

**SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL**

**Cabinet**

**Meeting held 13 February 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**

**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 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2013 were approved as a correct record with the following amendments to the resolution in respect of Item 11 – Parkhill Redevelopment:-

(a) the substitution of the words "Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance" for the words "Cabinet Member (Finance and Resources)" in lines 3 and 4 of paragraph (B) ;

(b) the substitution of the words "Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing" for the words "Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods" in the last line of paragraph (C); and

(c) the substitution of the words "Chief Property Officer" for the words "Director of Property and Facilities Management Services" in lines 2 and 3 of paragraph (D).

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

**5.1 Petition relating to Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre**

5.2 The Cabinet received a petition containing 1,431 signatures (combining a 103 signature e-petition and 1,328 paper petition) requesting the Council to keep staff at the Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre, allow more time for local residents and users of the facilities to discuss the future of the facilities with the Council before any changes were made and seriously consider alternatives to current proposals, working with local people and organisations, so that the future of these important

facilities could be secured.

- 5.3 Representations were made on behalf of the petitioners by Chris Taylor who stated that the Pitsmoor Adventure Playground was a huge resource and that almost 1,500 signatures in its support had been gathered in a short space of time. Youth and community workers at the facility provided services that were very much valued by the local community and provided opportunities for the children of new arrivals to establish social links and mix with other children in the area in a positive way that any community cohesion plan could not possibly replicate.
- 5.4 Mr Taylor added that the Playground made a major contribution towards diverting children and young people from potential anti-social behaviour or other criminal activity through the work of the staff who supervised the Playground. He added that closing the Playground risked adverse consequences in terms of crime and could prove to be an expensive mistake in terms of the potential costly involvement of agencies, including the South Yorkshire Police, in dealing with the consequences of closure.
- 5.5 Any move to close the facilities would remove the opportunity to provide children with the exercise they needed and help to address concerns about childhood obesity referred to in the City's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Mr Taylor contended that the Council must work with the local community to keep the Playground open and that the community would be furious if this facility was removed.
- 5.6 Lisa Swift representing the Friends of Verdon Recreation Centre stated that the Playground and Centre provided a vital service and their closure would have an unacceptable impact on families and the neighbourhood. She stated that there was a need for a service that was flexible to local needs and that local groups and residents should be encouraged to participate in helping to make the facilities sustainable.
- 5.7 Ms. Swift added that the existence of staff at the Centre helped to create a safe environment in which children and young people could play. She suggested that a system which would involve a nominated key holder for the premises would not work. However, there was a need for staff to be in post to keep the facilities safe and secure and that without these staff, the Centre could not function effectively.
- 5.8 She stated that the Council should recognise the efforts made by the Burngreave community over a number of years to raise funds for sporting facilities which provided an effective supplement to the assistance provided by the Council.
- 5.9 Councillor Isobel Bowler (Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure) responded that there was no doubting what Mr Taylor and

Ms. Swift was absolutely true and that the facilities were ones that were greatly valued by the local community. However, the Council had to consider many different, competing priorities within its service provision across the City. Activity Sheffield delivered three fixed facilities and mobile teams. The Council was now in a position where, to sustain the service, the council had to focus on its Mobile Teams. Currently, the Burngreave ward received a much higher level of Activity Sheffield resource than other wards in the City and this position was no longer sustainable and if the Council were to make the cut from its Mobile Team, rather than the fixed resource, it would be unfair to other areas which have the same level of need and would receive a significantly reduced service.

- 5.10 Councillor Bowler added that the Council was working hard with staff, local communities, partners on a range of options to keep as many facilities open and staffed through other service providers if appropriate. Discussions would continue to be held with the local community in order to secure, if possible, a community solution to maintaining access to the facilities which children and young people could use in a managed, safe way. The budget realities though meant that the Council was reducing resources for Activity Sheffield but, at the same time, trying to maintain as many services as possible across the City in partnership with communities.
- 5.11 Arising from the above discussions, Cabinet referred the petition on the Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and the Verdon Recreation Centre to the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee in March, 2013 together with the petition relating to the Highfield Adventure Playground, which had been considered by the Council meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2013.
- 5.12 Public Questions
- 5.13 Friend of Adventures
- 5.14 Berie Stott asked if there was a proposal for Activity Sheffield to make use of Outreach Workers as a trouble shooting method of tackling issues for young people across the City? She pointed out, however, that the Adventures organisation worked on an early intervention model of preventative working with young people and Ms. Stott asked was this not a more effective way of running this service?
- 5.15 Paul Samutt asked whether any other staffing models had been considered for management of Adventure Playgrounds and, if so, please could these be explained and the rationale behind them shared?
- 5.16 Jane Healey asked how could Activity Sheffield outreach workers meet the same number of visits that were achieved by Adventures last

year which totalled 25, 000?

