

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Cabinet

Meeting held 19 September 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Julie Dore (Chair), Olivia Blake, Lewis Dagnall, Jackie Drayton, Jayne Dunn, Mazher Iqbal, Mary Lea, Chris Peace, Jack Scott and Jim Steinke

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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 made at the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 18 July 2018 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Petition in respect of Affordable Housing

5.1.1 Michael Miller submitted a petition containing 2,569 signatures, requesting that housing developers be made to be more transparent about costs in Sheffield.

5.1.2 Mr Miller commented that current planning law stated that if a developer would make less than a 20% profit on a new development, they could ignore a Council's regulations about building affordable and social housing. Leaked documents from several developers had shown that the maths they used to work out their profit margins were purposefully misleading, allowing them to claim they will make less than 20% profit on a development by undervaluing the prices of the houses they will sell and over-costing the labour.

5.1.3 Mr Miller added that, to combat this, Islington, Greenwich, Lambeth and Bristol Councils had introduced a policy that forced developers; "viability assessments" to be made public. By bringing this maths into the public domain, Councils, campaigning groups and individuals would be able to hold developers to account and force them to use more honest maths. Would the Council therefore consider adopting this policy?

5.1.4 In response, Councillor Jack Scott, Cabinet Member for Transport and

Development, acknowledged that the large number of signatures in support of the petition highlighted the strength of feeling across the City in respect of this issue. He did not believe developers were exploiting a legal loophole in this respect but in his opinion the law deliberately assisted developers to get out of their obligations.

5.1.5 Sheffield was one of the best Councils in the country to press developers to fulfil their obligations in respect of viability. However, this did not take away the benefit of making such assessments public and Councillor Scott could see the benefit in requiring that. Developing a baseline that developers could refer to would also benefit developers in the long term.

5.1.6 Councillor Scott was supportive of developing this policy. It did need to be fair to developers but affordability to the public needed to be a priority. Councillor Scott wished to see viability assessments signed off by a named individual with the appropriate qualifications and then countersigned by the applicant. Councillor Scott therefore hoped that an executive decision in this respect could be signed off in the next couple of months. Clarification was needed as to whether a consultation process was required. Councillor Scott believed that undertaking a viability assessment at the end of the application process was the most transparent way of doing things. He concluded by thanking Mr Miller for the petition and suggested it be referred to the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee for consideration.

5.1.7 The Leader of the Council, Councillor Julie Dore, added that the Council did scrutinise viability assessments. The problem for the Council was the lack of the resources available to scrutinise the assessments as much as they would like as a result of Government cuts. She agreed with the views of Councillor Scott and that there should be two stages in the planning process in respect of viability – at the beginning and at the end of the process. Councillor Dore believed that a national policy in respect of this should be introduced and encouraged people to lobby the Government to achieve this.

5.1.8 **RESOLVED:** That the petition be referred to the Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Development Committee for consideration.

5.2 Public Question in respect of Wind Flow

5.2.1 Nigel Slack commented that, with ambitions in the City Centre for ever taller building blocks, he had expressed concern, to Councillors and developers, about the awareness of developers about wind-flow issues at ground level of such buildings. Mr Slack added that clearly no one would wish to create a Bridgewater House (Leeds) effect within the City Centre.

5.2.2 Mr Slack therefore asked what requirements did planning place on developers in respect of wind-flow modelling for new proposals? In light of the strong winds (40mph) yesterday and with Climate Change making extreme weather events more frequent, what wind speeds were they expected to consider?

5.2.3 Mr Slack further asked had the City created a measure of acceptable levels of

pedestrian safety or comfort and how might this be measured or monitored? Did any expectation on developers include the impact of light debris around the City and any associated vortex hazards?

5.2.4 Councillor Jack Scott responded that he was ambitious for the City in respect of development. As part of the planning process, developers were required to submit a micro climate assessment. This would inform detailed design negotiation and evaluations. There were a number of examples across the City where measures had been put in place which were designed to prevent a vortex or wind hazard.

5.2.5 However, Councillor Scott added that the issue required further policy development work and this would be included in the Local Plan in due course. If Mr Slack had any specific concerns related to particular buildings, these should be reported to building control.

5.3 Public Question in respect of Academies

5.3.1 Nigel Slack commented that, in January, it was highlighted that a number of Academy Schools were either in the red and, in conjunction with already dire levels of Government investment in Sheffield schools funding, we were seeing schools subject to unaccountable profiteering management and with about as much public scrutiny as Starbucks. Mr Slack believed that profit was now being placed ahead of pupil needs, including their safety, and the Education and Skills Funding Agency had had to intervene in some cases. Were the Council satisfied that Sheffield Academies had good levels of transparency and oversight from parents, governors and the Authority? Were the Council able to monitor Academy accounts and was there any awareness of financial risks associated with local Academies? Bearing in mind the recent reports of Sheffield pupil exclusions being above the national average, were the Council aware of the national correlation between these figures and the Academy status of the schools involved? Were the levels of exclusions a reflection of attempts by schools to improve test results and OFSTED scores?

5.3.2 In response, Councillor Jayne Dunn, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, commented that she was not in favour of academisation and the questions Mr Slack had asked were the very questions she had been asking. Unfortunately, the Council could not insist that they saw any financial figures from academies. The Schools Forum and Learn Sheffield within the City did encourage good sharing of best practice. The Education and Skills Funding Agency could see Academies finances but the Council were not able to. She agreed that levels of exclusions were not acceptable and this was an issue of policy development that the Council was working on.

