will take away the right they have to decide which school they want to receive their education from, which is very important for their future.
75. Cost might be prohibitive
76. The cost of public transport is so expensive now. Even for families like us who work all the hours we can there is no money left at the end of the month after paying all the bills and we simply cannot afford the bus fares. We both work full time and we do not ask for or receive any help from the Government. I will fight for my children's right to attend a Catholic school and get there on a free bus pass. We are being punished for working and wanting our children to attend a Catholic school
77. Yes it would especially for those parents who would not be able to afford daily travel to their preferred choice of school and especially in light of the current economic conditions were families are under financial constraints.
78. Many parents would not afford sending their children to faith schools, which would be against what they believe
79. Long distances travelled and high cost of transport.
80. Removing free transport will be unfair to, and will discriminate against, parents and families who wish to send their child to a faith school. This is a direct attack by Sheffield City Council on freedom to observe a faith or religion.
81. For many families it would be a major financial consideration especially where the children number more than one.
82. SADLY I haven't been able to read the consultation as my PDF reader says the file is damaged, hence I didn't answer the previous question. I strongly believe that removing free transport would prevent children and young people from disadvantaged families and areas to access places as Faith Schools. The council must know the hard times we are in and families simply cannot afford everything they want to. If sending a child to a faith school is going to affect their budgets by having to pay for transport costs (which are a significant amount), then they will opt to send them to a nearer school and sacrifice the faith school upbringing. If I had to make difficult choices, naturally I want to have money to clothe and feed my children over having to buy weekly and monthly bus passes - BUT THIS SHOULD NOT BE THE CASE. People shouldn't have to sacrifice being brought up in their faith out of economic circumstances. Being brought up in a religious background shouldn't be about economic status. What we'll get is that faith schools will be full of people that can afford to live in the catchment area (that is unfair) and others who can afford the transport costs to get to a faith school (again - that is unfair and discriminates against people with faith).

Agree

Appendix 5 – All Responses

1. Parents would have to consider whether they could afford the extra money to send their child or whether they were able to take them themselves.
2. financial pressure on families particularly with more than one child would definitely make more parents consider their local feeder schools as an option-assuming there are spaces available at these schools
3. It will stop the young people from lower income households attending these schools not the well off households.
4. Those who can afford it would go, but those who couldn't afford it, wouldn't be able to go. Faith schools were intended for everyone who wanted to be educated in a Christian school, not just the better off. Parents have the right to choose a school on the grounds of Religion and Belief. Pupils living in the northern half of the city are at a disadvantage, because they have to travel to the south of the city to find a Christian School. (There were two in the north - De La Salle and St Peters - the former was rebuilt as All Saints on Granville Road and the latter was closed to make way for Parson Cross College.
5. Families on low incomes will be paying £7 a week for one child at least, which they may not be able to afford.
6. I feel that some families will have to compromise their beliefs over financial difficulties and therefore only choose schools closest to them, which is a disgrace
7. Because I feel that some families, including my own, would probably have to think again and place finances first, rather than following their beliefs
8. it will put people off going to a good faith school and sending them to a nearer but not so well achieving school
9. If people can't afford it then they can't afford it - end of argument!
10. Clearly it would be a discouragement to travel and thus a discouragement to attend and may, in some circumstances, become the determining factor.
11. Due to the cost of travel (the cost of a bus pass has increased over the years at the school from £143.99 to £229.12 and is likely to increase again next year) and is expensive to fund e.g. for more than one child at a time at secondary school if a nearer school is a cheaper option.
12. Some people are quite rich so they could get there but others might not be able to pay to get there and some people get more than 1 bus to school.
13. Despite the council's assurances support will be available for low income families, many families are not entitled to free school meals, but little better off than those who are. These families will have to seriously consider the impact of sending their children to a school in the face of rising travel costs. 70p may not sound a lot, but it adds up to £7 a week for one child, £14 for two children, which is a significant amount of money if you are on a low income. The council has stated those in receipt of 'the higher level of working tax credit' will receive help, yet, there on the government's own tax credit website there is no distinction between one type of working tax credit and another so it is hard to understand exactly what the council actually means!
14. The cost could just be too much for some families

15. There is also a chance that the removal of (free) bus passes would lead to a decrease in the number of people actually attending school therefore decreasing the education levels of young people and harming their ability to earn money in the future. If more people were to become unemployed the council would be paying out more in job-seekers allowance and unemployment benefit while losing money through loss of income tax.

Not sure

1. I think if parents feel strongly enough about wishing their child to attend a faith school they will find a way and if this facility is removed may network with other parents to provide the transport in a variety of ways.
2. Personally, I feel that the excellent education that my daughter gets at Notre Dame outweighs the cost of getting her there. However, there may be families on lower incomes and with multiple children for whom the removal of free transport may be a problem.
3. I can't speak for other people's actions and reasons but if people genuinely want their children in a faith school they will place them there. As always, people will bear whatever they have to.
4. People could move house, or prioritise travel costs if attending such a school meant enough to them
5. Not if an affordable solution replaced it.
6. Parents will send their children to faith schools if they feel that the would benefit from it. Taking away the bus pass would just make the parents more determined to take their children there. But, faith schools would lose a large proportion of students.

Disagree

1. Those who REALLY want their children to attend such schools will happily pay regardless of their circumstances. It is not for the ratepayer to assist.
2. If you believe in your faith you go wherever. You go to the best school. Most people are not aware of the passes until after they have applied/

Strongly disagree

1. The council made a request for the support of the Catholic Church in Sheffield to close a number of faith schools to rationalise places across the city. This was supported by the Church based on a verbal contract with the then council that funding for school transport would be supported by the authority. In essence the current proposal to withdraw funding for transport is a breach in contract. It will also undermine parental choice since families who live a long distance away from school especially when there are multiple siblings will be gravely disadvantaged and their right to choose enshrined in law will be taken away.
2. If parents wish their child to attend a faith school then they will still send them and travel will not come into play as its parental choice. If a parent cannot afford the travel costs then their choice could be to send their child to their catchment school.

Appendix 5 – All Responses

3. The removal of free transport for children of faith wanting to attend faith schools may make it harder for them to access these schools. However it would make it no harder for children of no faith wanting to attend faith schools. The right to a free travel pass should be based on parental income not faith.
4. Denominational schools should help these students. All other families have to pay for school travel anyway.
5. If the church wants the buses they should pay
6. If they are so committed to this form of exclusive education they should find ways to fund the transport.
7. they can still catch bus if needed but they should be made to pay like all other children have to
8. Children can walk, cycle, or get lifts or travel independently. Furthermore, considering the often religious fervour of these elements, they will be more motivated to make their own independent travel arrangements.
9. This has always caused problems as there are so few Catholic High Schools in Sheffield, personally I believe that as Catholics we are a minority in Sheffield but nothing is being done to address this problem. Some children have to catch two mode of transport increasing their fares from £7.00 a week to £14.00 is this fair, I don't think it is.
10. If parents want a religious education for their children then they should pay for it directly.
11. No. Not at all, as I have said either all should pay or none ... Discrimination !!!!!
12. Absolutely not, other parents find the money to pay for bus fares each year. We all have financial challenges especially in this climate but priorities need to be made and education is paramount. After all we are talking a small amount of parents that will be affected but a large amount already have to pay bus fares and have never had any help. I do agree however that low income families should receive help.

14. Please tell us what you think the negative effects of a school transfer could be.

1. At Notre Dame GCSEs are taken through Y9, Y10 and Y11 with exams at the end of each year. My older child will have completed his 2nd GCSE in a couple of weeks. He would be unable to fall into the same pattern at another school - assuming there were places available there.
2. Community
3. Exams
4. exclusion from peer groups
5. I have one daughter at Notre Dame. My next daughter will go in sept 2014. It is clear that as a single parent I can't afford to pay £12 PER WEEK ON FARES. If my younger daughter is forced to go to a different school due to cost, she will be disadvantaged educationally, both should be given the same chance. Siblings should be together, it is safer when travelling & she is of nervous disposition. Having an older sister there is her safety net. Friends will be very divided & will become clear that only the more affluent children in her primary class will go.

- What happens to the rest! EDUCATION/SCHOOL IS A DECISION WHICH AFFECTS THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!
6. Isn't it obvious the negative effect that transferring a child from a school where he/she is happy and settled to then transfer them to a school where they do not know anyone. The possibility of bullying could arise when other pupils find that their school is not the child's first choice of school and also, friendships have already been established.
 7. My daughter is at a very delicate age and I believe it is important that as she has moved house and seen her parents be divorced in the last few years I think it may even go as far as an eating disorder but the financial cost would be such a burden to my already stretched budget - the only possibility i could do is use the money for bus fares on petrol and take her to school myself as the £7 would be better in my fuel tank but would be putting another car on the congested roads
 8. Not accepted, as pupils would know reasons for transfer. My daughter is very quiet & would struggle both mentally & socially. We were just 'on a roll' academically & proud of her achievements then this has to happen. CHILDREN HAVE FEELINGS!
 9. Not getting the Catholic education we deserve.
 10. Please tell us what you think the negative effects of a s...
 11. The community and family that has developed This stopped our isolation
 12. Transferring to another school would impact negatively on my children as starting at a new school is daunting enough in Y7 but to do this half way through Y8 would be disruptive.
 13. Well my local catchment school is dreadful. Poor results. Poor educational outcomes. My parents originally moved here safe in the knowledge they could afford to send me to my faith school. If they couldn't afford that, they were going to move to an area where a good catchment school was. But withdrawing the free passes is not what they anticipated.

25. Do you think that the proposed changes are likely to advance or to impede equality of opportunity and good relations between persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic and others?

26. Please tell us why you answered this way.

Yes

1. The proposals are clearly discriminatory against Christians.
2. they will impede choice of low income families
3. The proposals will impede equality of opportunity based not only on religion but also social cohesion since the faith schools are not selective and intake of students is from all social and economic backgrounds. The proposal will disadvantage the poor and lower middle earners. This is unfair.
4. yes it will impede equality of opportunity between the classes. Only the well off will be able to afford to send their children to Notre Dame. The current system welcomes all children regardless of class. This will

- inevitably change if multi-pupil households cannot afford transport costs
5. Because this is direct discrimination on faith education, be the person catholic or any other religion. People have a right to choose how there children are educated and the charge will create an inequality of opportunity. 95% of all children at the school have to catch a bus to school.
 6. Impede equality of opportunity. This would discriminate against families on the grounds of affordability excluding families from poorer backgrounds.
 7. Impede. Discrimination against persons with a certain religious belief, whereby potentially removing the option for them to attend a school which matches their beliefs. There is no equality here as it will all come down to money and affordability.
 8. Impedes those wishing their children to be educated in a catholic ethos.
 9. This question is poorly written as it posits a positive and negative outcome then asks for a yes or no answer. I have answered yes in that I believe it will advance quality of opportunity and good relations between persons with the relevant protected characteristic and others. This is because I believe it may allow a greater mixing of children of faith and no faith and hence encourage a greater level of understanding between the two groups. It will also end a practice which discriminates in favour of those with faith.
 10. Everybody should attend schools together, just as the Act quoted states as its aim. It is faith schools which go against the aims of the Act and should be considered illegal. Religion should not be in the education system, adults can choose to go to a religious organisation in their free time if they wish to. To have religion in schools can only be divisive.
 11. Because other groups still receive transport provided by the council. This group of people also attend schools outside their catchment area in the best educational interests of their child, how is this different from parents wanting to send their child to a faith school for their child's best educational interests
 12. Some Anglican schools serve areas where families use English as an additional language and have proportionally high BME communities. Some of these communities, such as the Somali community for example, will have less choice to access faith school education if free travel is eliminated.
 13. This is likely to impede rather than advance. Again it comes down to being discriminated against due to your personal work ethic to provide for your family.
 14. Yes, if poor families are having to cough up 10 quid or more (depending of how many children they have) they will have to make do with scraps and "hand me downs" and will not get as much of an opportunity to buy any "luxuries".
 15. My son has recently been diagnosed with epilepsy.
 16. It seems to be a particular assault on the Catholic way of life. It seeks to prohibit Catholics from accessing a Catholic education system. It is

- very divisive in that it would encourage Catholics (particularly those on low income who would not be entitled to free bus fare under the new proposals) to attend the nearest school rather than supporting Catholics to access a uniquely Catholic education system. The Catholic schools (primary and secondary) in Sheffield are held in high regard for the quality of education and ethos they promote. Working Catholic parents who are just above the income threshold would be therefore denied the equality of opportunity that higher earning Catholic parents could ensure for their children.
17. The proposed changes discriminate against people on low incomes; the reason for this is that although they would receive free bus passes, the other children will be aware that they receive free bus passes because they are on low incomes. This can be humiliating and embarrassing for the children and their parents. My son has a disability, I don't know if he would be entitled to a free bus pass but I know at age 14 that he would be embarrassed to be seen as being any way different to his peers. I am sure the Council will know that children can be very cruel and anyone who is seen to be different can be seen as a potential target for being discriminated against/bullied.
 18. Discrimination
 19. The question is not clear but if you mean does it create divisions then yes- being able to go to a decent school should be a right through no fault of our own we live in a poor area but we work very hard- as does my daughter at school and truly we value her opportunity she cannot go to the local school- the only one within walking distance because girls of Caribbean decent get bullied by the Asian boys- they do- they are made to feel cheap- a good education is her life line we don't have much money and even though we may qualify for a bus pass under the criteria of working tax credits- sometimes we just miss the highest rate by £10 or something
 20. We are being penalised for being catholic. You are clearly discriminating against us and something should be done about this.
 21. Our daughter, of mixed race, is happy and accepted where she is. The local school to where we live would not provide her with such an environment.
 22. A slightly odd question - You have to answer "Yes" if you think they will or will not impede! I think they will impede.
 23. There is likely to be fewer parents of other faiths or no faith selecting a denominational school as the school of choice for their child. This in turn will impede the opportunity for pupils in the denomination schools to form relationships with pupils of other faiths or no faith.
 24. I have a daughter on the SEN register in our local catholic primary school where she has attended since starting school. We attend the church to which the school is attached and I wish to present my daughter for her First Holy Communion next academic year. This will be a commitment to her faith and will be one she shares with many of her classmates. The natural step after primary school for her is to transfer to the catholic secondary school attended by her older siblings to continue her studies with her friends in a school which reflects our family beliefs. I will struggle to find her bus fares but will go without

- other items rather than not send her to the faith school. The things I will have to do without are likely to be things not essential to my children but essential to me such as prescription costs for my medication. I believe it is unfair that I should have to continue to make more and more sacrifices and believe that there are other parents in a similar position as me. These are people who work hard to provide for their children and find that each month their income buys less. We do not live in the affluent part of the city where the school happens to be situated and have no choice but to pay the cost of fares for our children to travel across the city if we want our children to attend the faith school.
25. Question is very badly phrased...not all Catholics necessarily have a university degree in English language! Yes, forcing people to choose a school based on financial constraints goes against all equal opportunity guidelines and is not demonstrating inclusivity.
 26. This is discrimination against Christian families.
 27. It could impede choice thereby equality of opportunity and in turn effect good relations. I do also understand that the benefits of the free travel for faith schools may seem unfair to some. Clever question - gets us to contradict ourselves!!
 28. I think it will impede the equality of opportunity those who wants to go to faith schools.
 29. In faith school I have like minded friends. It will impede my right as a religious person to attend religious school.
 30. We are a very tolerant nation but many people myself included are feeling that we work and are taxed to the end - services are less and budgets down but many people see people arriving from other countries and received the help in some cases they need but I am feeling that if you work and I must add I am only slightly over the low income threshold and if you are not claiming help under the Asylum Act of 1969 then you are pushed to the limits and feel that no one cares and no one listens too you - its a shame then people have to wonder why this awful extreme parties manage to make in roads with families and I have recently read in the national newspapers that the government are encouraging local authorities to take up the relevant funding but they are not doing so then making potential decisions like this and make the ordinary folk into political footballs
 31. children of the same faith who attended the same primary school will be broken up and split across different schools within the catchment areas
 32. People who would like to send their children to a faith school may not be able to afford to due to the cost of ravel.
 33. You have no idea of some of the harassment us Catholic teenagers get off other non-Catholic teenagers. Sometimes it's just nasty. Really lowers self-esteem and encourages self-hatred. Then people start to deny themselves and their religion. Then their families may dislike them for that too. Then they have nobody. Which results in depression, or even suicide. It does happen, I'm not making it up.
 34. It is outrageous that one faith gets special treatment: All should be treated equally.