- 5.17 Joe Taylor asked for details of Activity Sheffield's annual budget and how this had been spent in 2012/13 and how it would be spent 2013/14?
- 5.18 Councillor Isobel Bowler (Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure) confirmed that Mobile Workers carried out trouble shooting activities across the City, and carried out preventative work in addition to requests for them to respond to issues.
- 5.19 In terms of staffing models, Councillor Bowler indicated that Adventure Playgrounds operated with a minimum of three staff in order to take account of the risks associated with adventurous play and reflecting OFSTED guidance on supervision ratios. Therefore, whilst the Playgrounds were open, staffing levels could not and should not be reduced. The Council had considered whether the opening hours of the Playgrounds could be reduced, but that the facilities would still have to operate with three staff at all times and, therefore if opening times were to reduce by 50% this would only achieve 50% of the savings target.
- 5.20 Councillor Bowler stated that it was proposed to lose a number of full-time staff posts from Activity Sheffield which, she acknowledged, was undesirable but nevertheless necessary in order that the Council made the required savings and realigned service provision in the most effective way within the resources available. The number of visits per member of staff at Highfields was approximately 8,000 (25,000 divided by the three staff) compared with the target of 10,000 per worker for mobile Activity Sheffield staff.
- 5.22 Redaction of Information
- 5.23 Nigel Slack referred to the questions he asked at the Cabinet meeting on 21st November, 2012 concerning the redaction of information from the final business case for the Highways (Streets Ahead) Contract and the responses of Councillors Bryan Lodge and Jack Scott at the meeting. Mr Slack also referred to the fact that he had raised the issue of redaction at the Council meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2013 to which Councillors Julie Dore and Bryan Lodge had responded.
- 5.24 Mr Slack asked why the information referred to at the Cabinet meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2012 had been redacted and registered his concern that the definition of redaction as explained by Councillor Lodge at the Council meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January was very broad and unhelpful to the public in that it suggested that the driving force behind the redaction was not a legal concept but a contractor driven expectation.
- 5.25 He added that he understood what Councillor Dore was saying but it

was difficult to judge whether information was inappropriately redacted if the reason for the redaction was so vague.

- 5.26 Councillor Scott did not comment at the Full Council meeting but at a 'Meet the Cabinet' session the next night I again approached him, informally, to push for a more specific set of explanations for the redacted paragraphs, which he agreed to follow up, but he again suggested that the decision about redaction was essentially one for the contractor.
- 5.27 I therefore now find it necessary not only to ask whether there have been any further developments regarding the reasons for redaction being clarified but also what exactly are the procedures for agreeing the redactions in such cases?
- 5.28 Councillor Dore referred the question to the Chief Executive who indicated that, rather than give Mr Slack a verbal response, he would provide Mr Slack with a written response, with a copy to the Cabinet Member concerned, following his investigation into the degree to which it was possible to reduce the level of redaction to which Mr. Slack referred. However, the Chief Executive outlined the reasons which might be used for the redaction of information which fell into three categories namely, information which the Council was legally required to withhold, reasons of commercial confidentiality and the maintenance of individual privacy.
- 5.29 Kier Cleaning Budget
- 5.30 Stephen Windle asked, given the proposed cutbacks to the Kier Cleaning budget, were the Cabinet aware that the cutbacks included the cleaning of the Winter Gardens which were hugely used and, therefore should be well looked after?
- 5.31 Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) responded that the savings within the Kier Asset Partnership (KAPs) contract did not relate to cleaning. The savings were mainly centred upon the mail service and vacant properties management. However, the Council had a Service Level Agreement which required the Winter Gardens to be cleaned to a certain standard which would keep them well maintained.

## **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 Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee had, at its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2013, scrutinised the Cabinet decision of 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2012 relating to Home to School Transport and had agreed to take no action on the Cabinet decision.

Redesign of Early Years' Service

6.2 The Cabinet received a report of the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee on the outcome of that Committee's scrutiny of the Cabinet decision of 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2012 relating to the Redesign of the Early Years Service.

