

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday 24 July 2024 by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee.

Item No

8. **WORK PROGRAMME**

8.1 The Committee received a report containing the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and discussion. The aim of the Work Programme is to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee. It was highlighted that this is a live document and Members input to it was invaluable.

The report also contained details of a number of cross-cutting issues and proposals for their consideration by Policy Committees.

In addition it was reported that subsequent to the publication of the report that a further two issues had been identified for inclusion in the Work Programme:

- Entering into a Friendship Agreement with the City of Nablus: August 2024
- Annual Ombudsman Report: November 2024

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

(a) approves the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1, including the additions and amendments identified in Part 1 of the report;

(b) agrees that further issues be included in the work programme in respect of:

- Entering into a Friendship Agreement with the City of Nablus: August 2024
- Annual Ombudsman Report: November 2024; and

(c) approval be given to the consideration of cross cutting issues as detailed in Part 1 of the report.

9. **RESPONSE TO THE PETITION REQUESTING THE COUNCIL TO "STAND WITH PALESTINE"**

9.1 The Chief Executive presented a report providing the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee with advice in relation to the petition asking the council to "stand with Palestine" that has been referred to it by Full Council, and to recommend a course of action for the committee to consider in response to the

three requests in the petition.

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

(a) notes the content of the petition asking the Council to ‘stand with Palestine’, as referred to the committee by Full Council;

(b) notes that points 1 and 3 of the requests made in the petition have been fulfilled, by, respectively, the publication of a cross-party statement of solidarity on 25 March 2024, and the debate that took place on the issues raised by the petition at the Full Council meeting on 6 March 2024; and

(c) In relation to point 2 of the petition:

(1) Note that none of the recommendations of the Amnesty International report referred to in the petition are directed towards Sheffield City Council; note that matters of international law as set out in that report are not within the competence of Sheffield City Council; and further note that, as such, it is not open to the committee to make a designation of the type suggested by the petition.

(2) With the exception of investments, note that none of the actions in the 1981 Statement of Action published by Sheffield City Council as part of declaring Sheffield to be a South African Apartheid Free Zone are ones that the Council could now lawfully take in respect of Israel.

(3) With respect to investments note that in the current Treasury Management Strategy the Council has determined that it will only invest in countries with a defined sovereign credit rating of AA- or above and that this currently excludes Israel, but requests that as part of the next review of the Treasury Management Strategy consideration is given to the issues raised in the petition, along with all other considerations including duties under the Equalities Act 2010, best value, and proper financial management.

(4) Agrees to take no other action in respect of this aspect of the petition.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1 The recommendations in the report set out the only action available to the committee in respect of the requests made in the petition presented to Full Council.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1 There are no alternative options available to the committee in respect of this issue

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

10. STRATEGY AND RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE CLIMATE STATEMENT

10.1 The Executive Director City Futures submitted a report containing the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee Climate Statement which:

1. Responds to the Annual Climate Progress Report 2022/23 in a timely manner;

2. Restates the cross-party council commitment to taking what action we can to address the climate emergency, adapt our city and council for a changing climate and reduce emissions to achieve our ambition to be a net zero city and council by 2030; and

3. Increases understanding of the impact climate change will have on committees, the opportunities that tackling climate change offers, and the contribution to climate and net zero action each committee is currently making and needs to make moving forward.

10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That, on the back of the decision taken by this Committee at its meeting held on 13 December 2023 (12.2 (b)) this Committee agrees the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee Climate Statement, as set out in the report, to ensure that the proposed actions contained in such statement are reflected in their Work Programme.

10.3 Reasons for Decision

10.3.1 It is important that the response to the Annual Climate Progress Report is open and transparent in setting out the challenges which the local authority faces in making progress and clarifies future expectations on the part we all have to play in addressing climate change.

10.3.2 Committee do not currently have specific strategic goals for climate. The process required to develop these, and have the statements approved to be read at each committee meeting meant that option 5.2 was not feasible with the available resource and timeframe.

10.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

10.4.1 Not providing committee climate statements considered due to the resource required to collate.

10.4.2 Providing more detailed Committee Climate Statements that provided an overview of strategic climate goals, with each Chair then reading the committees statement publicly at their respective committee meeting following release of the report.

11. FUTURE SHEFFIELD TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – BUSINESS CASE FOR CHANGE

11.1 The Chief Operating Officer presented a report, alongside the report for item

12 in the agenda, providing an update on the council's Future Sheffield Transformation programme and work undertaken to date.

The report sets out the proposed next phases of the programme, helping the council to modernise and improve the ways we work, in order to achieve better outcomes for our city.

The report makes a recommendation to agree the scope of the programme, and also the scale of benefits (financial and non-financial) recent analysis has identified this work can deliver. The final recommendation is to agree that the potential savings are further developed into programme workstreams and reflected in the Council's medium term financial strategy.

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

(a) notes the work undertaken to date on the Future Sheffield (transformation) programme and agree the scope of the next phases of the programme, as set out in the report;

(b) agrees that the scope of savings identified should be reflected in the medium-term financial strategy and request that the Director of Finance and Commercial Services builds them into the next iteration of the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS); and

(c) agrees the draw down of the earmarked transformation funding to progress with these strategic transformation initiatives and detailed proposals as set out within sections 1.3 - 1.6 of the report (proposals i to xvii).