35. It will make the catholic people to not feel protected and actually discriminated
36. It is direct religious discrimination based on the fact that it is Catholics who are being targeted in a grossly offensive way!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
37. This is likely to impede equality of opportunity for parents living in poorer areas to attend a faith school. This is not only likely to impact on Catholic children and parents as children from other faiths also prioritise Notre Dame/All saints.
38. Impede
39. again, only families that are not currently struggling with finances will be able to afford to send their children to faith school
40. Yes, it will impede equality. In the school for which I am a Governor, we have children from a multitude of different cultural backgrounds & socioeconomic circumstances, yet all united by one faith. It is wonderful to see these children work and play together, finding out and celebrating our differences. I hope that all the children will develop into rounded individuals, who are accepting and tolerant of differences. If you remove the school bus support, you will turn our wonderfully multicultural school into one populated by the children of the white middle classes. Please don't do that - there is something special going on here!
41. Restricting access to education in Christian schools will not help to develop or maintain good relationships across different groups. Catholic families were told that their children would still be able to access Catholic education when the Catholic school in the north of the city was closed, it is unfair to now block it to those families who live 'in the wrong area' or cannot afford additional travel costs. Allowing children from all areas of the city to gather in shared education benefits the whole community. The Catholic community is spread widely throughout the city but the schools are both on the south of Sheffield. Removing free travel to the schools would discriminate against the Catholic children as they will have no option of attending a school of their own faith.
42. Removing free transport will impede equality of opportunity for Catholic children to access a faith school as the distances to be travelled are too great for many families to manage without access to free school buses.
43. Religious choice is being affected. This proposal is against free choice for Catholic Schools-choice is being limited due to financial constraints for families.
44. Because money will have to be a major consideration when a family wishes to send their child/children to a Catholic Faith school - so denying 'equal opportunity' to bring up / school your child in an environment that meets requirement based upon faith.
45. Catholic/faith families would be forced to make choices against their first preference in some cases.
46. Catholic children were promised free transport to a Catholic school (if they live more than 3 miles from the school) after the closure of a local secondary school as the two remaining Catholic secondary schools situated a long distance from many of the family homes. Deciding to

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- renege on this promise now and distorting the reasons that Catholics have free transport will impede good relations between different groups within our local area.
47. Children will not be able to attend a faith school
 48. Everyone is supposed to have equality in this Country
 49. Yes it would impede
 50. It is discrimination against personal faith and religious beliefs.
 51. Because no child should be denied the opportunity of attending a faith school of their choice because their parents cannot afford the travel expenses.
 52. Equality of opportunity impeded : Lack of Access to Catholic Schools for Catholic Children on financial grounds
 53. People especially those practicing their faith and who would like their children to be taught in schools that emulate their morals and values based on their religion/faith will be discriminated against.
 54. Yes, because as a catholic parent I wish to send my child to a catholic school, yet this policy means that it will prejudice parents who struggle to be able to afford the additional costs, especially as my child's school is on the opposite side of town (as is the other catholic secondary school). Therefore, the school is easily accessible if you live close by, or have sufficient income, and often these two things are closely related a Notre Dame is based in a rather affluent area of the city, but there is no equivalent school in the North of Sheffield, where, on average, the average income is much lower.

No

1. It can only impede; this consultation is stressful. the uncertainty and potential change will add to this
2. People of a wealthier background will still place their children in these schools but others on lower incomes may be denied the opportunity to send their children there.
3. Removing free passes for those going to denominational schools merely puts them on an equal footing with those going to 'normal' schools. I do not see why those wanting to go to a denominational school should be given opportunities that others do not have. Keeping this benefit impedes the equality of the vast majority.
4. No one is preventing children from attending school; nevertheless, attending a specific school which has a religious bias can hardly be a right which is itself reliant upon a special state subsidy. If parents deem that children require religious indoctrination they can ensure they attend churches and other faith establishments in their own time.
5. Faiths divide, not unite. Joint schooling promotes better relations.
6. The proposed change relates to private choices not community relations
7. Why can't Catholics pay 70p each way to school like I have to pay for my son , if that is their school of choice that is fine , no one is questioning that , not all Catholics that go to Notre dame are practising Catholics .. It's all about getting their kids in the best schools ,plus if bus fares are free it's win for them , ...

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8. Because they remove choice from a specific group of families with a specific religious belief

Not sure

1. This does not need to impede equality of opportunity or good relations. The whole city is facing budget cutbacks that affect people and schools of all characteristics. If a school is truly inclusive in every sense parents can feel that their child's personal needs and cultural/ethnic/faith background can be met in an open and inclusive way with strong community cohesion. Many of us work very hard to help our children appreciate all abilities and backgrounds and learn together.
2. The question doesn't make sense. It is not a yes or no answer.
3. Do not understand the question. You should make it clearer.
4. Not sure this question is worded correctly. Should we be answering yes or no to advance or yes or no to impede. I think it will have a negative effect because I feel this discriminates against people of faith.
5. I find this question impenetrable and impossible to answer. This consultation is not meaningful and cannot really be about equality when questions are written in such jargonistic and unclear language. Surely this will be open to a legal challenge? How on earth could someone for whom English is not their first language hope to unpick this question and answer it meaningfully?
6. This question makes no sense it does not have a Yes/No answer as you have asked 2 different questions -- Likely to Advance or Impede???
7. the question is ambiguous, there isn't a yes or no answer to "advance or impede"
8. They would impede equality of opportunity if only the better off and those in the south of the city could access the schools because of the cost of bus fares. If, however, Option 3 were offered to all pupils, those on low incomes would not be excluded from having the Christian education they would like, because they couldn't afford the bus fares.
9. I don't understand the question- please use plain English
10. I think it's highly unfair children who go to church schools get free travel- that should only be for children attending special needs schools. It is discrimination against other children who go to state schools!
11. Answers do not correspond with the question I feel the changed would massively impede equality as people wishing their child to attend a faith school would be divided by wealth which cannot be equal rights
12. I consider myself to be an intelligent person but this is a ridiculously phrased question. What on earth is it supposed to mean! I consider that children will be disadvantaged by this proposal. It seems to me that you are withdrawing an opportunity for some children to receive an excellent education at two of the best schools in the city because they cannot afford to live in the affluent south of the city where the best state schools are located.
13. This is a poorly worded, and a somewhat loaded question in my opinion. In fact it is two questions rolled into one so to offer a simple yes or no doesn't allow one to answer each question separately. The

term "equality of opportunity" is a very non-specific nebulous term allowing a wide range of interpretation. Ultimately though it seems to me any reduction of free transport can only act to limit a family's choices. It can never increase their choices. Therefore it can only act to limit equality of opportunity. But this is a complete red herring and why I see this loaded question. Any cuts in spending can only have negative effects. That is both obvious and inevitable. The real question is whether such cuts are acceptable despite their negative impact. For the second question I can't imagine a change in school transport policy will have much affect the relations between people. If it leads to more children from religious families mixing with those of non religious families then relations have the chance to grow which is not possible if they're isolated from each other. Having said that there is already a mixture of belief and non-belief at both faiths non-faith schools and that will no doubt continue regardless.

14. This question is incorrectly worded for a yes/no response. Yes, I think that it would impede equality of opportunity and no, I don't think it would advance equality of opportunity and good relations.
15. Question doesn't make sense!!
16. Don't really understand the question.
17. ?????? What does this mean
18. Your question is laughably contradictory, how can one tick either yes or no? How can it advance and impede at the same time? As I have already stated the proposed changes will be an impediment to equality of opportunity; it will give rise to ghettoising of catholic communities because, despite the fact the proposer places no value on faith, those with a faith background do and would therefore seek to ensure they were in an area where a denominational education was available; this consultation process has already been detrimental to relations of people with a protected characteristic and others, in my experience, because you have presented it as a sector of the community getting more than their due from the public purse and being treated preferentially to others which is simply not the reality. You have, in my view, made the catholic community a scapegoat and a target for religious-inspired hatred. As equal members of society primarily, but as voters and as taxpayers, we have an equal right to have our views heard and acted upon, your proposals suggest you do not hold the same view.
19. I do not understand the question
20. Did not understand the question
21. I do not understand the question
22. The above question is very poorly worded and ambiguous as it gives two alternatives "advance" and "impede", so it is not clear that answering 'Yes' refers to either advance or impede. It is a disgrace that Sheffield City Council includes such a question in a survey as important as this is.
23. I do not think they would be advanced instead impeded.
24. I don't really understand the second question. I am filling out this questionnaire because I have strong views on this proposal but I am not affected by it. Thankfully (and Thanks to God in my views) I have

been fortunate enough to buy a house in the catchment for the Catholic Schools that I want my children to attend. I don't need to use public transport as we can walk to the school. But I am concerned for Catholic (and all other faiths) that because they don't have the money, the jobs etc... To be able to afford transport to school, they won't be able to be brought up in their faith.

No response ticked

1. How do we tick this box??? It is asking 2 different questions "advance" or "impede". What happened to plain English grammar? Or is that part of the plan too, word it so no one understands the questions??!!!
2. I consider myself to be fairly intelligent but that question doesn't make sense. If you are going to send out a survey, at least have the common sense to ask questions in a way people can understand.
3. This question is ambiguous - of course the changes will impede equality of opportunity
4. Poorly worded question!!!
5. Not sure as i could not access the document to be read before reading this. It should have been made available in word doc as not everyone has access to PDF or adobe or whatever
6. Silly question, this question would not win any plan English awards
7. I did not answer this question because it does not warrant a 'yes' or 'no' answer. My answer is it impedes equality of opportunity.
8. This question does not make sense with the answer options provided.

27. Do you think that the proposed changes are likely to remove or minimise disadvantage to any person having any of the 8 relevant protected characteristics listed above?

28. Please tell us why you answered this way.

Yes

1. people have their choices removed due to finance reasons, this is outrageous
2. In terms of religion and beliefs. It covers not just Catholics but families of other faiths as well. You send your child there for a good rounded education. You want to send your child to a religious school because of what you belief in. Not just for the education you want the whole package. Personally any way.
3. I believe the removal of free travel passes for children with a religious denomination will allow for greater mixing of children from different religious and ethnic backgrounds and hence foster a greater level of understanding. I believe this will help to minimise disadvantage in the form of discrimination.
4. Everyone is treated equally.
5. See previous answer.
6. Children won't be able to be brought up in the faith of choice and will have to go to a local school with children of different religions and

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morals. This is exceptionally unfair. The council have other ways they can cut funding and a child's education shouldn't be affected.

7. Yes - because it impacts on religion or belief - these children will be at a disadvantage
8. Because some people are in a too high of an income bracket to receive a free bus pass but not high enough income to actually pay for the fares.

No

1. This discriminates against faith and takes away a person's right to choose a school on faith grounds.
2. Again, another question that I cannot understand
3. How can stopping funding for a travel pass remove disadvantage? Do you want me to walk the children to schools? I have a disability pass.....but they can't get there...except on foot! The laws have been around to ensure we are not discriminated against....but this looks like a penalty to my home position.
4. How can removing financial assistance remove or minimise disadvantage to anyone?
5. Rather than stop disadvantage they will increase disadvantage due to the discrimination in the proposal which is specifically discriminatory to religious and lower economic families. There is a clear policy by the council of protecting free public transport to other non faith schools whilst not protecting it to the faith schools in question. This is discrimination.
6. Notre Dame is a faith school that allows all practising religions to integrate as one and have the same opportunity of education. People with disabilities may find it harder to get to the school
7. It all boils down to whether someone can afford the fares. It has nothing to do with the age, pregnancy, race, sexual orientation etc
8. Can't see that this is really a relevant question looking at the 8 protected characteristics. The only characteristic which is relevant is religion and belief. In my opinion would be increasing disadvantage to people of a certain belief as you are actually removing the option for these children to attend the school which matches their beliefs by asking them to pay for the transport. In some cases families will no longer be able to send their children to the school of their choice due to this issue making that choice cost prohibitive. Other children in the city are being provided with free transport and these are not being targeted i.e. children from High Green attending Stocksbridge High School. This is discrimination that you are only targeting denominational schools.
9. The proposed changes do not protect those wishing to practice a religion, in this instance Catholic.
10. Catholics will be disadvantaged if they have to pay to get to their faith schools.
11. On the contrary, to have everybody treated equally is very important, the proposed changes are a step towards a more equal society and the aims of the Act quoted. Faith schools should not have an unfair advantage over everybody else.

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12. As previous question, this relates to religion and belief, either provide free transport or more faith schools within catchment Areas in the city to make faith schools more accessible to those wishing to attend, who have already demonstrated their commitment to faith to gain access to the school.
13. As stated in the last response.
14. No. People will still learn from their parents the tenets of their faith and their attitudes to others. Faith schools reinforce rigid doctrines: mixed schools are better placed to teach equality and acceptance but cannot entirely correct home attitudes.
15. These changes are only going to affect families such as mine that actually work. I don't know the statistics but I bet there are more families claiming benefits than having both parents working. I do understand how lucky we are as a family but believe me this is through hard work.
16. No disadvantage is caused in any cases
17. The changes will disadvantage people.
18. Which 8 characteristics? I reiterate that people will be disadvantaged if they cannot afford to pay the fares of any group or minority
19. As a Catholic parent of children in primary school, my children would still be hugely disadvantaged. My eldest son will go into Year 6 next year and we will be looking at which secondary school to send him to. I would naturally want his younger brother to also attend the same school. The proposal to end free school passes is essentially an attack on our right to choose to have our sons educated in a Catholic secondary school. The cost of the free school passes is minute in comparison to the huge damage it will inflict on our religious community.
20. Your changes are clearly against the Catholic faith. I thought we lived in a democracy where everyone's opinion counts and we had a voice. Thanks to Sheffield City Council we have nothing and our children are being held as pawns in your stupid games. If I can't afford to send my child to school because of this go ahead and prosecute me it's all of SCC's doing anyway.
21. Removing a choice to attend a much loved school is not going to remove disadvantage!
22. Because the proposed changes do not advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and do not foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The proposed changes do exactly the opposite and impact adversely on minority groups.
23. See last question
24. Catholic pupils will be disadvantaged by the proposed changes.
25. Quite the reverse - Its causing disadvantage on grounds of religion or belief.
26. As per my belief I wanted to send my children to faith schools. By making this proposal you are making my life hard to find extra penny either by over working or depriving our standard life.