6.3 The following recommendation had been made to Cabinet by the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee:-

"That Cabinet:-

(i) considers what transitional arrangements are needed to be put in place to ensure that good quality early years provision is able to be sustained; and

(ii) provides further detail of provision within the 17 areas, and gives assurances that a comprehensive communications plan is developed to inform parents of the locations of support, and the type of support available, in the 17 areas."

Councillor Gill Furniss (Chair of the Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee) advised Cabinet that the Scrutiny Committee intended to give further consideration to these proposals at a meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 and scrutinise the matter regularly thereafter.

Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families) thanked the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee for their recommendations and welcomed the detailed discussions and debate at that meeting. She stated that the recommendations would be included within the compilation of consultation responses on the Early Years' Review. Councillor Julie Dore (Chair) confirmed that there was a need to ensure that the issues raised by the Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee were included in the forthcoming report to Cabinet on the outcome of consultation on the Early Years' Review.

**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 Children, Young People and Families Portfolio below:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Years' Service</u>
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Maxine Baker	Teacher, Valley Park Primary School	22
Helen Bush	Headteacher, Mundella Primary School	25
Janet Evans	Supervisory Assistant, Intake Primary School	31
Bronwyn Harrison	Night Residential Support Worker	23
Susan Melrose	Senior Teaching Assistant Level 3, St Mary's CE Primary School	25
Susan Myers	Teaching Assistant, Angram Bank Primary School	20
Jean Picksley	Deputy Headteacher, Athelstan Primary School	39
Celia Smith	Teacher, Beck Primary School	38
Elaine Wright	Teacher, Tapton School	23

(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. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2012/13 (MONTH 8)**

8.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report which provided the Month 8 Monitoring Statement on the City Council's Revenue and Capital Budget for 2012/13.

8.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) notes the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2012/13 budget position;
- (b) notes but does not approve the carry forward requests detailed in Appendix 1;
- (c) in relation to the Capital Programme:-

- (i) notes 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;
- (ii) notes the proposed variations and slippage in Appendix 2 and the EMT approved variations;
- (iii) approves the variations in Appendix 2 which are within its delegated authority;
- (iv) delegates to the Cabinet Members for Finance and Resources and Culture, Sport and Leisure authority to approve the additional works for the Manor Toddler Play scheme, and
- (v) notes the latest position on the Capital Programme.

### **8.3 Reasons for Decision**

- 8.3.1 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.

### **8.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 8.4.1 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

### **8.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

### **8.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration**

None

### **8.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Laraine Manley, Executive Director, Resources.

### **8.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In**



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

**9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14**

- 9.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report providing an overview of the Council's Capital Programme, which showed a broadly balanced position with proposed expenditure totalling £ 564 million over the next 5 years to 2016/17.
- 9.2 The Capital Programme was made up of a number of different elements and detailed reports were appended relating to a breakdown of the Capital Programme by Portfolio; a Programme Monitoring report to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2012; Capital Programme Funding Sources; the Capital Receipt and Corporate Resource Pool (CRP) 2012-17; the Children and Young People and Families Capital Programme and Capital Strategy 2013-14; Housing Capital Programme 2012-17; Properties and Facilities Management (Resources) Capital Programme; Communities Capital Programme; the Neighbourhoods Investment Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18; the Housing Investment Programme 2013/14-2017/18; the Local Transport Plan (LTP); the Capital Approval Process and proposed Capital Projects by Portfolio.
- 9.3 As part of Cabinet's consideration of the joint report, it was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee had noted the following recommendations without amendment, as part of its consideration of the report earlier in the day
- 9.4 RESOLVED: That the City Council, at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2013, be recommended to:-
- (a) approve those specific projects included in the 2012-13 to 2016-17 programme at Appendix 10, with block allocations being 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;
  - (b) note the proposed Capital Programme for the 5 years to 2016/17 as per Appendix 10;
  - (c) approve the proposal at paragraph 18 to address the current funding gap on Building Schools for the Future

(BSF) and note that progress will be monitored and reported to Members as part of the normal budget monitoring process;

- (d) approve the allocations from the Corporate Resource Pool and the policy outlined in Appendix 4 such that the commitment from the CRP is limited to one year and no CRP supported schemes are approved beyond 2013 -14. (If substantial capital receipts are realised within 2012-13 or 2013-14 a further report will be brought to Members as part of the monthly approval process); and
- (e) approve the proposal at paragraph 33 to incorporate all capital receipts arising from non charitable covenanted Parks into the CRP.

