

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday 21 February 2024 by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee.

Item No

9. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024-25

- 9.1 The Director of Finance and Commercial Services submitted reports containing proposals with regard to the Council's Revenue Budget for 2024-25 and the Capital Strategy for 2023-2053.

The purpose of the Revenue Budget report is to:

- recommend to Full Council the City Council's revenue budget for 2024/25, including the position on reserves and balances;
- recommend to Full Council to approve a 2024/25 Council Tax for the City Council; and
- recommend to Full Council to note the levies and precepts made on the City Council by other authorities.

The purpose of the Capital Strategy and Budget Book 2024-2054 is to provide a snapshot of our capital programme for the period 2024-2029, together with the background and context for our capital investment over this period and for the next thirty years.

In addition, the Director of Finance and Commercial Services submitted a supplementary report providing details of the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Precept and details of the decisions taken at Finance Committee on Monday 19th February regarding premium Council Tax charges. The supplementary report set out newly stated recommendations featuring both these elements.

At the meeting the Director of Finance and Commercial Services outlined details of an additional recommendation to be added in respect of a delegation of authority to the relevant Director to increase fees and charges where they have been considered by a Policy Committee as part of the budget process and are included in Appendix 3 - Committee External Income of the Sheffield City Council Revenue Budget 2024/25.

- 9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

1. As regards the Revenue Budget , approves for submission to the meeting of the City Council on 6th March 2024, the recommendations in the Revenue Budget report, as set out below:-

- (i) To approve a net Revenue Budget for 2024/25 amounting to £543.815m;
- (ii) To approve a Band D equivalent Council Tax of £1,932.56 for City Council services, i.e. an increase of 4.99% (2.99% City Council increase and 2% national arrangement for the social care precept);
- (iii) To note that the Section 151 Officer has reviewed the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves, in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003. Further details can be found in **Appendix 5** and within the Section 25 Statutory Statement on Sustainability of Budget and Level of Reserves from paragraph 2;
- (iv) To note that, if overspends against the agreed budgets emerge, then Executive Directors and Directors will be required to develop and implement plans to mitigate fully any overspend, within 2024/25, in consultation with elected Members;
- (v) To approve the savings as set out in **Appendix 2**;
- (vi) To approve the revenue budget allocations for each of the services, as set out in **Appendix 4a**;
- (vii) To note that, based on the estimated expenditure level set out in **Appendix 4** to this report, the amounts shown in part B of **Appendix 6** would be calculated by the City Council for the year 2024/25, in accordance with sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- (viii) To note the information on the precepts issued by the South Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner and of South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority, together with the impact of these on the overall amount of Council Tax to be charged in the City Council's area;
- (ix) To note the precepts issued by local parish councils which add £676,767 to the calculation of the budget requirement in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- (x) To approve the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategies set out in **Appendix 7** and the recommendations contained therein;
- (xi) To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy set out in **Appendix 7**, which takes into account the revisions proposed for 2024/25 onwards;

(xii) To agree that authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Commercial Services to undertake Treasury Management activity, to create and amend appropriate Treasury Management Practice Statements and to report on the operation of Treasury Management activity on the terms set out in these documents;

(xiii) To approve a Pay Policy for 2024/25 as set out in **Appendix 8**;

(xiv) To agree that (a) the Members allowances scheme introduced in 2022/23 be implemented for 2024/25 and (b) to note that the Independent Remuneration Panel will review the Scheme each year, to make sure the scheme supports the governance structure and the roles and responsibilities of elected members;

(xv) To note the determination of the Finance Committee on Monday 19th February 2024 to implement a second homes premium (as defined in the report to that Committee) from 1st April 2025;

(xvi) To note the determination of the Finance Committee on Monday 19th February 2024 to bring forward the chargeable period of the Long Term Empty premium from 2 years of unoccupation to 1 year of unoccupation with effect from 1st April 2024; and

(xvii) Except where the decision is to be taken by the Council as a Charity Trustee, to delegate authority to the relevant Director to increase fees and charges where they have been considered by a Policy Committee as part of the budget process and are included in Appendix 3 - Committee External Income of the Sheffield City Council Revenue Budget 2024/25.