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27. Because of this proposal my parents may have to over work so I will get less time with my parents. I may have to live on beans on toast everyday.
28. Any subsidies should be available to all children regardless of faith
29. See Q14.
30. This is religious discrimination!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
31. I think these proposals are likely to increase disadvantage to parents who want a faith based education for their children who are experiencing poverty. At a time when we are trying to improve attainment for the most disadvantaged and at a time when it is proven that Notre Dame does this the decision to withdraw passes is short sighted.
32. They will increase disadvantage.
33. It will increase it
34. You will simply be penalising the poorer families, many of whom come from ethnic minorities.
35. Removing free bus passes will not help.
36. Catholic families will be disadvantaged by the removal of free school bus passes. Removal of free transport when the only Catholic schools are many miles away becomes a barrier to educational choice (it is a removal of choice) and as such is discriminatory to Catholic families who have no school available within a reasonable distance.
37. The wording of this question is difficult to understand. It will be a disadvantage to Catholic children and Catholic families if we have free bus passes withdrawn.
38. Catholics were promised that their access to a faith school would not be restricted; removing free transport for those children living further away from the schools will put them at a real disadvantage. Catholic families will be disadvantaged simply for living in the wrong area and trying to follow their faith.
39. Everyone should have equality
40. Because everybody is equal and this should be respected.
41. Because it is likely to increase disadvantages by removing freedom of choice from lower earners who hold religious beliefs.
42. Everybody should be treated equality with regards to their faith and religious beliefs.
43. Proposal 2 has the potential to minimise the disadvantage to children currently attending a catholic school, but not for those due to attend in September 2013, whilst option 3 only helps a minority in year 10 and above and ignores the fact that Notre Dame, at least, begins working towards GCSEs in year 9 .
44. This is a badly worded question that could confuse parents.

Not sure

1. As with many of these things the way changes are communicated and the information that is relayed will be crucial and will contribute to whether people feel 'disadvantaged' or not. As a disabled person I am disadvantaged but if others support in ways they can I am content that I am supported AND we have to recognise the changing circumstances in so many aspects.

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2. Again, I do not understand the question
3. Do not follow this question!! If I read it correctly though I think the proposals will heighten disadvantage rather than minimise it!
4. I don't understand this question either. This is consultation is not open or fair.
5. Having read this question at least 10 times I am still not sure what you are asking, meaning the only response I can give is 'Not Sure'. I am not sure you can use this questionnaire to assess opinion when it makes little sense but perhaps that was the intention?
6. as before
7. Again, other badly worded questions - have you guys never heard of plain English! How can removing attendance at a faith school not disadvantage someone based on their faith!
8. I'm not sure what the 8 protected characteristics are?? Speaking personally one of the worrying aspects of removing free bus passes for me personally is that my son has adhd. This means that he is very unorganised; on occasions he has missed the bus and has had to catch two buses to school. He knows how to do this as I have shown him what to do. Due to his condition if say, he missed the bus to school and had to catch two buses to school he would have to pay two bus fares to get to school. Therefore, he would have used all his bus fare just getting to school. How does he get home from school with all his bus fare gone? I could not trust him to give him extra money; he has no organisation skills and could easily just spend any money on sweets etc, therefore, stranded again with no money to get home. These are my personal concerns and as such I feel as if the Council would be discriminating against people with disabilities.
9. The question is very hard to understand!
10. I don't understand the wording of the question.
11. Have no idea what this question is referring to. I am disgusted that the wording of these questions has not been thought out more carefully to enable all sections of the community to answer. I am an educated person with a university degree and am at a loss to comprehend. Parents of children with English as a second language are attempting to read, understand and answer these same questions! The practice of equal opportunities encompasses all aspects of life including this questionnaire!
12. I think this means: Do you think that removing free bus passes to faith schools will help someone with any of the 8 relevant protected characteristics? If we're talking about children then I don't see any link here with any of the protected characteristics other than religion. And even that is questionable since most children are too young to have made up their minds about their religious beliefs. Many, perhaps most, only conclude this process as adults. So if child has to go to a non-faith school I don't think it will help or harm them unless of course that school is a less good school overall (which in some cases is true).
13. I think it is a bad idea to remove this concessionary arrangement or at least if any charges need to be implemented look at the costings more closely - £7 per week is just too much for any family to cover (per child)
14. I believe Catholic/Christian families are being discriminated against.

15. What 8 relevant protected characteristics?
16. SADLY I haven't been able to read the consultation PDF, my PDF reader says the file is damaged and hence I don't understand the last question. I would like to be given the opportunity to read the consultation if it can be sent to me in again via email (jacqueline diaz niето@hotmail.com) and then I can answer these questions.

No response ticked

1. Re word this so it makes sense to Joe-Public!! Do not go ahead with the proposed changes to cut free bus travel to Catholic Schools.
2. Again poor question
3. Option 3 applied to all pupils would minimise disadvantage, not remove it.
4. pls read last write up
5. Ditto
6. what 8 proposed characteristics??
7. Can't see the characteristics

29. Please use the space below if you would like to make any other comments about the proposal. Alternatively, you can email comments to us at admissionsconsultation@sheffield.gov.uk.

1. • Currently there is a real mix of children attending school. There are children from families across the board from all areas of the City creating diversity, helping to promote tolerance and understanding. My feelings are that should this proposal be implemented there would be a real change in the makeup of the school. You would no longer see the diverse mix of people, but a more divided school. Education in the state sector should be the same for all learners irrespective of wealth, background or geographical location. As a Catholic community the school strives to serve the common good i.e. service to all. This is at odds with what is being proposed making it impossible to achieve what is at the very heart of Catholic values. As a consequence of this, you would see children moving from Y6-Y7, not to their feeder Catholic High School, but to their local community High School. Potentially without their friends with whom they have probably been at school with since they were 5 years old. The transition to High School is difficult enough. Let us please not add to their anguish by forcing through this change and removing the option, from potentially hundreds of children, of attending their school of choice which caters for their needs and beliefs, based purely on costs. • The journey on the bus is enjoyable for my children and I assume for others. This is a time where they can catch up with friends and maybe do some homework. But it is more than that; it gives my children a sense of responsibility, independence and a sense of belonging and helps with social skills and bonding. Implementing these changes would result in many families being unable to afford the additional cost and children missing out of this experience. • The introduction of fares would mean a reduction in the

number of children using the bus. This would have an impact on profitability and ultimately viability. There could be a real danger that the service would be withdrawn. This would remove parental choice as certain schools would no longer be an option. In my case the journey from Stocksbridge to Notre Dame would involve the cost of two buses and impossible journey times during the rush hour. The situation would be untenable making the possibly of my children attending the school of my choice impossible. The alternative would be an 11 mile drive to school which would be unworkable and not really an option worth considering. Not only would it prove costly in monetary terms, it would also impact the environment due to increased traffic on the roads especially around school times. Travelling on one bus would be the option of choice being the safer and more eco-friendly method of transport. Funding needs to remain in place in order to safeguard this valuable service, to ensure that children in the present and in the future will have the freedom of choice to attend the faith school of their choice irrespective of income or geography. • You may feel that that this change will have little impact to the number of children catching the buses. I disagree. Maybe not for the children already attending, but definitely for children who are yet to make the move to High School. I feel this will have a huge bearing on numbers. I go back to the question of viability of the service. If parents are forced to send their children to the local community High School, there is are no guarantees of gaining a place. Already the schools in Sheffield are under a huge strain with many schools being oversubscribed year after year. The children who are no longer able to attend their designated Catholic feeder school would have to attend their local community School. Are you going to increase capacity in these schools? I doubt it as this would have huge cost implications. Has this been considered? The alternative would be to bus the children to the next nearest school which could accommodate them, and who would pay for this? It would have to come from the council's budget. Interesting scenario, I have a feeling of déjà-vu! Has anyone thought about this during the proposal talks? • Currently there are children who travel to Stocksbridge High School by bus who live in High Green /Chapelton. Ecclesfield is the catchment school for these children but even though their local High school is not oversubscribed they exercise their right of parental choice to send their children to Stocksbridge. After a recent telephone call to the Councils offices, I was informed that some of these children travel under a zero rate pass. It begs the question therefore, as to whether they been targeted also as the letter seems to imply that this relates only to Denominational Home to School transport? If this is the case and they have not been targeted, there is definitely a clear case of discrimination here, targeted against children attending faith schools as their situation is no different to this one. • Families are already struggling to make ends meet. Some will accept and pay up; some won't be able to pay up and will have to make the difficult decision of withdrawing their child from the school, or not applying in the first place. Bearing in mind that the child may have attended that school for maybe four years. This is wholly unacceptable. Others will have to make sacrifices elsewhere by

cancelling their child's football coaching, gymnastics or music lessons for instance. This would be unthinkable. You are only young once and children should be given every possible opportunity to thrive and participate in the things they love to do. Being told they can no longer attend their favourite club or music class after years of practice and exams is a tragedy. You may think that I am over dramatising here, but this will be the cold hard reality of what will be played out in many houses across the City as a consequence of what it is being proposed. At the end of the day it will be the children who will suffer for the overspending and incompetence of the past. • Once again this seems to be an attack on hard working families by asking them to shoulder the burden of financial mismanagement in the past, and to find hundreds of extra pounds each year, sometimes thousands. For instance my brother has four children, three of which currently attend St Ann's Catholic Junior School in Stocksbridge. His intention was to send his children to Notre Dame to continue with their Catholic education, but in light of the recent proposals this option is looking increasingly slim. He is a hard working citizen, who pays his taxes, contributes to the economy, and does the best he can for his children. He earns a decent wage but is not eligible, or ever claimed for, any state benefits. Saying that, he would not be in a position to pay over £1000/year for bus fares should the zero rated pass be withdrawn. It is extremely likely that he would no longer be able to send his children to Notre Dame due to the cost implications. I suspect this will be the case for the majority of people, who would find it extremely difficult to find the extra money required, especially if they had a large family. As stated before, you would probably find that the only people who would be in a position to attend the Catholic High schools would be the rich, the poor and local children who could walk to school. This surely cannot be acceptable and fair; this sounds more like an Independent school rather than a school which relies on the public purse to educate its children.

2. A child brought up in the catholic faith is entitled to choose a catholic education. Any barriers to this such as the proposed removal of bus passes is demonstrating discrimination and needs to be re-evaluated. Cuts should be made elsewhere where they will not damage an individual's free choice to a catholic education.
3. a labour council was voted in to act for the people, this is not acting for the people and I will vote appropriately next time
4. As a single mother who is already under enormous financial constraint and who however does not qualify for any form of benefit I feel that the proposed changes are unfair to say the least. Not to mention ABOVE ALL that it impinges on my rights based on my faith/religion to send my child to a faith based school of my choice where I feel that my child's educational and faith needs will be met.
5. Can you please email a copy of the consultation as I can't read the PDF posted online? I will then be able to answer the questions that I have answered 'Not Sure'. My email address is:
JacquelineDiaznieto@hotmail.com I would also like to say that thankfully (and I do give thanks to God) i have been able to study and get a good job to support my family and I don't need to apply for free

travel to school. I was brought up in London by very working class parents (cleaner and bus driver) and I benefited from free travel to my nearest Catholic School. I grew up in strong faith, trusting in God and this gave me the perseverance to continue studying to better myself. Hence I am eternally grateful to the council where I grew up for providing me with free travel to get to my Catholic School. I continue to actively practice my faith (at St Vincent's Catholic church in Crookes) and I want my own children to grow in the same faith that I grew up in and also I want that same opportunity to be given to all children of all economic backgrounds. If they want to attend faith schools but don't have the means, I believe they should be supported. Faith can only be a good thing for society and for the council.

6. children are the future and should be given every opportunity affordable, any disruption in their education has a lifelong consequence, continuity is vital for them to fulfil their potential and staying within their peer group and attending their school of choice should not be put at risk by punitive financial considerations, free travel to school is vital.
7. Even though the council is under no obligation to continue with the agreement, it would be unfair to remove the free bus passes. The fact that the council can not commit themselves to what they agreed on in this past means that there is going to be a lot of mistrust between the council and the community that the council is supposed to serve
8. Families have made a commitment to their faith and their children's education. Decisions are made with the promises and information available and families have settled their children into schools with the understanding that the free transport promised will be provided. To then remove the free transport is moving the goal posts half way through and is unfair to the children. Parents do not want to cause disruption and distress to their children, especially in academic years leading directly to exams, and will struggle financially rather than move children to different schools. The financial hardship will be significant for some families, a long term, unexpected financial demand in order to maintain the educational stability for children; they will be disadvantaged because of their faith. There are a lot of Catholics and they have votes too.
9. Firstly I fail to see how this document can be used to assess opinion when it is so poorly worded on questions 14 & 15, it seems little or no thought has been used in its planning. I received 3 identical letters with this questionnaire, costing the council 3 lots of postage, printing and SAE's. Another parent received 6 letters for her twins again resulting in wastage of council funds and I know speaking to other parents they have also received duplicate letters. Its hard to see how you can justify removing funding a child's right to a religious education whilst clearly showing such incompetence and waste in the most basic admin functions, perhaps if the council paid more attention to detail in these areas they would save the money they need without affecting a child's basic right to an education. You state that the council will try to accommodate a request for local school places for those children who will need to move schools; will the new school be expected to provide

- the same standard of Religious Education? By forcing a parent to choose between finding additional funds for their Catholic child to attend their faith school and having to attend a non faith school is clearly discriminatory. You are asking parents to choose between religion and money? You have stated that you will not discriminate against those with disabilities but are discriminating against those with religious beliefs which are clearly a contradiction in terms and cannot possibly be acceptable in legal terms.
10. Have already emailed and you have ignored comments thus far.
ALSO THE LABOUR COUNCIL HAS TO MAKE CUTS DUE TO LABOURS GROSS INABILITY AND INCOMPETENCE WITH PUBLIC FINANCES SINCE 1997!!!! STOP PLAYING POLITICS WITH CHILDRENS FUTURES BY BLAMING THE COALITION GOVERNMENT, IT IS YOUR OWN PARTY WHO ARE TOTALLY TO BLAME FOR THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WE ARE IN NOW!!!!!!
 11. Hinde House School is retaining their discretionary transport subsidy to the school when Park House closed a number of years ago. In the 1970s, the Catholic sector rationalised its Secondary School provision, closing three of its five secondary schools to remove surplus places. This action was extremely painful, especially for those families in the catchment areas of the schools that were to close (St Peter's, St John Fisher, St Paul's / De La Salle). It was done with the support and co-operation of the Local Authority, who assured the Catholic community at the numerous meetings held, when explaining the closure of their local Catholic school that free transport would be provided for students from these areas so that they would always have access to a Catholic secondary school. This agreement will no longer be honoured for the Catholic community if this proposal goes through but will be retained for non denominational schools.
 12. Hundreds of children travel many miles in order to attend Catholic schools. Removal of free transport to school for these children will stop them being able to go to the Catholic schools meaning hundreds of extra families will need to be squeezed into local schools. All Saints and Notre Dame have increased their capacity, particularly on the closure of St Peter's to the north, to take children from all across the city, how local schools are going to find spaces for all the children who can no longer travel to the Catholic schools doesn't seem to have been thought through.
 13. I am becoming more and more frustrated at the way in which your average family is being penalized from all angles. My husband and I work hard to support our children and try to set them a good example by showing them that the way forward is to study hard and stand on your own two feet by doing the best you can to work no matter what the job is. The younger generation are cottoning on to the fact that "it pays" to be on benefits. I know this is a rant of a middle aged mum of two but as stated I could cry with the frustration. I know that cuts have to be made but please please what more can we give you than we already have. My husband and I haven't had a pay rise, we are having to pay more pension contributions, our shopping bill is escalating and