(NOTE: 1.This item is referred for approval by the City Council and cannot, therefore, be called in for scrutiny; and  
2. The report on the Capital Programme 2013/14 will be circulated to all Council Members)

## **10. REVENUE BUDGET APPROVAL 2013/14**

- 10.1 A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Resources was submitted, which set out the latest position on the 2012/13 budget; provided details of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013/14; sought approval to the City Council's revenue expenditure plans and requirements for 2013/14, including the position on reserves and balances; levies and precepts made on the City Council by other authorities; the City Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, including the financial outlook for 2013/14 and beyond; proposals for the level of Council Tax to be kept the same as for 2012/13; and the technical calculation of the overall Council Tax increase, including South Yorkshire precepts.

As part of Cabinet's consideration of the joint report, it was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee had noted the following recommendations without amendment, as part of its consideration of the joint report earlier in the day.

RESOLVED: That, on the understanding that the reference to the proposed closure of the Bole Hill View Resource Centre in paragraph 130 of the joint report be amended to show the proposed closure of the Centre as taking effect from "March 2014" rather than "October, 2013" as shown, the City Council, at its meeting on 1st March, 2013, be recommended to:-

- (a) approve a net Revenue Budget for 2013/14 amounting to £477.430m;
- (b) approve a Band D equivalent Council Tax of £1,282.75 for City Council services, i.e. at the same level as 2012/13;
- (c) approve the Revenue Budget allocations and Budget Implementation Plans for each of the services, as set out in Appendix 2;
- (d) note that, based on the estimated expenditure level of £477.430m set out in Appendix 3 to this report, the amounts shown in part B of Appendix 6 would be calculated by the City Council for the year 2012/13, in accordance with sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- (e) note the information on the precepts issued by the South Yorkshire Police Authority and the South Yorkshire Fire and Civil Defence Authority, together with the impact of these on the overall amount of Council Tax to be charged in the City Council's area.
- (f) note the latest 2012/13 budget monitoring position;
- (g) approve the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategies set out in Appendix 7 and the recommendations contained therein;
- (h) approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement set out in Appendix 7; and
- (i) agree that authority be delegated to the Director of Finance 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.

(NOTE: 1.This item is referred for approval by the City Council and cannot, therefore, be called in for scrutiny; and  
2. The report on the Revenue Budget 2013/14 will be circulated to all Council Members)

## **11. HOUSING STRATEGY 2013-23**

- 11.1 The Executive Director, Place, submitted a report setting out the Council's Housing Strategy for 2013-2023 setting Sheffield City Council's approach to housing in all tenures and in all areas of the City. The Strategy would be supported by an Action Plan which would be refreshed every three years to make it responsive to the local and national housing landscape but will be guided by the overarching themes and priorities of

the Strategy.

11.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) endorses the Housing Strategy 2013-23 as a statement of the City's housing priorities; and
- (b) approves the accompanying 2013-16 Housing Strategy Action Plan.

11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 To enable the Council to set out a clear vision and delivery plan for housing and housing services which will help the Council to achieve its ambitions to create a Great Place to Live and Sustainable Communities.

11.3.2 The new Housing Strategy will help our partners, funders and residents understand our housing ambitions for new and existing homes in the city and the housing services provided for Sheffield's residents. In addition, it will enable them to consider and develop their own opportunities to deliver this shared vision.

11.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.4.1 Although local authorities do not have a statutory duty to produce a housing strategy, previous government guidance has urged local authorities to take a more strategic approach to housing as part of their place shaping role.

11.4.2 Without a current housing strategy there will be no clear vision for Sheffield's housing that can be shared with partners, residents and funding bodies. In the past, funding bodies have requested to see the housing strategy as part of their decision making process. The lack of a strategy will also make it more difficult to develop a strategic approach to investment that amounts to millions of pounds over the life of the strategy.

11.4.3 Any benefit gained from not allocating resources to develop a strategy and monitor its action plan would be outweighed by the cost incurred through not developing a joined up strategic approach to housing policy and investment decisions. Progress updates of the strategy's action plan will also help to ensure that housing priorities that have been identified by partners and residents will be regularly monitored and reported on.

11.5 **Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

11.6 **Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During**

**Consideration**

None

**11.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Simon Green, Executive Director, Place.

**11.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In**

Safer and Stronger Communities.