11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 The proposals set out in this report form the foundation for a significant programme of transformation and improvement to enable the Council to deliver its priorities within a sustainable medium term financial strategy. The ambition and commitment to improvement and delivery as part of the Future Sheffield Programme links directly to the Council Plan priorities and the 'making it happen' section.

11.3.2 The analysis and the evidence base summarised at appendix 2 provide a clear overview of the scope for delivery, whilst recognising that transformation of the scale is challenging there are many opportunities to develop and modernise the council, improve service delivery and reduce costs.

11.3.3 The scope of the programme blending performance, outcomes and savings (see Figure 2) reflect the challenges of the financial context in which the council operates as well as the requirements of various regulatory bodies and the expectations of the citizens the Council serves

11.3.4 With its 'one council' operating model, Sheffield City Council has set out how it intends to work in a consistent, holistic and partnership orientated manner. By

including a focus on strategic capabilities, aligning activity to desired outcome and recognising the importance of both the customer experience and enabling support services, this will support the Council to become an organisation that can deliver the ambition from the Council Plan: to be one of the best performing councils in the country by 2028.

11.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 11.4.1 Do nothing - the Council could choose not to implement the next phases of the Future Sheffield Programme, this has been rejected because the Council would fail to deliver against the medium-term financial strategy, and the commitments set out in the Council Plan
- 11.4.2 Service or directorate-based improvement - the Council could choose to enable individual services areas to develop and implement specific changes associated with savings or improvements within services or directorate budgets. This has been rejected because it would not achieve the 'one council' approach and the holistic outcomes and financial benefits envisaged in the Council Plan or medium-term financial strategy.
- 11.4.3 Centrally defined savings targets by policy committee remit - the Council could choose to allocate savings targets by policy committee remit. This has been rejected as it would not deliver service improvements, the alignment of council services to priorities and would miss opportunities for transformation and the delivery of the ambitions of the Future Sheffield Programme.

12. FUTURE SHEFFIELD – CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY – A NEW DELIVERY MODEL

- 12.1 The Chief Operating Officer presented a report, alongside the report for Item 11 in the agenda, setting out the approach the Council is proposing to take in order to successfully implement the Customer Experience Strategy agreed in April 2024.

The Customer model is designed to operate across the whole organisation and has been developed to improve customer experience and outcomes and will have implications for the way services and functions are organised, our ways of working and how customers will be able to interact with the Council.

This report sets out how the Customer Experience Programme, as part of the Future Sheffield Transformation Programme, will enable the Council to deliver key changes in order to successfully implement the model and achieve the vision and priorities included within the Customer Experience Strategy, approved by Strategy and Resources Committee on 17th April 2024.

This report also outlines the key relationships between the Customer Experience Programme and other significant programmes for the Council, including the council-wide Target Operating Model and the Community Engagement programme. The co-ordinated delivery of change across these areas will improve service effectiveness and delivery across the organisation

whilst contributing to the robust long-term financial plan for the Council.

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

(a) notes the aims and approach for the council's Customer Experience Programme, alongside its potential benefits to be developed and incorporated into the MTFP;

(b) endorses the focus of the first phase of the Customer Experience Programme, including the service areas prioritised for end-to-end customer journey development alongside the Digital Programme;

(c) agrees to progress further development and delivery of the Customer model, including strengthened leadership for this function and the draw down of earmarked transformation funding to support delivery, realising the model across the Council, and associated benefits; and

(d) agrees for a progress report on delivery by the Customer Experience programme to be presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee in November 2024.

12.3 Reasons for Decision

12.3.1 The Customer Experience Programme, alongside the Digital Programme, is a key pillar of the Council's four-year transformation programme, Future Sheffield, which is aimed at improving service effectiveness and delivery across the organisation whilst creating a robust long-term financial plan for the Council.

12.3.2 Delivering a whole council approach for Customer Experience, as part of the development and implementation of the Council's Target Operating Model, will achieve more joined-up services, greater effectiveness and efficiencies which could not be achieved by individual siloed changes. Areas prioritised for delivery in this phase of the Customer Experience Programme have been selected for their good potential impact and relative ease of delivery. As the Programme progresses, the Council will develop the capabilities and infrastructure to successfully deliver for more sweeping and potentially complex changes.

12.3.3 The Council's Customer model needs to change to deliver against the vision and ambitions of the Customer Experience Strategy. This phase of the Programme will enable our main first points of contact to be optimised and establish solid foundations for further transformation over the medium-to-long term. It will also develop and strengthen capabilities that we have not recently had as a Council, such as how we embed the use of customer feedback and business intelligence to design and deliver services.

12.3.4 By moving from Strategy into delivery, the Customer Experience Programme will begin to demonstrate the benefits and tangible change to the organisation

and our communities. This will build the momentum and our ability to deliver wider transformation, with strategic oversight by Future Sheffield Board and the Strategy and Resources Committee.