- I'm worried about the utility bills. I am just the voice of many mums out there who don't know where this will all end.
14. I am concerned about the safety of the current service. There seems to be no limit to the number of pupils on a bus. Earlier this month the 782 broke down in Walkley and all the students were asked to get onto the 780 which was already full. Who is monitoring this?
 15. I am sure the money could be saved in other ways, for instance councillors and all people who are paid to much and waste tax payers money on travel and other things themselves claiming money that they should not claim and do not need they want to live in the normal working families shoes who when have paid mortgages and bills do not have any money left as it is without having to worry about more to pay out, no wonder this state is like it is.
 16. I am utterly appalled that you have wasted yet more money on sending this questionnaire to me, not once but twice for the same child. I know of people that have received this form 3-5 times when they have only 2 children. This money could have been spent on bus passes for the children.
 17. I feel strongly that this proposal is very targeted at the Catholic community in Sheffield who will be most affected by it and it may well negatively impact on the year 7 enrolment figures in our Catholic secondary schools. The council would do well to heed the real concerns of our Catholic population in Sheffield.
 18. I feel that this proposal will also impact on the environment as it will encourage more car usage and will clog up the already congested roads of the city. In addition the location of the two catholic schools is on some of the busiest routes in Sheffield. As a Labour voter I am appalled that such an unfair and targeted proposal has been put forward and I am disgusted that the Council is being so narrow minded, Is it one person in particular who has a dislike for our faith?. Look again, assurances were made.
 19. I fully appreciate cuts have to made and fortunately we could manage but I am concerned for some families who really may see this as a barrier to sending their children to All Saints when they live within walking distance of Meadowhead. (St Thomas of Canterbury families.) Could this have a knock on effect for oversubscription to Meadowhead?
 20. I hope the Council comes to the right and just decision in supporting all the children who attend faith schools, so that they can happily continue with their education without having to worry about the financial costs of attending them.
 21. I hope this has been sent to all schools & not just Catholics as before , otherwise the answers will be the same , people of Sheffield do not know this is happening People I have spoken to did not realise this was happening ,
 22. I sincerely hope you know that many people would be happy to pay for their bus pass as non-Catholics do , however the main issue for the majority of people is having to fumble around for difficult amounts of lose change daily while carrying large, heavy bags and while holding up the queue!

23. I think that Sheffield City Council has withdrawn or minimized enough of its services since well before the recession to save money, including making electrocutions and others redundant! But taking away from families of true faith, who would struggle to send their child to a faith school without the aid of a pass is by far the lowest of the low in my opinion.
24. I think that the council must save money through the support that parishes give to their faith schools. I also think that if we didn't have faith schools we would struggle to accommodate all the children at local schools. I therefore think it is only fair that the council provides free travel.
25. I think the proposal is excellent. It is about time we stood up to these so-called 'faith' schools. There should be no religion in the education system.
26. I think this is ridiculous, why should certain kids get free travel and not others? My children are Christian but go to state school and we have to pay for them on buses etc. i certainly wouldn't expect free travel for them- nor would i take it. You cannot treat different 'groups' of people differently- this is why there is so much anger and hatred in today's society. should be one rule for all and that's it- special needs children should be the only ones not charged as they can't help being sn nor help the fact they need to go to special school. church schools are a parents choice so parents should be made to pay travel like other parents have to...simple as
27. I understand that cuts are having to be made but it should not be at the expense of children's education. If these changes go ahead, it will result in families having to send their children to local schools - this will put pressure on those schools that probably will not have enough places to offer. Local primary schools have had to expand and double capacity and are still now having to increase their numbers going over the legal class size of 30 because there are just not enough places available for children in the area. Also I would like to point out that the letters were sent out twice to each child - how is this helping to save money when I receive 4 copies of the same thing.
28. I want to object to the withdrawal of free bus transportation for children attending Catholic secondary schools because as a practising Catholic family I want to bring my children up in the Catholic faith, so sending my children to a Catholic school is the obvious choice for us. I feel that the Council are discriminating against our religious beliefs by cutting free bus travel. At the end of the day why ANYONE should be discriminated against for their religious beliefs. Shouldn't we be proud to live in a City where multi religious beliefs are recognised and respected? I already have one child at Notre Dame and one due to attend in September 2013. Many other families are in this position and we are now faced with the dilemma of leaving one or more at Notre Dame (not paying bus fare at the present time) and sending one to the local comprehensive because of the cost of bus travel, indeed you stated in your letter to parents that we may now want to reconsider which school to apply for. Also, for children currently in Y6, the open evenings for all other potential schools have now passed so neither

children or parents have any idea what other schools are like. Children currently in Y6 have, along with parents, decided which is the best school for them to apply to and how will it affect children to now be told they may not be going to the school of their choice and may be going to a school they have never even visited? Another point to consider is over subscription of local schools if children that would normally apply to the Catholic schools are forced to apply to their local comprehensive because of financial restraints. If here was an influx to the local comprehensive of children who had previously attended a Catholic school, there could be resentment from the children already established at the local comprehensive and this would undoubtedly lead to bullying and discrimination. Is it fair that wealthier parents are able to send their children to the school of their choice when less fortunate parents are not? Also, the children who are still eligible for free bus passes i.e. on benefits will be obvious to all the other kids; making them stand out from the other children. Parents who really cannot afford to pay these bus fares, particularly parents of more than one child may feel under pressure to continue to send their children and will be putting themselves under financial pressure to keep their children happy. An important point to consider is if parents decide to drive their children to School - the congestion on Flood Road is already diabolical, imagine even more traffic – an accident waiting to happen? How can a parent tell a child that they are not going to continue at Notre Dame School and that they will have to try and get them into another school, this is bad enough for children presently in Y6 but what about children having to leave a school they love because of Council cutbacks? Surely this would have a profound detrimental effect on children's' education and consequently their academic achievements. Another point to consider is if parents were withdrawing children from Notre Dame and placing elsewhere whole new uniforms would have to be bought. Everyone in the city has suffered because of financial cutbacks, we understand that this has be done; many of us do not have annual pay rises any more, we have accepted fortnightly emptying of bins, we back on to a park and we know that the grass will not be cut as regularly as previously etc etc. We understand that we have to make sacrifices and accept this but please do not punish our children because they do not understand why their lives could be turned upside down and their education disrupted. I have tried to shield my children from what is being proposed, I do not want to upset them and especially my child who is in Y6 who is looking forward to moving on to Notre Dame where we have been for a visit. She has never been to Ecclesfield School, which would be our alternative option if we were not Catholics. Lastly, on a personal level, I would just like to say my husband and I are not wealthy nor are we on benefits, we both work hard; please do not put another burden on us, we pay our Council Tax as do most other people, please do not stretch us any further it is hard enough as it is to make ends meet! We do not wish our children to suffer, how can we tell our children they may not be attending the school our neighbours' children will be attending just because they are financially better off than we are because, at the end of the day, if this

proposal is enforced that will be the situation for many people. I hope you will take all of the above points into consideration. I want to object to the withdrawal of free bus transportation for children attending Catholic secondary schools because as a practising Catholic family I want to bring my children up in the Catholic faith, so sending my children to a Catholic school is the obvious choice for us. I feel that the Council are discriminating against our religious beliefs by cutting free bus travel. At the end of the day why should ANYONE be discriminated against for their religious beliefs. Shouldn't we be proud to live in a City where multi religious beliefs are recognised and respected? I already have one child at Notre Dame and one due to attend in September 2013. Many other families are in this position and we are now faced with the dilemma of leaving one or more at Notre Dame (not paying bus fare at the present time) and sending one to the local comprehensive because of the cost of bus travel, indeed you stated in your letter to parents that we may now want to reconsider which school to apply for. Also, for children currently in Y6, the open evenings for all other potential schools have now passed so neither children or parents have any idea what other schools are like. Children currently in Y6 have, along with parents, decided which is the best school for them to apply to and how will it affect children to now be told they may not be going to the school of their choice and may be going to a school they have never even visited? Another point to consider is over subscription of local schools if children that would normally apply to the Catholic schools are forced to apply to their local comprehensive because of financial restraints. If there was an influx to the local comprehensive of children who had previously attended a Catholic school, there could be resentment from the children already established at the local comprehensive and this would undoubtedly lead to bullying and discrimination. Is it fair that wealthier parents are able to send their children to the school of their choice when less fortunate parents are not? Also, the children who are still eligible for free bus passes i.e. on benefits will be obvious to all the other kids; making them stand out from the other children. Parents who really cannot afford to pay these bus fares, particularly parents of more than one child may feel under pressure to continue to send their children and will be putting themselves under financial pressure to keep their children happy. An important point to consider is if parents decide to drive their children to School - the congestion on Fulwood Road is already diabolical, imagine even more traffic – an accident waiting to happen? How can a parent tell a child that they are not going to continue at Notre Dame School and that they will have to try and get them into another school, this is bad enough for children presently in Y6 but what about children having to leave a school they love because of Council cutbacks? Surely this would have a profound detrimental effect on children's' education and consequently their academic achievements. Another point to consider is if parents were withdrawing children from Notre Dame and placing elsewhere whole new uniforms would have to be bought. Everyone in the city has suffered because of financial cutbacks, we understand that this has been done; many of us do not have

annual pay rises any more, we have accepted fortnightly emptying of bins, we back on to a park and we know that the grass will not be cut as regularly as previously etc etc. We understand that we have to make sacrifices and accept this but please do not punish our children because they do not understand why their lives could be turned upside down and their education disrupted. I have tried to shield my children from what is being proposed, I do not want to upset them and especially my child who is in Y6 who is looking forward to moving on to Notre Dame where we have been for a visit. She has never been to Ecclesfield School, which would be our alternative option if we were not Catholics. Furthermore, I would like to comment on the short notice given regarding this proposal, we received a letter during the half term holiday; this gives parents very little time to put their view across. Lastly, on a personal level, I would just like to say my husband and I are not wealthy nor are we on benefits, we both work hard; please do not put another burden on us, we pay our Council Tax as do most other people, please do not stretch us any further it is hard enough as it is to make ends meet! We do not wish our children to suffer, how can we tell our children they may not be attending the school our neighbours' children will be attending just because they are financially better off than we are because, at the end of the day, if this proposal is enforced that will be the situation for many people. I hope you will take all of the above points into consideration.

29. In the "Consultation Document", the City Council states that "326 responses (approximately 5% of those invited to respond), were received from the last consultation, which suggests that the Catholic community are not too concerned about losing the free transport. What you fail to include are approximately 3000 responses that were made via written petitions and over 800 electronically via your website! 1. Unlike most Councils considering this action, Sheffield is proposing to remove the discretionary transport subsidy to children already attending a Catholic school rather than applying the removal of the subsidy to those children who apply to attend Catholic schools in the future. This appears particularly unfair and in legal terms may be counter to the "legitimate expectation" a person might have i.e. an expectation that the provision that exists would be continued. 2. In relation to the two Catholic high schools, working with the Council, the Diocese closed three secondary schools to reduce the cost of secondary provision in the City. To compensate for the loss of local Catholic schools, which was very painful for many parishes, especially as these parishes had contributed to the building costs of these schools, it was agreed with the City Council that Catholic families sending their children to the more distant Catholic high schools would receive a discretionary transport subsidy. Although the Council claims they have no evidence of such an agreement, extracts from Sheffield City Council documents were quoted to the officers and members of the Council, during a meeting at the Town Hall on the 24th January 2013, when they reviewed the earlier decision to remove free bus passes for all pupils. Offers of copies of these documents were made but not taken up by them. 3. The Council also say that, even if they

had proof of this "agreement", they have "no obligation to continue". This is particularly disappointing as it calls into question the trust and confidence that we can have in the Council. There may be no legal obligation but there is certainly a moral obligation and, if changes to an agreement are necessary, these changes should be decided via discussion with those involved. 4. The Council will continue to offer the statutory transport subsidy where children attend catchment area schools. The nature of the catchment areas of community schools in Sheffield does not mean that they are necessarily the 'nearest suitable school', which is the legal definition with regard to provision of transport subsidy. For many Catholic parents the nearest suitable school is the nearest Catholic school, though the Council chooses not to accept that a Catholic school is the suitable school for a Catholic child. In addition, although Sheffield City Council does not accept that Catholic schools have catchment areas, Council officers have used the term 'catchment area' to describe the parish or parishes which link with a particular Catholic school and in the "historic agreement", mentioned in point 2 above, the Council's documents actually mention "having to change the catchment area of Notre Dame to include the previous catchment area of St Peter's as it closes". It seems the Council can determine the catchment areas of their own schools, ignoring the statutory requirement, yet are denying that the catchment areas agreed with the Catholic community ever existed. Even today Council documentation uses the term "catchment" to decide e.g. which Catholic primary school a child should attend! 5. An official from the Council confirmed that a "free bus" is provided for pupils to attend another school in the City "because when their local school was closed the parents were given an assurance that one would be provided". This apparently does not come from the discretionary transport fund. 6. Many of you will know only too well that we find ourselves in difficult economic circumstances and we all acknowledge the challenges faced by Sheffield City Council in balancing the books. However, there are aspects of this particular proposal to remove discretionary transport subsidy for Catholic families which appear too many to be unfair for the reasons outlined above.

30. In the 1980's when the Catholic school to the north of Sheffield was closed, the community was promised that their children would be able to access Catholic education by using school buses and free school bus passes. It is unfair and unjust, to withdraw that promise after the school has been converted into different usage and the children have no option of a Catholic education in the north of the city. Is there the school capacity in the north of Sheffield to take the numbers of children who currently travel across the city to the two Catholic secondary schools?
31. It is wrong and I feel like the council are not taking student's faith into consideration. If my children have to move school because of this it will cause a great impact on them. Do not do this, if you are going to take the bus passes away do it gradually, let the children who have the passes keep them!!!!