2. As regards the Capital Strategy, approves the submission to the meeting of the City Council on 6 March 2024, the recommendations:-

(i) To approve the contents of the Capital Strategy and the specific projects included in the years 2024/25 to 2028/29;

(ii) To note that the block allocations are included within the programme for noting at this stage and detailed proposals will be brought back for separate Member approval as part of the monthly monitoring procedures; and

(iii) To approve the proposed Capital Programme for the 5 years to 2028/29 as per Section F of the Capital Report.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 9.3.1 The City Council on 6 March 2024 meets to consider the Revenue Budget for 2024/25 and to determine the Council Tax for that year. The report provides information to enable the Council to set a budget and determine the Council Tax. The proposals set out in this report provide for a balanced budget to be recommended to Full Council.

Approval of the Capital Strategy and Budget Book will endorse the Council's proposed approach to capital investment for the next five years and will approve the capital programme to date set out at Section F.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 9.4.1 A number of alternative courses of action are considered as part of the Business Planning process undertaken by Officers before options are recommended to individual policy committees. 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.

- 9.4.2 It is a requirement for all local authorities to produce a Capital Strategy.

10. **COUNCIL PLAN**

- 10.1 The Chief Executive presented a report setting out a final draft of an ambitious four-year Council Plan for Sheffield City Council following public consultation.

The Council Plan aligns directly to our four-year Medium Term Financial Strategy. The new Plan sets out a clear mission statement for the organisation – 'together we get things done' - and five strategic outcomes for the organisation.

The commitments in the new Plan are our contribution to deliver Sheffield's City Goals, ensuring that we will always put people at the heart of what we do and prioritise the long-term prosperity of the city, leading the transition to net zero economy while protecting our treasured local environment.

Since the committee endorsed the draft Plan in December, citizens, employees and partners have given their views via the Have Your Say Sheffield hub and a summary of this feedback is included in the report and in Appendix 2.

The Council Plan has been updated to reflect the feedback we have received and this is in Appendix 1.

- 10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(i) notes and thank citizens, employees and partners for comments and insights provided on the draft Council Plan as part of the Council Plan and Budget Conversation;

(ii) notes the updates and amendments that have been made in line with the feedback on the draft Council Plan; and

(iii) recommends the proposed Council Plan, as set out in Appendix 1, to Full Council for consideration at its meeting on 6th March 2024.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 The Council Plan provides a clear and positive statement of purpose and ambition for the whole council. It is aligned to our four-year Medium Term Financial Strategy and the draft outcomes will increasingly become the focus for our budget and Directorate Plans over the coming year.

10.3.2 Following consultation, the recommendation to Strategy and Resources Policy Committee will enable Full Council to consider the proposed Plan alongside the proposed 2024/25 Budget in March 2024.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 **a) do nothing** – rejected – as set out in the Strategic Framework 2023/24, we are committed to developing and agreeing a medium-term plan for the council that sets out what we want to achieve for the city in the coming years and how we will contribute to the City Goals. The Council Plan is part of our Policy Framework and a critical step in our continued development as an organisation, connecting the ambitions and priorities of the administration to our Medium-Term Financial Strategy, workforce plans, Council Performance Framework, and Directorate Plans. It also ensures that we deliver on one of the key recommendations of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, further demonstrating our strategic development and maturity as an organisation.

10.4.2 **b) extend the Corporate Delivery Plan** – rejected – the Corporate Delivery Plan has provided vital stability and focus for the organisation over the last year, building on the One Year Plan, and bringing clear focus onto a number of key challenges that citizens wanted to see improve. However, the Corporate Delivery Plan was deliberately short term and as recommended by the LGA Peer Team, it is important to bring medium-term focus for the Council so that citizens, staff and partners understand our priorities and ambitions.

11. **DELIVERY OF THE CITY'S HERITAGE STRATEGY**

11.1 The Executive Director City Futures submitted a report responding to the request from Full Council that the Heritage Strategy for Sheffield be added to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee workplan.

The endorsement of Strategy and Resources Policy Committee is requested against the initial actions identified, plus support for exploration into creating and sustaining a Sheffield City Council Heritage Officer post to help continue this work with the sector.

The Strategy and Resourced Committee is also recommended to formally

adopt the Joined Up Heritage Sheffield Heritage Strategy.