**12. SHEFFIELD CITY REGION GROWTH FUND ROUND 3 - UNLOCKING BUSINESS INVESTMENT**

12.1 The Executive Director, Place, submitted a report setting out proposals for the Council to act in the capacity of Accountable Body on behalf of the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in relation to a £25m of Regional Growth Funding (RGF) programme secured under round 3. The City Council will be responsible for contracting with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) for the delivery of the programme, for receiving and managing the funds, for undertaking the technical assessment of the business proposals and for contracting with the recipient businesses. In respect of the contract with BIS, we will carry responsibility for the delivery of the programme outcomes.

12.2 The LEP, in whose name the bid was submitted, will retain a strategic/policy responsibility for the programme, including setting the overall approach to investment, leading the call for new proposals and reviewing overall progress of the programme and reporting this to the LEP Board.

12.3 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet agrees to:-

- (a) the principle of the Council taking on the role of Accountable Body and establishing management arrangements for the assessment of investment applications, contracting for the delivery of job outcomes with business and monitoring the performance of these projects until 2016/17;
- (b) delegate authority to the Executive Director, Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development, the Director of Finance, and the Director of Legal Services, to agree the terms of and conclude the funding agreement with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS);
- (c) delegate authority to the Director of Creative Sheffield, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development and the Director of Legal Services and Director of

Finance to agree any variations to the agreement with BIS;

- (d) delegate authority to the Director of Creative Sheffield, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Legal Services, to approve the scheme delivery plan for this programme which will include detailed methodology for the assessment, contracting and monitoring of business investment proposals;
- (e) delegate authority to the Director of Creative Sheffield to approve investment decisions and contract with successful companies, in consultation with the Chief Executive of the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership;
- (f) delegate authority to the Director of Creative Sheffield to contract with business applicants in a form agreed with Legal Services; and
- (g) delegate to the Director of Creative Sheffield, in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Chief Executive of the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, authority to approve appropriate expenditure from the revenue finance approved by BIS for the purpose of managing these funds.

### 12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 This is now the third round of RGF and to date Sheffield specifically, and the City Region more generally, has had only very limited success in securing funds. Round 1 was largely limited to direct, large scale, bids and very few went forward from Sheffield City Region and only the Finningley Link Road and Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre were successful. In round 2, BIS encouraged programme bids and SCC worked with City Region partners to put together a proposal designed to distribute funds (with support) to Small and Medium Enterprises. The bid was not successful, although very similar programmes were supported through the Banks (eg Natwest and HSBC) which was clearly the Government's preferred route. Against this background, when round 3 was announced, we felt that it was imperative that Authorities worked with the LEP to put together a credible programme bid which would be able to support companies in the City Region with investment projects smaller than £1m. In order to do so, it was necessary to underpin the bid with a local authority accountable body and it was felt that Sheffield City Council was best placed to provide this function.

12.3.2 RGF is the most significant investment funding for business to emerge from Government since the demise of the RDAs. It is important that we are able to play a significant role in ensuring these funds are available to the City Region and Sheffield businesses in particular. We expect to support approximately 50/60 businesses through these funds up to half of which could be from Sheffield. The £25m will lever in a minimum of £100m of additional private sector investment and generate an absolute total of 1900 new or safeguarded jobs by the end of 2015/16.

**12.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

**12.4.1 Not acting as Accountable Body for RGF**

SCC was the only LA in South Yorkshire prepared to take on this role and probably the only one with capacity. A Local Authority Accountable Body was a pre-requisite for a LEP led RGF bid, so failure to identify a suitably qualified authority acting in this role would have jeopardised our ability to draw down £25m for the benefit of small and medium sized businesses in the City Region.

**12.4.2 Allowing the LEP business entity (LEPCO) to take over the role.**

This would not have been acceptable to BIS and the LEPCO would not have had the systems in place to carry out the essential functions required to administer the fund. In reality this was not a realistic option.

**12.4.3 Procuring a Fund Manager/Grant Administrator**

This would potentially have been a feasible option. However, this would have only covered part of the issue – ie the actual, administration of the grants/loans. The Council would still have had to contract with BIS and would have been responsible for the on-going monitoring of investments. So, whilst aspects of this option would have had some merit, we believe that it would not have represented a comprehensive and cost effective option.

**12.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

**12.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration**

None

**12.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Simon Green, Executive Director, Place.

**12.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In**

Environment and Economic Well-being.

**NOTE:** The next meeting of Cabinet will be held on Wednesday, 27th February, 2013 at 2.00 p.m. in the Town Hall.)