32. It just seems an unfair system and when you look at the figures it proves it.
33. It's always the single parents & working class families that have to suffer. Why penalise the children from a good education in a school which upholds our beliefs. We are practising Catholics, my children alter serve, they love the close connections between church & school life. It will split friends, the church community & cause upset to many families who only want the best for their children. IT'S THE CHILDREN WHO WILL SUFFER!!! Please, Please, PLEASE rethink & keep our free bus passes as promised when we took the decision to choose Notre Dame High School for our children.
34. It's discriminating against Christians because if Catholics want to go to a Catholic school they might need to travel long distances.
35. It's discrimination. However, sometimes I think the travel companies shouldn't have that subsidy from the government/council to give out free travel though. They should provide it or less. That's where cuts should be made! If they remove free passes, I think people will try to find alternative ways of travelling, so the companies will just lose revenue anyway. It's called greed! They are too greedy, make cuts on them! Not members of the public. Aren't you governors supposed to encourage spending to boost the economy? Well this is doing the opposite, you realize that right? Yours, from a 16-year-old high-school boy at Notre Dame, where I have been given one of the best educations I could have asked for, including my Christian ethos, Mark Wills
36. its unfair for people who wont be able to pay
37. Need to improve questionnaire clarity, too wording making the question inaccessible to the majority
38. One wonders how much of the proposed £250,000 saving is being spent on not one but two half baked consultations which do nothing more than tick boxes on a local council checklist!
39. Perhaps if the consultation had been done properly back in October, the Council would have saved some money by not having to send out hundreds of questionnaires with postage paid envelopes in.
40. Sadly I have little confidence in my response having any impact on the council's decision. A generation of children will ultimately lose their right to choosing a Faith education as a result of this decision and the Council will continue to proclaim it fights injustice.
41. Some of the questions in this survey are very badly worded and should not have been included in the form in that state.
42. Stop this discrimination based on ideological party political philosophy which is aimed at serving the interests of secular atheism and ideology rather than being focused on serving the needs of the real people of Sheffield. This is especially so when the wasteful nature of the council is constantly highlighted in the media in relation to political and ideological financial support for 'pet projects.' rather than supporting the future of Sheffield through supporting the children and families who will be bringing the prosperity to the city in the future.
43. The City Council appear to be denying the statutory transport subsidy to children who attend catchment area schools, where their nearest

suitable catchment area school is a denominational school. The nature of the catchment areas of community schools in Sheffield does not mean that they are necessarily the 'nearest suitable school', which is the legal definition with regard to provision of transport subsidy. For many Catholic parents the nearest suitable school is the nearest Catholic school, though this Council chooses not to accept that a Catholic school is the suitable school for a Catholic child. The catholic secondary schools in Sheffield offer some of the very best educational opportunities to pupils both catholic or not but who come from low income families from the other side of the city. These pupils will be robbed by the City Council of the opportunity of experiencing a first class education if their parents are denied the choice of denomination school as a result of the proposal. The educational standards in Sheffield and South Yorkshire are ignorantly worse than in other areas. I would like to see the City Council increasing access for pupils to the outstanding schools from a wider area rather than discouraging parents from choosing the best schools for their children. Whist everyone realises the financially times are difficult the City Council should not be looking to penalise children and damaging the long term prospects of the pupils of Sheffield in this way.

44. The Council appears to be discriminating against persons who wish to send their children to faith schools which are treading on very stony ground.
45. The Council have acted in a high handed and cavalier fashion as evidenced by the need to conduct a second consultation. They have presented a set of proposals that only allow for a predetermined outcome i.e. the ceasing of discretionary free bus passes for faith schools. It is just the time-scale over which this will be achieved that is being debated.
46. The Council is clearly facing big budget cuts but should do everything it can to continue to provide any child who receives a free bus pass under the current discretionary system for as long as it can. The council should also recognise that IN THE PAST certain catholic schools were closed AND THERE WAS AN UNDERSTANDING THAT FREE TRANSPORT WOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THOSE PUPILS WHO WOULD HAVE TO TRAVEL TO THE REMAINING SCHOOL WHEN SUCH A DISTANCE WAS EXCESSIVE, AS SUCH THE council SHOULD NOT BREAK THAT UNDERSTANDING.
47. The impact is greater on my family as we have a child in year 8 and one in year 5 who will go to Notre Dame. This is a horrendous amount of money to afford to get the catholic education my children deserve.
48. The proposal is outrageous and cannot go ahead. It is discriminatory at worst, bad management at best. Look through your history documentation of the council closing Catholic Schools, look at the page where it says the council will close some of the Catholic Secondary schools, but will provide FREE bus transport to all requiring it, to access the Catholic schools that the council have chosen to remain open!!
49. The questions are constructed to give limited scope for a view in opposition to the council's intentions, for example there is no option to

- retain the status quo which may force some people to choose one of the options given which necessarily gives a false result; it is therefore inherently unfair. the question on whether the proposals will impede or advance equality is ambiguous and will undoubtedly generate false results which should be taken into consideration
50. There seems to be a flawed assumption in this whole process. It assumes that all those who want to go to faith schools do so for religious reasons. This is simply not true. Often parents want to send their children to a certain faith school not because of its religious persuasions but simply because it is seen as the best school. My son goes to a faith school yet neither him nor I are religious and his mother is only in the vaguest way possible. We sent him to a Catholic school because we saw it as the best school, not because it was Catholic. When he was bullied at school (related to a disability) the school dealt with it swiftly and firmly and it's never been a problem since. This is what is important to us, not the religious side of his schooling. I think most families will happily trade one little white lie, "Yes we're a staunch Catholic family," if it means a better education for their children. So I think a more honest question is whether free bus pass funding should continue to help give families a wider choice of schools.
51. These questions have been deliberately worded to confuse people.
52. This has been a hastily conceived policy. Please consider changing it. For the cash saved by the Council you have put 'huge strain' on us who would like their children educated in a christian way with an ethos of looking after those with ill health/supporting the vulnerable and those in great need. This jeopardises our support network
53. This proposal is unfair and discriminating against our beliefs. There isn't a catholic secondary school in our area and as a working family with 5 children we are already struggling with costs/ bills and debt spiralling out of control. How are we supposed to find an extra £550 pound a year for bus fares because of our beliefs when people who can't be bothered to go to work get free school dinners/ bus passes.
54. We are a catholic family, we have four children. Our annual income is a little above the minimum required to get free pass and when the decision takes place will affect us a lot. Nowadays I would have never thought that anybody could ever give up the religious school education because there is not financial help for the families
55. We have a second child due to go to this school in September 2014, which will mean double the bus fares. We feel that it is unfair to charge bus fares for young people to travel to a school just because of their faith, but it is very important to us that our children go to a Catholic School.
56. WHATS WRONG WITH THE POLICIES OF THIS GOVERNMENT??? BRIGHT STUDENTS, THE FUTURE OF BRITAINS ECONOMY. ALL PARENTS WANT THEIR CHILDREN TO ACHIEVE TO THEIR ACADEMIC POTENTIAL. WE`RE BEING FORCED INTO TAKING AWAY THE BEST EDUCATION FOR MY CHILD OVER THE PRICE OF A BUS FARE! IT`S UPSETTING FOR US AS A FAMILY, SOMETHING OUT OF OUR CONTROL! AS A SUPPLY TEACHER, MY INCOME HAS BEEN JUST OVER 13K. I HAVE FOUR

DEPENDANT CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME. HOW AM I EXPECTED TO PAY FOR TWO CHILDREN TO GO TO NOTRE DAME AN EXTRA £12 PER WEEK OUT OF MY INCOME? IT SIMPLY ISNT POSSIBLE. NOW, I DONT KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR MY CHILDREN. SLEEPLESS NIGHTS, WORRY, UPSET, THAT'S ONLY THE START. AT LEAST DELIVER WHATS BEEN PROMISED BY LETTING PUPILS / SIBLINGS GO THROUGH THE SYSTEM WITH THE ZERO PASSES. THE DECISION AFFECTS 2 MANY STUDENTS & HAS DIRECT IMPACT ON FAMILIES.

57. Whilst this proposal may look as if it saves money in the short term, I doubt this will prove the case in the reality of the longer term.
58. You are hitting out at honest, hard working, tax paying people who only want the education for their children that they deserve.
59. You need to revise free mobility pass, and stop attacking our CHILDREN.
60. You state that you want to know the impact of these proposals on particular groups: In our school there are 249 pupils. 35.5% of pupils come from ethnic minority groups. There are 44 pupils who regularly use the dedicated school buses, of which 25 (56.8%) are from minority ethnic groups, with black African the most common. One can deduce from this that the proposal will disproportionately affect pupils from minority ethnic groups.



Drayton - for your approval please

R5572

To the parents of
L

Education Department
Chief Education Officer
G M A Harrison, CBE MA
PO Box No. 67
Leopold Street
Sheffield
S1 1RJ

Telephone 0742-26341 Telex 54243

If telephoning, please ask for extension *325* and then M
Your reference Our reference

Slamford

Date

Dear Parents

CLOSURE OF ST PETER'S RC SECONDARY SCHOOL - JULY 1985

The arrangements for the transfer of pupils on the closure of the school are the same as those which applied to the pupils who transferred in September 1984. These are given below.

A place has been reserved for _____ at Notre Dame School from September 1985 and the Headteacher, Sister Marie Philippa, will be contacting you to explain the arrangements for entry.

...
... If you do not wish to accept this offer of a place at Notre Dame and would prefer a place at All Saints' School for _____ I should be glad if you would indicate this on the enclosed form. It is important that the number of children wishing to attend each school is known as soon as possible and I enclose a stamped addressed envelope for you to return to me. Your form together with the forms from other parents stating their preferences will then be considered on behalf of the appropriate Governing Body.

Should you decide that you prefer a place in a (non-Catholic) County Secondary School, the Education Committee is prepared to consider an application from you and you should indicate this preference on the attached form. An application form for this purpose can be obtained from the Headteacher of St Peter's RC Secondary School or from the Education Department (Pupils' Administration Division). The completed application form should be returned to the Education Department by Friday 8 February 1985.

Special arrangements have been made with regard to free travel for Roman Catholic pupils from the North of the City who will attend either Notre Dame or All Saints' schools and who reside over three miles from whichever of these schools is attended. The Education Committee have agreed to waive their new policy on free travel until new catchment areas have been agreed for the remaining two Roman Catholic Secondary Schools. This means that whichever of the two schools your child attends, provided you reside over three miles from that school your child will be entitled to free travel until they leave the school, subject only to any policy change by the Education Committee.

Discussions are at present taking place between the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Commission and the Education Authority over the provision of special buses. It is being proposed that one vehicle should start from both the Stocksbridge and High Green areas and go direct to the two sites of Notre Dame School provided there are sufficient pupils travelling to make these arrangements viable.

continued ...

It is hoped that this will ease the travelling problem of pupils from these areas, together with some who live close to these areas and who live on the routes of the buses into the city. Further details will be made available to you as soon as a decision has been made.

Please note that a child may not travel on a special bus and also have a free travel pass to use the normal service buses.

If you need assistance in making your choice, please contact the Headteacher of your child's present school or the Headteacher of Notre Dame or All Saints' Schools,

Mr A Allen	St Peter's RC School Morrall Road, S5 9AJ	Tel: 460003
Sister Marie Philippa	Notre Dame RC School Fulwood Road, S10 3BT	Tel: 302537
Mr J P Kelly	All Saints' RC School Granville Road, S2 2QB	Tel: 24851

I should be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this information by completing the slip below and returning to your child's present school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Chief Education Officer

KB

I have received the letter "Closure of St Peter's RC Secondary School - July 1985".

Signed

Parent/Guardian of

PLEASE TEAR OFF THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE HEADTEACHER OF ST PETER'S RC SECONDARY SCHOOL.



Copy to: Monsignor Sullivan, The Presbtery, St. Marie's Church, Norfolk Street Sheffield 115E

for information

To the parents of

Education Department

Chief Education Officer
G M A Harrison, CBE MA

PO Box No. 67
Leopold Street
Sheffield
S1 1RJ

Telephone 0742-26341

Telex 54243

If telephoning, please ask for extension 298 and then Mr. Freeman

Your reference

Our reference SE/P/PJF

Date December, 1984.

Dear Parents,

Transfer to Secondary School - September, 1985.

You will already know that St. Peter's R.C. Secondary School is to close in July, 1985. The arrangements for transfer to secondary school for children in this year's J4 age group who normally would have been offered St. Peter's School for their secondary education are the same as those which applied to Roman Catholic children from the north of the city who transferred to secondary school in September, 1984. These are given below.

I am writing to let you know that a place has been reserved for at Notre Dame School (Lower School - Cavendish Street) from September, 1985 and the Headteacher, Sister Marie Philippa, will be contacting you to explain the arrangements for entry.

If, however, you do not wish to accept this offer of a place at Notre Dame and would prefer a place at All Saints School for I should be glad if you would indicate this on the enclosed form. It is important that the number of children wishing to attend either school is known as soon as possible and I enclose a stamped addressed envelope for you to return the form to me. Your form together with the forms from other parents stating their preferences will then be forwarded to the appropriate Governing Body.

Should you decide that you prefer a place in a (non-Catholic) County Secondary School, the Education Committee is prepared to consider an application from you and you should indicate this preference on the attached form. An application form for this purpose can be obtained from the Headteacher of your child's present school or from the Education Department (Pupils' Administration Division). The completed application form should be returned to the Education Department within six weeks of the receipt of this letter.

Special arrangements have been made with regard to free travel for Roman Catholic pupils from the North of the City who will attend either Notre Dame or All Saints schools and who reside over three miles from whichever of these schools is attended. The Education Committee have agreed to waive their new policy on free travel until new catchment areas have been agreed for the remaining two Roman Catholic Secondary Schools. This means that whichever of the two schools your child attends, provided you reside over three miles from that school your child will be entitled to free travel until they leave the school, subject only to any further general policy change by the Education Committee.

Continued/.....

Discussions are at present taking place between the Diocese of Hallam School's Commission and the Education Authority over the provision of special buses. It is being proposed that one vehicle should start from both the Stocksbridge and High Green areas and go direct to the two sites of Notre Dame School.

It is hoped that this will ease the problem of travelling of pupils from these areas, and some who live close to these areas and who live on the routes of the buses into the city. Further details will be made available to you as soon as an agreement has been made.

Please note that a child may not travel on a special bus and also have a free travel pass to use the normal service buses.

If you need assistance in making your choice please contact the Headteacher of your child's present school or the Headteachers of Notre Dame, All Saints or St. Peter's Secondary Schools, who are:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Sister Marie Philippa | Notre Dame R.C. School,
Fulwood Road, S10 3BT. | Tel: 302536 |
| Mr. J. P. Kelly | All Saints R.C. School,
Granville Road, S2 2QB. | Tel: 24851 |
| Mr. A. Allen | St. Peter's R.C. School,
Morrall Road, S5 9AJ. | Tel: 460003 |

Enclosed also with this letter are copies of the Local Education Authority brochure 'An Educational Partnership', the purpose of which is to explain to parents the policies of the Authority, and the booklet of Notre Dame School, where a place has been reserved for your child.

I should be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this information by completing the slip below and returning it to your child's present primary school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

G. M. A. Harrison

Chief Education Officer.

ST.

.....

I have received the letter "Transfer to Secondary School" together with the Local Education Authority brochure "An Educational Partnership" and the booklet of Notre Dame school, at which a place has been reserved for my child.

Signed

Parent/Guardian of

PLEASE TEAR OFF THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO THE HEADTEACHER OF YOUR CHILD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL.