11.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(i) agrees to adopt the Heritage Strategy appended, as developed by Joined Up Heritage Sheffield;

(ii) notes the progress already being made in embedding heritage in Sheffield City Council policy and activity;

(iii) endorses the initial Heritage Strategy Action Plan actions identified;

(iv) support the exploration of ways to create and sustain a Sheffield City Council Heritage Officer post to help continue this work with the sector; and

(v) notes that implementation of the Heritage Action Plan will be monitored over a 12 month period and future reports will be brought to this committee.

11.3 Reasons for Decision

11.3.1 The motion passed by Full Council noted (in summary) that:

- the Heritage Strategy for Sheffield is unique in being a community-led strategy, created from the ground up by grass roots organisations;
- the aim of a Heritage Strategy is to protect and enhance a city's heritage and invigorate interest and development; believing that Sheffield's heritage is defined in its widest sense including not only physical assets such as historic buildings and structures, archaeological sites, historic townscapes and landscapes, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, but also museums and art galleries and their collections, archives, libraries, public art, natural habitats, people and communities, spoken stories and much more;
- Sheffield's unique heritage is particularly inclusive, embracing the customs, traditions and skills developed locally, such as the 107 languages spoken, radicalism, anti-slavery campaigning, music, our working men's clubs, and Sheffield as the Home of Football;
- the importance of Heritage to our city recognises its social, environmental, educational and well-being benefits and its economic potential;
- the Heritage sector is an important source of economic prosperity and growth with a total GVA (Gross Value Added) of £36bn, supporting over 500,000 jobs nationally.

By formally adopting the Sheffield Heritage Strategy, Strategy and Resources Committee endorses all the benefits set out above.

The attached Action Plan sets out a way forward for Sheffield City Council to fulfil its role and further benefit from the opportunities which heritage offers.

In order to respond most positively to the heritage agenda, additional officer capacity would be needed to fulfil this potential.

11.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 11.4.1 Over recent years, Sheffield City Council has come to value the city's built heritage and distinctiveness through successful developments such as Kelham Island and Heart of the City, as well as community-based projects run by the University of Sheffield like Roots and Futures.

By adopting the Heritage Strategy and Heritage Action Plan, Sheffield City Council demonstrates support and leadership to maximise the benefits of heritage to the city.

While heritage-positive attitudes and priorities can be built into many areas of the Council's work, we are severely limited by lack of capacity in developing this beneficial area of work.

An alternative approach would be to reject the idea of exploring a dedicated Heritage Officer. If this approach was taken, much of the activity outlined in 1.13 and the Action Plan will either not take place or will happen slowly and in a piecemeal way.

12. **UPDATE ON SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL'S ACTIONS RELATING TO THE ONGOING CONFLICT IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE**

- 12.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement presented a report considering a series of actions to be undertaken by Sheffield City Council responding to concerns expressed by local people in relation to the ongoing conflict in Gaza and the humanitarian situation that continues to unfold. It also responds to a recent Full Council motion, which amongst other things, called for the Strategy and Resources Committee to consider whether Sheffield City Council should join the Sheffield Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid.

- 12.2 **RESOLVED:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(i) notes that the aims of the Sheffield Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid are ones that Sheffield City Council may not lawfully implement, and therefore to note that the Council cannot join the Sheffield Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid;

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(ii) notes the concern of many people in Sheffield about the loss of civilian life

in Israel and Palestine, to note the actions of many people in Sheffield who have campaigned against the ongoing violence, particularly in Gaza, and those who have fundraised to support the victims of the conflict, and to note the options available for Sheffield people to donate to the humanitarian response should they so wish;

(iii) notes that Sheffield City Council does not have any contractual relationship with any of the companies named in the UN Human Rights Council as enabling or supporting the construction or continued existence of illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and to note that the Council will always procure services in line with its Ethical Procurement Policy; and

(iv) notes Sheffield City Council's continued recognition of the State of Palestine as a full, sovereign, and independent nation, as set out in the resolution of Full Council on 4 September 2019.

(NOTE: The result of the vote on resolution (i) was FOR - 11 Members; AGAINST - 2 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members.

12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 By adopting the recommendations, the Council will demonstrate how it is responding to the concerns raised about the ongoing conflict in Gaza by many in the city, whilst ensuring that it acts in accordance with the legal framework laid down by Parliament.