- 12.3.5 The whole organisation customer model has been aligned to the development of the target operating model and is a vanguard for how the other aspects of the Target Operating Model will be delivered over the coming months.

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 12.4.1 Do nothing - The Council could choose not to implement the cross-council Customer model and not progress the Customer Experience Programme, thereby continuing to deliver as per existing ways of working. This has been rejected because the Council would fail to deliver against the commitments set out in the Customer Experience Strategy, with the resulting negative impact on demand, costs, the Council's medium-term financial sustainability, and its reputation.

- 12.4.2 Service by service improvement - The Council could choose to enable individual services areas to develop and implement specific changes associated with the aims and ambitions of the Customer Experience Strategy. This has been rejected because it would not achieve the 'one council' approach and the holistic outcomes and financial benefits envisaged in the Council Plan and the Future Sheffield Programme. In addition, the delivery of change and improved ways of working risks being impeded by operational pressures.

- 12.4.3 Targeted change projects - The Council could choose to focus resource and capacity on specific cross-council targeted developments outlined in the Customer Experience Strategy. This would have some impact for key customer journeys and services. However, it has been rejected as it would not deliver greater connectivity and consistency for customers, and it would not sufficiently address duplication, fragmentation and gaps across the Council, where there is significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our customer arrangements

13. **ENHANCING OUR APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT WITH CITIZENS AND IN COMMUNITIES**

- 13.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement submitted a report setting out the Council's approach to delivering on the Council Plan priority of developing "A new approach to community empowerment and engagement, working with our Voluntary, Community and Faith sector partners and through Local Area Committees".

The report does this through:

- setting out a strategic Statement of Intent for this area of work;
- welcoming the leadership being shown by the Governance Committee on the

development of our vision and longer-term plan for community engagement

- proposing a set of “Foundations for Good Engagement” to make clear the consistent, core standards of practice we need to have in place ahead of the Governance Committee’s work completing, and to ensure they are building on solid ground.

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

(a) approves the Engagement Statement of Intent, as set out in the report now submitted;

(b) approves the proposed Foundations for Good Engagement, as set out in the report and Appendix 3, as a living document, and delegate authority to the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement to update these as necessary; and

(c) notes the Governance Committee’s work to respond to the recommendations of the Involve report, including the establishment of a Public Involvement Working Group.

13.3 **Reasons for Decision**

13.3.1 This proposal is recommended in order to demonstrate our commitment in a way that enables the Council to be held accountable, and to ensure that the foundations of our approach are in place on which more aspirational work can build.

13.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

13.4.1 One alternative option would be leaving arrangements as they currently are: as set out in this paper this would be unsatisfactory as it would leave the Council in the position of not delivering key priorities in the Council Plan.

13.4.2 A second alternative option would have been to bring a fully worked up engagement framework and approach for endorsement. This was not pursued as it would not reflect our intention of being more open in our approach to engagement: it is preferable that the Governance Committee conduct their work to shape is as is proposed.

14. **ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2023/2024**

14.1 The Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report:

(1) Outlining the complaints and compliments Sheffield City Council received in 2023-24 reporting year in line with corporate requirements;

(2) Identifying key trends and developments within complaints; and

(3) Identifying future development and a corporate complaint service improvement plan for 2024-26.

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

(a) note the statistical analysis of the annual report and the breakdowns therein including information on the performance of complaints and the issues raised;

(b) agrees that the conclusions and recommendations set out in paragraph 1.15 of this report should form the basis of its written response to the Annual Complaints Report for publication;

(c) notes the links to the Customer Experience Strategy, which will provide the fundamental support and direction needed to improve and transform the way Sheffield City Council handles and manages complaints; and

(d) agrees to provide ongoing support to the implementation and service improvements as outlined in the 2024-2026 Complaint Service Improvement Plan.

14.3 **Reasons for Decision**

14.3.1 Strategy and Resources Policy Committee has lead responsibility for complaints including monitoring of complaint handling performance on behalf of the Council.

14.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

14.4.1 Not applicable.

15. 2023/24 FINAL OUT-TURN POSITION

15.1 The Director of Finance & Commercial Services presented a report presenting the financial outturn position for 2023/24.

15.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee note the updated information and management actions on the 2023/24 Revenue Budget Outturn as described in this report.

15.3 **Reasons for Decision**

15.3.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget.

15.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

15.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

16. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2025/26 TO 2028/29

- 16.1 The Director of Finance and Commercial Services presented a report setting out an early view of the medium-term financial position for the Council. This report sets out the scale of mitigations required to offset budget pressures and will be updated in the autumn following details of work on the future Target Operating Model and budget prioritisation activity.

The setting of a robust and balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy will enable the Council to remain financially sustainable and deliver against the Council Plan.

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

(a) approves the Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in this report and summarised in Appendix 1;

(b) endorses the proposed approach to ensure the financial sustainability of the Council over the medium term; and

(c) notes the Sheffield City Council Productivity Plan as mentioned in paragraph 1.8 of this report and attached at Appendix 4

16.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 16.3.1 The Council is required to both set a balanced budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

16.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 16.4.1 No other alternatives were considered.