The Permanent Under Secretary,
Department of Education and Science,
Elizabeth House,
York Road,
LONDON.
SEL 7PH

Education Department
Chief Education Officer
G M A Harrison, CBE MA
PO Box No. 67
Leopold Street
Sheffield
S1 1RJ

Telephone 0742-26341 Telex 54243

If telephoning, please ask for extension 242 and then Mr. Millard

Your reference Our reference MJM Date 4th June, 1980

Dear Sir,

Sheffield Local Education Authority
St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Secondary School

It is proposed, following consultations with the Roman Catholic Diocesan Authority, the governors, staff representatives and parents, that this Authority should cease to maintain St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Secondary School on 31st July, 1981. A draft Section 13 Notice is enclosed.

The reason for this proposed closure is a general fall in the number of children attending, and expected to attend Roman Catholic secondary schools in this Authority. The total capacity of the four Roman Catholic secondary schools amounts to 420 places in each year group. In September, 1980, 366 pupils will be admitted to these schools (falling to 236 in 1986) as follows: Notre Dame 141; All Saints' 116; St. Peter's 75; and St. John Fisher 34. In considering which school to close the Diocesan Authority and this Authority have taken into account: the spare capacity at All Saints' School; the possibility of further space becoming available given a slight adjustment to the All Saints' catchment area in favour of Notre Dame School; and the ease with which pupils in the present St. John Fisher catchment area would be able to travel to All Saints' School. It is proposed, therefore, to incorporate the St. John Fisher catchment area into that of All Saints' and transfer those children attending St. John Fisher in July, 1981 to All Saints' as from September, 1981. The outcome of parental choice on admissions at present also suggests the appropriateness of the closure of St. John Fisher : of 75 children in the St. John Fisher catchment area due to transfer to that school in September, 1980 only 34 have elected to take up the place offered at St. John Fisher. Other parents have preferred to opt for All Saints' School. In the proposed new admission arrangements parents will continue to have the opportunity to choose alternative schools wherever possible.

The proposal then is to close St. John Fisher by September, 1981. In order to ensure continuity of education for the present S3 year group the St. John Fisher curriculum would be maintained at All Saints' School until July, 1982 and this Authority will be providing additional staffing support where necessary.

The St. John Fisher building is likely to continue to be used as an annexe of All Saints' in 1981/82. Thereafter this Authority may be interested in purchasing the building and site as part of a major sports development associated with the Sheffield City Polytechnic.

I shall be grateful for your consideration of this matter in order that the Section 13 Notice can be published by 1st July of this year.

Yours faithfully,



Chief Education Officer

Enc.

ME

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN in accordance with the provisions of Section 13(3) of the Education Act 1944 (as amended) that the City of Sheffield Metropolitan District Council, being the Local Education Authority, propose to cease to maintain St. John Fisher Roman Catholic Secondary (Aided) School on 31st July, 1981.

1. As from September, 1981 the catchment area of All Saints' Roman Catholic (Aided) School will be extended to incorporate the present St. John Fisher catchment area and Roman Catholic children who would normally transfer to St. John Fisher from primary schools will from that date be admitted to All Saints' School.
2. Pupils in years 1 - 4 at St. John Fisher School in the school year 1980/81 will have the opportunity to transfer to All Saints' School in September, 1981 where the standard and continuity of their education will be maintained.
3. Parents are reminded that they have the right to opt for schools other than All Saints' and wherever possible the Diocesan Authority and this Authority will seek to meet such requests.

The Managers or Governors of any voluntary school affected by the proposals, or any ten or more local government electors for the area in which the schools are situated, or any local education authority concerned, may submit objections to the proposals by a letter addressed to the Permanent Under Secretary of State, Department of Education and Science, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH, which should reach him within two months after the first publication of this notice.

Date

Signed G. M. A. Harrison
.....
Chief Education Officer

(ICB/LP)

Section 13(1) and (3) of the Education Act 1944 as amended by Section 16 of the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, the Secretary of State for Education and Science Order 1964 (SI 1964 No. 490) and the Education Act 1968, provides as follows:

"(1) Where a local education authority intend:-

- (a) to establish a new county school;
- (b) to maintain as a county school any school which at the time being is not such a school; or
- (c) to cease to maintain any county school or any voluntary school;

or where a local education authority intend to make any significant change in the character, or significant enlargement of the premises, of a county school, they shall submit proposals for that purpose to the Secretary of State."

"(3) After any proposals have been submitted to the Secretary of State under this section, the Authority or persons by whom the proposals were submitted, shall forthwith give public notice of the proposals in the prescribed manner, and the managers or governors of any voluntary school affected by the proposals or any ten or more local government electors for the area and any local education authority concerned may within two months after the first publication of the notice submit to the Secretary of State objections to the proposals."

Children, Young People and Families Service

Inclusion & Learning Services,
 Floor 3, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield S1 2SH



Enquiries: John Bigley, Manager, Admissions & Access
 Tel: 0114 273 4097 Fax: 0114 273 5701
 Email: john.bigley@sheffield.gov.uk
 Web Site: www.sheffield.gov.uk

All Headteachers of Catholic Primary Schools

16 May 2013

Dear Colleague

Home to School Transport Consultation Special Arrangements from the 1970/80s Update

The Council is at present engaged in a consultation on the issue of ceasing to provide free bus travel to primary and secondary school pupils who attend denominational schools more than 3 miles from their homes. The consultation began on 25 March and was scheduled to be completed by 21 May 2013. This is the second consultation to be conducted on this issue. The object of this second consultation is to respond to issues that emerged from the first consultation, and to ensure that all those who wish to comment on the proposals have a proper opportunity to do so

During the first consultation some people told us that in the 1970s and 1980s they believed that following closure of Roman Catholic Secondary Schools the Council made an agreement to continue to provide free school travel for children attending the remaining denominational secondary schools more than 3 miles from their homes.

The Council's position on a "historical agreement" is set out at page 7 of the consultation document dated 25 March. The position being that the Council did not have evidence of such an agreement and that the Council was under no obligation to continue funding free school travel as it was discretionary.

Since the consultation document was published, and in the course of this second consultation, the Council has been shown letters sent to parents of pupils transferring from primary to secondary schools in the mid-1980s which say:

" Special arrangements have been made with regard to free travel for Roman Catholic pupils from the North of the City who will attend either Notre Dame or All Saints schools and who reside over three miles from whichever of these schools is attended. The Education Committee have agreed to waive their new policy on free travel until new catchment areas have been agreed for the remaining two Roman Catholic Secondary Schools. This means whichever of

the two schools your child attends, provided you reside over three miles from that school your child will be entitled to free travel until they leave the school, subject only to any further general policy change by the Education Committee.”

The Council has looked at the letters in question, and does not consider that they show that there was an agreement that the Council would always continue to provide such funding to Catholic secondary school pupils or that there was any arrangement with respect to primary school children. The Council considers that it has continued to fund free bus travel for Catholic pupils as a matter of discretion, and not obligation

In addition, the Council commissioned special busses, sometimes referred to as green buses, to meet the needs of students travelling from the far North and South East of the city to Notre Dame and All Saints, and these arrangements are not affected by the present proposals.

Before making its final decision the Council would like to give you a further opportunity to tell us if there is anything else you think we need to know about the “special arrangements” made in the 1970/80s. We appreciate that it is a very long time ago but we consider that it is important to have all the relevant information available to us before making a final decision.

We have put back the closing date for consultation to 5 pm on **Friday 24th May** to give further time for you to comment on the “special arrangements”.

To ensure we get your comments as soon as possible we ask you to contact us by telephone on 273 4097 or email admissionsconsultation@sheffield.gov.uk or either write to us at the following address marked “Home to School Transport Consultation”

Pupil Admissions Team
Inclusion & Learning Services
CYPF
Floor 3
Howden House
Union Street
Sheffield
S1 2SH

Please note that the date for Cabinet to make the final decision is now 19 June 2013.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Bigley', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

John Bigley
Manager for Access and Admissions
Inclusion & Learning Services
Children, Young People and Families

Diocese for Sheffield & Hallam
Cc Notre Dame
All Saints
All RC Primary Schools

Bigley John

From: A.Dewhurst [A.Dewhurst@stmarieslearning.co.uk]
Sent: 16 May 2013 17:36
To: Bigley John
Subject: RE:Transport Consultation

Dear John

I have just received the e-mail from Nichola Furniss with regard to the consultation about denominational transport support for faith schools. I note that we are asked to respond directly to you following receipt of the attached documents, and I am therefore doing so.

I have read the historical documents from 1984 and 1985, and the council's response to the contents of these documents. In my opinion, the council's response is entirely predictable, because it has only one focus - to stop funding transport for Catholic pupils attending faith schools. Furthermore, its response is very simplistic, and does not attempt to explore the nuances of the statements contained within the documents. My reading of these statements is very different to that of the council.

Firstly, we have no explanation of the references in the documents to the "new policy on free travel" at that time: What was the policy? How had it changed? What was being waived?

Secondly, it is quite clear to me that the council was agreeing that parents (the recipients of the letter that is) could choose either All Saints School or Notre Dame School in this instance, and have free travel if they lived more than three miles away from whichever one they chose, "until new catchment areas have been agreed for the remaining two Roman Catholic Secondary Schools". Obviously the intention thereafter was to designate a new catchment area for each school, redefining where those who would have normally gone to St Peter's, or one of the other original Catholic secondary schools.

"until new catchment areas have been agreed" - this would seem to be the crucial phrase within the whole of the letter. The council is stating in that letter that free transport would continue, to either school, until an agreement had been made about which primary schools were in the "catchment areas" for each secondary school. Where is this agreement on Catchment Areas? Presumably the council did not leave such a matter undone for 25 years or more? The letter is plainly pointing out that each remaining Catholic secondary school would have a "catchment area". And, presumably once that was sorted out, pupils living more than three miles from their catchment area Catholic school, would be eligible for free transport to the school, in the same way that any other pupil is, who lives this distance away from their catchment school. We have been led to believe by the Council that Catholic schools have never had catchment areas, and yet here is a document from Sheffield Corporation Education Department confirming their existence.

My third point is with reference to the sweeping comment that there is no evidence that the council made any commitment to primary school pupils. Not in this document, perhaps, because it is about the transfer of pupils from primary to secondary school at a time of change. It would be correct to say that there is no reference within the document to assistance with transport for primary age pupils, but one would not have expected to find any in this context. That does not mean that historical agreements have never existed. In the case of this school, agreements would have been discussed at the time the school moved from Edmund Road in Sheffield 2 to the present site in Sheffield 10 around 1971/72,

or around the time that St Vincent's Primary School closed around 1989. I understand that it would not be in the council's interest to unearth any documents relating to these events.

I would also like to comment about the online questionnaire that has been set up for this phase of the consultation, and that I have accessed as a parent and as a headteacher. In my view, there is little to commend the design of this consultation device, because it does not give those opposed to the removal of transport assistance adequate opportunity to voice their opposition. Two examples: firstly, when stating a preference for one of the three options for removing transport assistance, there is no opportunity to say "none of these", because I am opposed to all of the options and don't want to give the impression that I back any of them. Secondly, there is the following question:

"Do you think that the proposed changes are likely to advance or to impede equality of opportunity and good relations between persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic and others?"

"Advance or impede" - surely these are opposites wherein one makes a choice between the two, and yet the choice of answer is only "Yes" or "No". Nonsensical! It somehow sums up the consultation process.

One last area that is worth noting, and I have explained this in my online response, is that in our school pupils from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are disproportionately affected by the proposed changes. Labour party members please take note.

I would be grateful if you could forward this e-mail to whoever is collating the responses for the consultation.

yours

Alan

Mr A Dewhurst

Headteacher
St Marie's School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy
Fulwood Road
Sheffield
S10 3DQ

Tel: 0114 2301904

Fax: 0114 2303509

Email: a.dewhurst@stmarieslearning.co.uk

St Marie's School Trust is an exempt charity and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England with Company Number 8181858 and has a registered office at St Marie's School, Fulwood Road, Sheffield S10 3DQ

and is part of the Umbrella Trust of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom with Company No. [08180450](#).

or other document supplied with this e-mail

Sheffield City Council

Equality Impact Assessment



Name of policy/project/decision: Denominational Transport

Status of policy/project/decision: New

Name of person(s) writing EIA: John Bigley – Manager, Admissions & Access

Date: 19 June 2013

Service: Inclusion & Learning Services

Portfolio: Children, Young People and Families

What are the brief aims of the policy/project/decision?

Following Central Government funding reductions the Council is facing extreme pressures on increasingly limited budgets. Over the past two years the Council has had to find savings of around £130 million.

In 2013-14, the Council must find a further £50 million of savings, with more cuts in the following years. Efficiency savings will not be sufficient to achieve this and the Council consequently has had to reduce the budgets of many frontline services.

Sheffield's Home to School Transport Policy currently provides discretionary free transport where a parent has applied for a school on grounds of religion or belief. Sheffield has previously chosen to support families with travel to denominational schools, however there is no general statutory duty requiring local authorities to provide free transport to faith schools. The Council can therefore consider whether such discretionary provision should be discontinued.

Given that the Council cannot afford to continue funding discretionary free transport for attendance at faith schools, its second consultation set out three options:

- Option 1** Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013.
- Option 2** Withdraw the current provision for funding discretionary transport on a phased basis starting with entry to Reception and Year 7 in September 2013 and each subsequent year. Under this option, pupils currently receiving a pass under discretionary criteria would continue to receive it until they finish at their current school.
- Option 3.** Withdraw all discretionary free bus passes for travel to denominational schools under the discretionary scheme from September 2013 and offer the phased arrangements described below to assist families with cost of travel for children in exam years during 2013/14 and 2014/15. These arrangements are intended to help families that would experience difficulties with the affordability of travel to school if all free bus passes were to be withdrawn. This is a **new** option please see below for more details.

1. The family has a child or children in Y10 or Y11;

2. The pupil is in receipt of a free pass under the current discretionary policy arrangements but would lose it if the Council's proposals were implemented;
3. The family is in receipt of working tax credit below the maximum rate (if a family is in receipt of the maximum rate they are entitled to a free bus pass under the statutory criteria).

The Consultation was undertaken between 25 March and 21 May 2013 and we consulted the following stakeholders:

- Parents of all current Y7-Y10 students attending All Saints and Notre Dame
- Parents of all current Y5 and Y6 pupils attending Aided Primary Schools
- Parents of any Reception-Y4 pupils currently in receipt of a discretionary free pass
- All Secondary and Primary Headteachers and Chairs of Governors
- Sheffield College
- Longley Park
- Sheffield Hallam and Sheffield Diocese
- South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
- SACRE
- All Councillors
- All local MPs
- Parishes and Bishops

Background to proposal

Following Central Government funding reductions the Council is facing extreme pressures on increasingly limited budgets. Over the past two years the Council has had to find savings of around £130 million. In 2013-14, the Council must find a further £50 million of savings, with more cuts in the following years. Efficiency savings will not be sufficient to achieve this and the Council consequently has had to reduce the budgets of many frontline services.

The Council currently provides discretionary free bus passes for pupils to attend faith schools where they meet specific criteria. The Authority is not required to make such provision. A number of other Authorities including those in south Yorkshire have already withdrawn such provision.

In terms of the proposed withdrawal Sheffield consulted over the period 25 March and 21 May 2013.

The Cabinet is being asked to consider three options ranging from full withdrawal to two phased introductions. The potential impact on different characteristics defined as being protected under the Equality Act 2010 may be different based on which option is approved.