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

12.4.1 The only alternative option considered was to join the Sheffield Coalition against Israeli Apartheid. As discussed in the body of the report, this option was likely to be unlawful and, as such, was discounted.

13. **INTERNATIONAL UPDATE**

13.1 The Executive Director City Futures submitted a report (a) noting that, in November 2023, Strategy & Resources Committee approved proposals for a new Partner City Policy, including assessment criteria for the purposes of assessing new approaches and reviewing the effectiveness of existing international relationships; and (b) providing a summary of the assessments recently undertaken in respect of both existing relationships and approaches received and makes recommendations in respect of decisions required of the Committee. The report also provides a summary of activities and events, linked to our international relations that have taken place over the last 12 months

13.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(i) For the reasons set out in the report, agrees that the City Council:

- a) Relinquishes the relationship with Anshan;
- b) Does not reinitiate the Trade and Collaboration Agreements with the cities of Daqing and Nanchang;
- c) Retains the relationship with Chengdu;
- d) Retains links with Bapaume;
- e) Acknowledges the links with Estelí whilst acknowledging that this relationship is community-driven, rather than Council-led;
- f) Retains links with Bochum; Kawasaki; Khmelnytskyi and Pittsburgh;
- g) Takes no further action at this time in respect of the relationship with Donetsk;
- h) Acknowledges the historical and community links in the case of Kotli and the historical links with Kitwe, noting that the civic relationship in respect of each city is effectively dormant;
- i) Enters into a Friendship Agreement with Nablus; and
- j) Carries out further work in respect of identifying the potential opportunities with locations in South Korea.

(ii) That the Committee acknowledges the important role of the Lord Mayor in respect of fostering new international relationships and helping to maintain existing links with Partner Cities.

13.3 Reasons for Decision

13.3.1 Development of the Partner City Policy included a commitment to undertake a follow-on review of all existing international relationships. Prior to this exercise, it is unclear whether any such review had ever been implemented previously.

13.3.2 The outcome of the review is that the City Council is able to focus on developing relationships with a much more manageable number of international locations which have a genuine desire to collaborate and where specific benefits can be identified.

13.3.3 This report presents the Council's first annual International Update. The intention is that a transparent overview of Sheffield's activities within the international arena will be provided each Municipal Year.

13.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

13.4.1 The alternative option is to retain the status quo. The development of proposals for a Partner City Policy, approved by Strategy and Resources Policy Committee in November 2023, was an acknowledgement that retaining the status quo was not appropriate. The review of existing international relationships is a direct result of that decision.

14. MULTI AGENCY RECOVERY FOLLOWING THE STANNINGTON, MALIN BRIDGE AND HILLSBOROUGH GAS OUTAGE (DECEMBER 2022)

14.1 The Executive Director City Futures presented a report outlining ongoing

recovery actions following the significant gas outage and its associated impacts at Stannington, Malin Bridge and Hillsborough in December 2022, as well as introducing and sharing the multi-agency learning following this incident.

The report contains the following appendices:

Appendix 1 – Externally produced, multi-agency debrief report (closed item)

Appendix 2 – Recovery Coordinating Group case study and recommendations

14.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(i) notes and acknowledges the Recovery Coordinating Group case study and recommendations report (Appendix 2); and

(ii) notes for information that the externally produced multi agency debrief report (Appendix 1 – closed item), acknowledging the delivery of these recommendations is being monitored through the Local Resilience Forum.

14.3 **Reasons for Decision**

14.3.1 Debrief and learning lessons post incident is standard national and local practice and in line with the national resilience standards of expectation, the learning shared as part of the attachments fulfils this requirement.

14.3.2 Sharing these lessons identifies across other agencies nationally is standard practice, in line with the processes put in place via the Cabinet Office, this will be achieved through sharing the learning resources outlined at section 1.6 (b) of the report.

14.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

14.4.1 It is best practice, following a major or significant incident to firstly identify learning to enable responder agencies to update and amend any plans or processes. It is nationally promoted this is achieved through a multi-agency debrief as was carried out in following the significant gas outage at Stannington, Malin Bridge and Hillsborough. It is common practice for this learning to be shared across different organisations nationally that this experiential learning can be applied in different regions. The Recovery Coordinating Group have developed products and tools to further support this and offer a more immersive, realistic “on the shelf” exercise.