5.3.3 Councillor Julie Dore added that governing bodies had access to their school's finances and questions could be raised at governing body meetings. However, academies did not have to have Local Government appointees on their governing bodies. She shared the concerns of Mr Slack and added that the Council were working to find a solution to the problems.

5.4 Public Question in respect of the Walk-In Centre at Broad Lane

5.4.1 Nigel Slack referred to the saving of the Walk-In Centre on Broad Lane and asked if there was pressure put on to the Clinical Commissioning Group to bring this back to the NHS rather than as a profit making provider of NHS branded services?

5.4.2 Councillor Chris Peace, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care, responded that it was clear that, nationally, Labour saw the NHS as the preferred provider. The CCG were meeting in respect of this tomorrow and no decision had been taken as yet. This was a good example of the democratic process as it had been discussed at Scrutiny, the Health and Wellbeing Board and at Full Council. She was clear that any proposals should not widen health inequalities in the City and negatively impact the most vulnerable in the City.

5.5 Public Question in respect of the Powers of the Sheffield City Region Mayor

5.5.1 Nigel Slack asked with responsibility for transport strategy being part of the Sheffield City Region Mayor's role, what part will the City play in guiding this process?

5.5.2 Councillor Julie Dore commented that, prior to the Mayoral Authority being created, there was an integrated South Yorkshire Transport Authority and engagement with the Mayor on transport would not be too dissimilar to the way the Council used to engage with the Transport Authority. Sheffield had its own Transport Strategy and engaged widely with partners across the City Region Authority. A City Region wide deal had not yet been signed to Sheffield's disappointment and, as a result, no devolved transport funding due to the Devolution Deal had been received from Government.

6. ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY

6.1 It was reported that there had been no decisions called-in for Scrutiny since the last meeting of the Cabinet.

7. RETIREMENT OF STAFF

7.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report on Council staff retirements.

7.2 **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>
<u>Place</u>		
Stephen Ash	Assistant Transport Services Manager	32
Karen Barker	Secretary to Senior	38

	Management Team	
Ralph Bennett	Building Control Manager	39
Keith Brookes	Enforcement Officer, Trading Standards	44
Maxine Clark	Neighbourhood Support Officer	20
Richard Coe	Senior Civil and Structural Engineer	44
Andrew Conwill	Planning Officer, Landscapes	43
Janet Curbishley	Senior Business Support Officer	31
Paul Fell	Transport, Traffic and Parking Services Business Manager	39
Gillian French	Technician , Highways Development Control	39
Brendan Gillespie	Enforcement Assistant, Planning	30
Fiona Graham	Team Leader, Estate Management	34
Stephen Guest	Technical Manager, Building Services	39
Sandra Hall	Housing Co-Ordinator	35
Richard Harris	Ecology Manager, Parks and Countryside	28
Stevenson Hewitt	Clerk of Works	45
Amanda James	Housing Development Officer	32
John Marshall	Assistant Markets Manager	46
Susan Nadin	Bereavement Services Manager	37
Richard Proctor	Transport Planning Manager	35
Paul Sheen	Cost Manager	32

Victor Slimm	Driver/Plant Operative	40
Maurice Suter	Property Technician, Property Services	30
Susan Walker	Community Arts Officer	30

People Services

Wendy Bramwell	Team Manager, Intermediate Care Assessment Team	29
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Resources

Jon Mordecai	Trade Union Convenor	44
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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. NEW HOMES DELIVERY PLAN

8.1 The Executive Director, Place submitted a report commenting on, and attaching, the New Homes Delivery Plan which sets out the broad principles and proposals for a programme for achieving, on average, 2,000 new homes per annum in the areas of Sheffield where they are needed over the next five years, and a longer term pipeline to sustain this level of delivery.

8.2 Councillor Jack Scott responded and stated that, in light of today's Government announcement regarding funding for social housing and infrastructure investment, it would be wise to defer this report to allow a full analysis of the Government's announcement. Councillor Julie Dore agreed and suggested the Council should examine its approach in light of this development. This was agreed by Cabinet Members.

8.3 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) in light of today's Government announcement regarding funding for future social housing development, defers a decision on the Plan to enable a full analysis of the implications of the Government's announcement and requests that a further report be submitted to the October meeting;
- (b) agrees that any work currently in progress aligned with the Plan be continued in the meantime; and
- (c) requests that any decisions required to implement the Plan prior to the October meeting be taken in accordance with the Leader's Scheme of Delegation.

8.4 Reasons for Decision

8.4.1 To assess the implications of today's Government announcement for the delivery of the Plan.

8.5 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

8.5.1 To approve the recommendations as outlined in the report.

9. MONTH 4 CAPITAL APPROVALS

9.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report providing details of proposed changes to the Capital Programme as brought forward in Month 04 2018/19.

9.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet approves the proposed additions and variations to the Capital Programme listed in Appendix 1 of the report, including the procurement strategies and delegates authority to the Director of Finance and Commercial Services or nominated Officer, as appropriate, to award the necessary contracts.

9.3 Reasons for Decision

9.3.1 The proposed changes to the Capital Programme will improve the services to the people of Sheffield.

9.3.2 To formally record changes to 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.

9.3.3 Obtain the relevant delegations to allow projects to proceed.

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

9.4.1 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.