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#), we have to pay due regard to: "Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations." [More information is available on the council website](#)

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	
<p>Age</p> <p>Free bus passes are currently provided for pupils of statutory school age. In 2011/12 a total of 1029 free passes were issued for pupils attending faith schools.</p> <p>Of this number 74 qualified under the statutory low income criteria and therefore would not be affected at all</p>	<p>This is an age specific proposal, and all of those who receive the free bus passes at issue are between the ages of 5 and 16.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>The proposal directly impacts on statutory school aged children of between 5 and 16 years old.</p> <p>Feedback from the consultation highlighted that 65.9% of responses strongly agreed that the removal of free transport would prevent children and young people accessing places in faith schools in the future.</p> <p>However, 45.1% of responses would not consider a transfer to another school if free transport was withdrawn, though 19.9% were unsure.</p>
<p>Disability</p> <p>Any child that has a disability that requires them to receive assisted transport to and from school would not be affected by this proposal as the statutory duty on the Council in such circumstances would remain.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>If the child or young person attends their nearest appropriate school, either mainstream, Integrated Resource or Special School, which is named in their Statement of Special Educational Needs and that school is outside of the Statutory walking distance they will qualify for statutory transport assistance.</p> <p>Therefore, pupils meeting these criteria would not be affected by these proposals.</p> <p>Assisted Transport (taxi, specialised vehicle) will be decided on an individual basis, depending on the level of the child's needs.</p>
<p>Pregnancy/maternity</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>This proposal has no impact on this category.</p>
<p>Race The current Y11 cohort would not be affected by these proposals.</p> <p>Of the remaining pupils who are</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>A mapping exercise has been undertaken to identify the residences of the "Other Black African" students to establish whether or not this would impact on a specific area of the City. The evidence confirms that there is no direct impact on any one part of the City</p>

<p>currently in receipt of passes an analysis of ethnic background has been undertaken.</p> <p>There are 15 different ethnic backgrounds identified.</p> <p>The most significant impact is on the “White British” group who make up 75% of current recipients.</p> <p>The next largest ethnic group in receipt is “Other Black African” at 7%.</p>			<p>than any other.</p> <p>390 (82.6%) of responses to the consultation were from respondents describing their ethnicity as being white. Of this 368 (95.3%) were White UK. The largest number of BME responses 14 (48.3%) under the came from the grouping of Black/African/ Caribbean or Black British with 4 (13.8%).</p> <p>The two largest numerical groupings of responses broadly mirror the two largest affected groups.</p>
<p>Religion/belief Currently in Sheffield free denominational transport is predominantly accessed by Catholic children as the only denominational secondary schools in Sheffield are Catholic.</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>382 (94.1%) of those who responded to the consultation described themselves as Christian.</p> <p>The proposed changes would directly impact on a limited number of families. Just over 1000 pupils currently receive free bus passes to attend denominational secondary schools, approximately 3% of the whole secondary school population.</p> <p>The provision is currently accessed by Catholic children as the only denominational secondary schools in Sheffield are Catholic. Hence the proposal affects only Catholic families.</p> <p>The majority of passes (94.8 %) are provided for pupils attending All Saints and Notre Dame Secondary Schools with a smaller number (5.2 %) provided for primary school pupils.</p> <p>In their responses to the consultations, some parents of other faiths (including non-Catholic Christians) have stated that they consider the present policy to be unfair because its effect is to treat Catholic families more favourably than families of other faiths and/or beliefs.</p>

			<p>The proposed change will not impact on families who meet the statutory “low income” criteria as the statutory requirement to provide free transport on grounds of, inter alia, the parents’ religion or belief remains.</p> <p>See also the discussion in relation to the faith sector, below.</p>
Sex	Neutral	None	This proposal has no impact on this category.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	None	This proposal has no impact on this category.
Transgender	Neutral	None	This proposal has no impact on this category.
Carers	Neutral	None	This proposal has no impact on this category.
Voluntary, community & faith sector	Negative	High	<p>There are direct implications for Catholic and Church of England schools, families and both Diocesan Bodies. There may be a perception of discrimination against families wishing to attend Faith schools on grounds of religion or belief.</p> <p>The Diocese of Hallam and Notre Dame School have explained that their understanding of the organisation of Catholic provision in the city was based on an expectation that Catholic pupils attending the Catholic primaries would be able to transfer to the Catholic secondary schools.</p> <p>They make the point that if the free bus passes were withdrawn, it would be unequal for those Catholic families living three miles or more from a Catholic secondary school because they would not have zero fare bus pass to assist with their travel to secondary school. Their view is that this would result in a narrower social intake at the Catholic schools which are located closer to the more</p>

			<p>affluent residential areas of Sheffield.</p> <p>Families with children already attending a denominational school applied for places under the current policy criteria. Many Catholic families would therefore be faced with a change in provision from that available at the time they applied to attend the school in the first year. One impact of this proposal could be that some Catholic families can no longer afford to send their children to a Catholic School.</p> <p>Families that are defined as “Low Income” would however continue to retain their statutory entitlement to free transport.</p> <p>One option being considered by the Council to mitigate the impact on families is the on-going provision of funding for Y10 and Y11 pupils under Option 3.</p> <p>The Department for Education issued new guidance on Home to School Travel and Transport in March 2013. The guidance states clearly that</p> <p><i>“There is no general statutory duty requiring local authorities to provide free transport to faith school”</i></p> <p>Any child that does no longer qualify for a free pass may still use the dedicated buses and pay the minimum fare, currently 70p a journey.</p>
<p>Financial inclusion, poverty, social justice:</p>	Negative	Medium	<p>The proposed change will affect the Catholic community in particular, particularly with regard to their ability to access a place at a Catholic School if that is their preference, or their expectation.</p> <p>However, it is important to note that there will be no impact on families that meet the statutory “low income” definition as described above. i.e. where the child is eligible for Free School Meals or the family is in receipt of the Higher rate of Working Tax Credit . Families meeting these criteria will still qualify for free transport on the grounds of religion and belief. In 2012/13 there were a total of 57 passes allocated under low income criteria.</p> <p>There is a financial impact upon families that currently receive free transport, if it were to be withdrawn. Following the consultation exercise held in the Autumn Term 2012 many parents responded who were just</p>

			<p>outside the “Low Income” criteria who raised concerns that they would not be in a position to fund transport to enable their child or children to continue attending their current school.</p> <p>In recognition of this potential difficulty one of the options that the Council consulted upon is for students in Years 10 and 11 who are currently in receipt of a free bus pass to retain their entitlement if the family is in receipt of Working Tax Credit at anything below the higher rate (Option 3).</p> <p>Any child that no longer qualifies for a free pass may still use the dedicated buses and pay the minimum fare, currently 70p a journey.</p> <p>Families who are currently in receipt of free transport may have to consider the current school placement of their child if they cannot afford to pay for transport. This may be perceived as divisive in that only those that can afford to pay for transport can continue to attend denominational schools. Responses to the questionnaire indicate that 151parents (35.2% of those responding) may consider transferring their children to other schools if the free passes are withdrawn.</p>
Cohesion:	Low	None	<p>Analysis of the geographical distribution of pupils currently in receipt of discretionary free bus passes shows a wide spread predominantly in the North, North/East and South/South East of the City. It is not therefore anticipated that this proposal would have any significant impact on social cohesion.</p>
Other/additional:			

Overall summary of possible impact (to be used on EMT, cabinet reports etc):

- **What is the proposal?**

We are consulting on 3 Options which are confirmed above on page 1.

- **Why do it?**

The provision is discretionary and is therefore not a statutory requirement. At a time of unprecedented pressures on the Council's budget it must consider all elements of discretionary expenditure in order to protect front line services to the most vulnerable.

- **Is it in line with regional/national developments?**

Yes. Many Authorities have already withdrawn this provision including our South Yorkshire neighbours Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham.

- **Which groups it will affect adversely?**

The most direct impact of withdrawing the discretionary free bus passes would be on Catholic pupils attending Catholic schools. Currently around 1000 pupils receive passes. Catholic children who meet the statutory low income criteria will not be affected by these proposals and will retain their statutory entitlement to travel to any school between 2 and 15 miles from home on grounds of religion or belief.

- **Who was Consulted?**

- Parents of all current Y7-Y10 students attending All Saints and Notre Dame
- Parents of all current Y5 and Y6 pupils attending Aided Primary Schools
- Parents of any Rec-Y4 pupils currently in receipt of a discretionary free pass
- All Secondary and Primary Headteachers and Chairs of Governors
- Sheffield College
- Longley Park
- Sheffield Hallam and Sheffield Diocese
- South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive
- SACRE
- All Councillors
- All local MPs
- Parishes and Bishops

- **What did consultees say**

The consultation was targeted at those with an interest in the proposals. The wider public were able to respond via the Council web site. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of respondents were against the proposed changes.

A total of 495 questionnaires were completed and received, 17 emails and 2 letters. Of those responding by questionnaire the majority were from parents or carers (431, 87.1%) and young people (41, 8.3%). A full analysis of responses is provided at Appendices 1, 4 and 5 to the main Cabinet report.

Of those that responded 66.9% currently receive passes and 33.1% do not. A total of 364 (73.8%) strongly disagreed with the proposed changes and 9.7% strongly agreed.

- **How much of consultation feedback helped in reshape of EIA**

The responses were carefully considered. The Authority thoroughly investigated whether there would be any detriment to any specific part of the City or on any minority group through a mapping exercise as explained in this report and concluded that there was no evidence of such detriment.

- **Impact implication on other services/portfolios**

The assessment of travel passes is undertaken by the Customer First Team. Colleagues have been fully briefed and will be notified of any change to the current policy criteria.

The Council's Transport Manager has also been kept informed though these proposals are not expected to impact on the current contractual arrangements of those providing transport to All Saints and Notre Dame.

- **What has/can be done to mitigate/any future action to be taken.**

Option 3 makes provision for students in Years 10 and 11 where families are on any element of Working Tax Credit outside the highest rate.

If you have identified significant change, med or high negative outcomes or for example the impact is on specialist provision relating to the groups above, or there is cumulative impact you **must** complete the action plan.

Review date:

Q Tier Ref

Reference number:

Action plan

Area of impact	Action and mitigation	Lead, timescale and how it will be monitored/reviewed
Religion and Belief	<p>To provide summary information on the proposed change as not all families will be affected.</p> <p>To provide information on the appeals process and on alternative schools to affected families.</p> <p>Option 3 seeks to mitigate by making provision for students in Years 10 and 11 where families are on any element of Working Tax Credit outside the highest rate.</p>	<p>Information will be provided by the Schools Admissions Service from June 2013.</p> <p>First point of contact information will be updated as necessary.</p>
Faith and Community	<p>To provide summary information on the proposed change as not all families will be affected.</p> <p>To provide information on the appeals process and on alternative schools to affected families.</p> <p>Option 3 seeks to mitigate by making provision for students in Years 10 and 11 where families are on any element of Working Tax Credit outside the highest rate.</p>	<p>Information will be provided by the Schools Admissions Service from June 2013.</p> <p>First point of contact information will be updated as necessary.</p>

Area of impact	Action and mitigation	Lead, timescale and how it will be monitored/reviewed
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		

Approved (Lead Manager): Date:

Approved (EIA Lead Officer for Portfolio): Date:

Sheffield City Council Home to School Transport Appeals Process

The following two stage home to school transport review/appeals process will be implemented for applicants who do not meet the statutory eligibility criteria and have been refused assistance with transport to a school.

The parent/carer who wishes to challenge a decision about the transport arrangements offered to their child, including questions of their child's eligibility for travel support, the distance measurement and the safety of the route, will be entitled to seek a review of and, if necessary, an appeal to the Admissions Committee against the decision.

Stage one:

Once a decision has been made to refuse Home to School Transport, a parent/carer will receive a letter from Customer First informing them that:

They have **20 working days** from receipt of the local authority's home to school transport decision, to make a written request asking for a review of that decision.

The written request should detail why the parent/carer believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.

Within **20 working days** of receipt of the parent's written request, a senior officer will review the original decision and send the parent a detailed written outcome setting out:

1. The nature of the decision reached;
2. What factors were considered;
3. How the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. consideration of eligibility criteria, qualifying schools, Road Safety etc. if appropriate);
4. Information about other departments and/or agencies if they were consulted as part of the process (if appropriate);
5. The rationale for the decision reached;
6. Information regarding further escalation of the appeals process to stage two (if appropriate).

Stage two:

The parent/carer has **20 working days** from receipt of the local authority's Stage one decision to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two where an

Admissions Committee will meet and consider the individual circumstances. The parent/carer should submit detailed reasons for the appeal, together with any supporting information/documents.

The Terms of Reference for the Admissions Committee is set out in the Council's Constitution. The Committee have delegated authority to determine appeals against decisions to refuse transport. This means that the Committee has discretion to consider any case that does not fall within the Council's Home to School Transport Policy. The Committee is experienced with regard to school transport legislation guidance.

Within **40 working days** of receipt of a request for escalation, the Committee will consider representations from the parent and Local Authority officers. At this stage of the process the parent/carer is welcome to attend the appeal to support their case in person, if they wish to do so. For those who do not wish to attend, the appeal will be determined on the basis of the written material submitted.

Before reaching their decision the Committee will look at all the available information and documentary evidence and reach a considered view in light of their discretion.

The Committee will consider whether there are any exceptional educational, financial, medical, physical, family or social circumstances. The Committee will also consider the reasons for choosing a particular school. **[Please insert any other factors you feel are relevant]**

Once a decision has been reached the parent/carer will receive a detailed written outcome of the appeal setting out:

1. The nature of the decision reached;
2. What factors were considered;
3. The rationale for the decision reached;
4. How the review was conducted (including consideration of eligibility criteria qualifying schools, road safety assessments etc, if appropriate);
5. The guidelines and standards followed (including statutory duties, DFE guidelines, road safety assessments);
6. Information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process (if appropriate);
7. If refused, information about escalation to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below).

Complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman/Judicial Review

The decision of the Committee is final and there is no further appeal, unless there have been significant and material changes in the parent's circumstances that

require a new decision about their application, e.g. medical reasons or they have moved house.

Where an appeal is unsuccessful at Stage two, appellants will be notified that they have the right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, only where complainants consider that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal was handled.

If the complainant considers the decision of the Admission Committee to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may also apply for judicial review.

This document will be published on the Sheffield City Council's website and paper copies will be provided with refusal letters.

June 2013

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

Report of: Executive Director (Place)

Date: 19 June 2013

Subject: Disposal of Errington Sites B & C, Arbourthorne.

Author of Report: Christine Rose (273 4373)

Summary:

This report seeks authority to dispose of two cleared sites at Arbourthorne, referred to here as Errington Sites B & C, to Sanctuary Housing Association (SHA) for the development of affordable housing. The new homes would offer a relocation option for those households affected by the demolition scheme in the area (as approved by Cabinet on 08 May 2013).

Delivery of the proposed affordable housing scheme requires the Council to dispose of the sites to SHA at nil consideration.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The development of housing on these sites would benefit the local economy, provide opportunities for local labour and contribute to the physical regeneration of Arbourthorne. The Council would also benefit from funds generated through the New Homes Bonus scheme, which includes additional financial incentives for providing affordable homes.

The provision of affordable housing would provide additional relocation options for Arbourthorne residents affected by demolition and help meet the identified shortfall of affordable housing in the City.

Recommendations:

- R1 That the land now shown at Appendix A as Errington Site B be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council and disposed to Sanctuary Affordable Housing Limited at nil consideration for use as social housing
- R2 That the land now shown at Appendix A as Errington Site C be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council and subject to the availability of further grant funding and the submission to the City Council of an acceptable scheme disposed to Sanctuary Affordable Housing Limited at nil consideration for use as social housing
- R3 That the Director of Capital and Major Projects in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Development Services be authorised to agree an acceptable scheme for Errington C.
- R4 That the Director of Capital and Major Projects in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Development Services be authorised to negotiate and agree terms for the disposal of the land for the purposes set out in the report including the variation of any boundaries as required and the Director of Capital and Major Projects be authorised to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the necessary legal documentation.
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Background Papers:

Category of Report: OPEN except for Appendix C: CLOSED

Appendix C is not for publication because it contains exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES Cleared by: Chris Nicholson
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by: Andrea Simpson
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by: Ian Oldershaw
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES
Economic impact
YES
Community safety implications
YES
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
YES
Area(s) affected
East Community Assembly
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Cllr Harry Harpham
Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee if decision called in
Safer and Stronger Communities
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
YES

Disposal of Errington Sites B & C, Arbourthorne

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks authority to dispose of two cleared sites at Arbourthorne, referred to here as Errington Sites B & C, to Sanctuary Housing Association (SHA) for the development of affordable housing. The new homes would offer a relocation option for those households affected by the demolition scheme in the area (as approved by Cabinet on 08 May 2013).
- 1.2 Delivery of the proposed affordable housing scheme requires the Council to dispose of the sites to SHA at nil consideration.

2. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE

- 2.1 There is a shortfall of affordable housing within Sheffield and the scheme would add to the stock of high quality affordable accommodation in the City.
- 2.2 For residents of Arbourthorne affected by demolition, it would provide another affordable local relocation option as an alternative to existing Council homes, which would then ease the demand on those properties and hasten the rehousing process.

3. OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.1 The provision of additional affordable housing in Arbourthorne would help sustain that community by minimising the disruption caused by the demolition process and allowing residents to continue living in the area.
- 3.2 SHA are committed to supporting local labour and this development would create employment opportunities for local people.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Errington development sites (A, B & C), shown at Appendix A, were created by the demolition of non-traditional "5M" style Council properties. The demolition of the properties on the Errington sites was known as Phase 1.
- 4.2 Errington Site A is already under development, following Cabinet's decision in September 2011 to dispose of the site to SHA. The development of 52 affordable rented apartments for older people is expected to complete in April 2014.
- 4.3 On 08 May 2013, Cabinet authorised the demolition of Arbourthorne Phases 2 and 3. Appendix B shows the Errington sites in relation to these phases.

- 4.4 Following delays to another SHA scheme elsewhere in the region, funding has become available to deliver 44 affordable rented homes. SHA approached the City Council with a proposal to extend their existing involvement in Arbourthorne by developing these homes there.

5. PROPOSAL

- 5.1 It is proposed to develop 44 homes for Affordable Rent on Errington Site B – a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes.
- 5.2 SHA have drawn up a sketch plan to develop 31 additional properties on the remainder of the cleared site (Errington Site C). Funding has not yet been sought for this site. SHA would seek HCA funding if Cabinet approves the disposal.
- 5.3 All properties would be subject to 100% nominations from the Council on initial lets, meaning they would be part of the Demolition Band set up for those affected by the Arbourthorne demolition scheme.
- 5.4 The funding for Site B has become available in the 2011/15 Affordable Homes Programme, which means the scheme must be completed by March 2015.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The viability of these schemes depends on the Council making the land available for nil consideration. This is demonstrated by the review of SHA's development appraisal contained in a Closed Appendix C.
- 6.2 Disposing of Errington Site B to SHA for nil consideration would equate to a Council contribution towards the provision of affordable housing of £176,000, based on the current valuation of the site.
- 6.3 Disposing of Errington Site C to SHA for nil consideration would equate to a Council contribution towards the provision of affordable housing of £124,000, based on the current valuation of the site.
- 6.4 The sites sit within the Housing Revenue Account. No provision has been made within the Neighbourhoods Investment Programme for a capital receipt being generated from the sale of this land, so there is no direct impact on the planned capital programme.
- 6.5 The development of affordable housing on these sites would produce a significant benefit to the Council through the government's New Homes Bonus scheme, which includes additional financial incentives for affordable homes. This would amount to over £8,000 per unit over six years.
- 6.6 The Council currently pays for the maintenance of the cleared site so

there would be a saving following transfer to SHA.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 When deciding whether to dispose of a site at a discount to its market value it must be considered whether the proposed disposal would be in the interests of the City and its inhabitants as a whole and council tax payers and would be consistent with the effective, economic and efficient discharge of the Council's functions.
- 7.2 The land is held for the purposes of Part II of the Housing Act 1985 and the power to dispose is under Section 32 of that Act and subject to Secretary of State's consent.
- 7.3 Disposal of the site to SHA at nil consideration to enable the development of affordable homes would constitute assistance in connection with privately let housing accommodation and would require the consent of the Secretary of State under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1988. A General Consent has been issued for financial assistance or gratuitous benefit consisting of disposal of land to registered providers of social housing for development as housing accommodation. No further consent under section 32 of the 1985 Act is needed.
- 7.4 Although Sanctuary Housing Association is the group name for the Registered Provider, the disposal would be to Sanctuary Affordable Housing Limited, which is the part of the SHA group that owns Affordable Rented homes.

8. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This project should be of universal positive benefit to all local people regardless of age, race, sex, faith, disability, sexuality, etc. No negative equality impacts have been identified.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan includes a proposal to build 75 new Council houses over the next three years, so the Council could look to develop Errington B & C itself. However, this would require more preparatory work, which would delay the development process and mean that relocation options were not in place as quickly for residents affected by demolition. It would also mean that the HCA grant being made available via SHA would be lost to the city and that the Council would not be able to pursue new Council housing in any other areas.
- 9.2 A private housing development would not be a viable proposition in the current housing market, so the alternative is to retain the site for future disposal. Whilst this might eventually yield a capital receipt for the

Council, the site would be left vacant for the foreseeable future. This would be detrimental to the regeneration of Arbourthorne and would hinder the rehousing process for those residents affected by demolition.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The development of housing on these sites would benefit the local economy, provide opportunities for local labour and contribute to the physical regeneration of Arbourthorne. The Council would also benefit from funds generated through the New Homes Bonus scheme, which includes additional financial incentives for providing affordable homes.
- 10.2 The provision of affordable housing would provide additional relocation options for Arbourthorne residents affected by demolition and help meet the identified shortfall of affordable housing in the City.

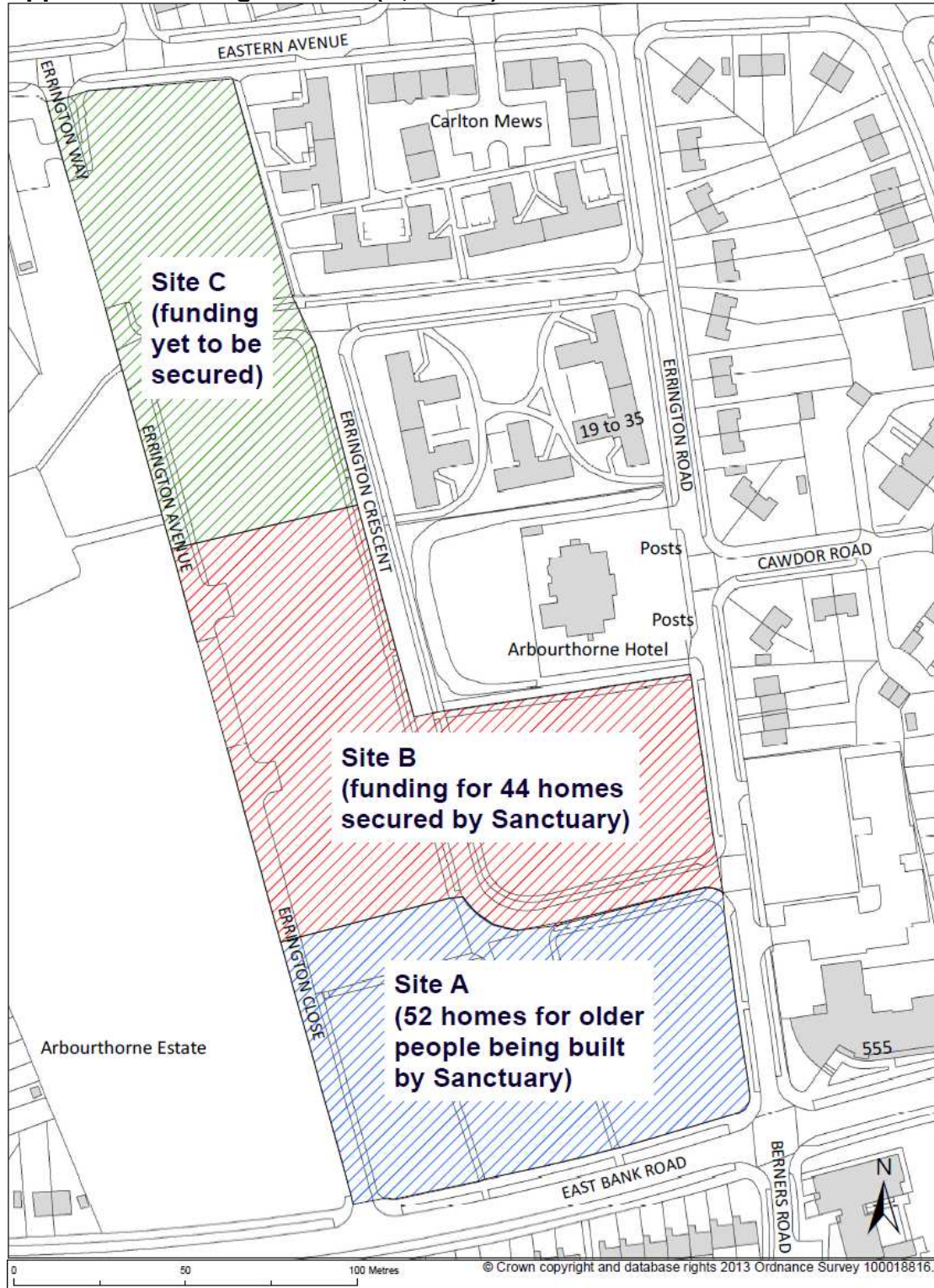
11 REASONS FOR EXEMPTION

- 11.1 Appendix C of this report is presented as an exempt item because it contains exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The reason for its exemption is that the Appendix contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

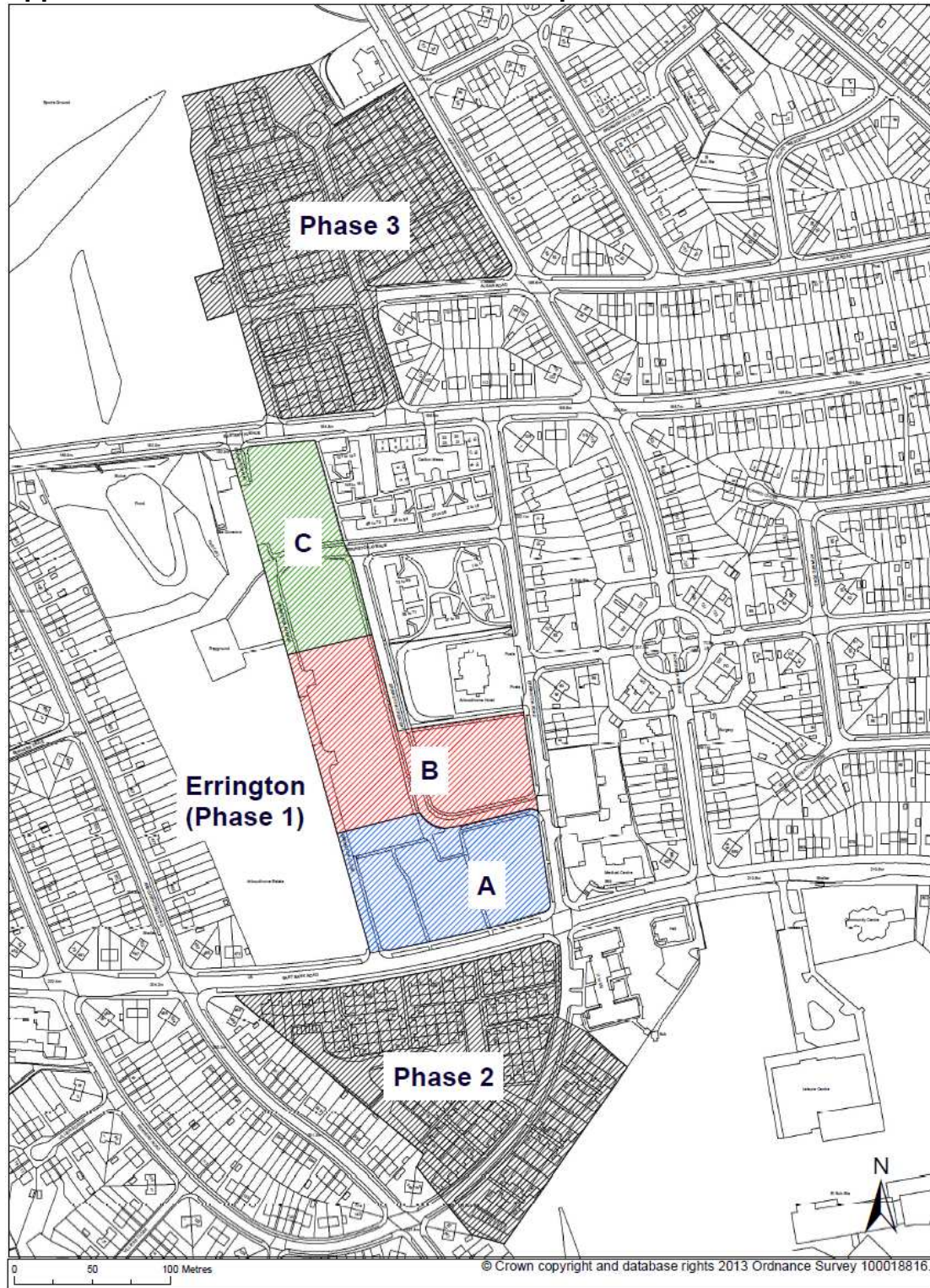
11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1 That the land now shown at Appendix A as Errington Site B be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council and disposed to Sanctuary Affordable Housing Limited for use as social housing
- R2 That the land now shown at Appendix A as Errington Site C be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council and subject to the availability of further grant funding and the submission to the City Council of an acceptable scheme disposed to Sanctuary Affordable Housing Limited for use as social housing
- R3 That the Director of Capital and Major Projects in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Development Services be authorised to agree an acceptable scheme for Errington C.
- R4 That the Director of Capital and Major Projects in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and Development Services be authorised to negotiate and agree terms for the disposal of the land for the purposes set out in the report including the variation of any boundaries as required and the Director of Capital and Major Projects be authorised to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the necessary legal documentation.

Appendix A: Errington Sites (A, B & C)



Appendix B: Arbourthorne Fields Redevelopment Sites



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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