

# Council

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**Wednesday 23 January 2013**

**2.00 pm**

**Council Chamber, Town Hall,  
Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH**

**The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend**

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## COUNCIL

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**Wednesday 23 January 2013, at 2.00 pm**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH**

**The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend**

### MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor John Campbell)  
THE DEPUTY LORD MAYOR (Councillor Vickie Priestley)

1	<i>Arbourthorne Ward</i> Julie Dore John Robson Jack Scott	10	<i>Dore &amp; Totley Ward</i> Keith Hill Joe Otten Colin Ross	19	<i>Mosborough Ward</i> David Barker Isobel Bowler Tony Downing
2	<i>Beauchief &amp; Greenhill Ward</i> Simon Clement-Jones Clive Skelton Roy Munn	11	<i>East Ecclesfield Ward</i> Garry Weatherall Steve Wilson Joyce Wright	20	<i>Nether Edge Ward</i> Anders Hanson Qurban Hussain Nikki Bond
3	<i>Beighton Ward</i> Helen Mirfin-Boukouris Chris Rosling-Josephs Ian Saunders	12	<i>Ecclesall Ward</i> Roger Davison Diana Stimely Penny Baker	21	<i>Richmond Ward</i> John Campbell Martin Lawton Lynn Rooney
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5	<i>Broomhill Ward</i> Shaffaq Mohammed Stuart Wattam Jayne Dunn	14	<i>Fulwood Ward</i> Andrew Sangar Janice Sidebottom Sue Alston	23	<i>Southey Ward</i> Leigh Bramall Tony Damms Gill Furniss
6	<i>Burngreave Ward</i> Jackie Drayton Ibrar Hussain Talib Hussain	15	<i>Gleadless Valley Ward</i> Cate McDonald Tim Rippon Steve Jones	24	<i>Stannington Ward</i> David Baker Vickie Priestley Katie Condliffe
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8	<i>Crookes Ward</i> Sylvia Anginotti Geoff Smith Rob Frost	17	<i>Hillsborough Ward</i> Janet Bragg Bob Johnson George Lindars-Hammond	26	<i>Walkley Ward</i> Ben Curran Nikki Sharpe Neale Gibson
9	<i>Darnall Ward</i> Harry Harpham Mazher Iqbal Mary Lea	18	<i>Manor Castle Ward</i> Jenny Armstrong Terry Fox Pat Midgley	27	<i>West Ecclesfield Ward</i> Trevor Bagshaw Alf Meade Adam Hurst
				28	<i>Woodhouse Ward</i> Mick Rooney Jackie Satur Ray Satur

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John Mothersole

Chief Executive

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Contact:

Paul Robinson, Democratic Services

Tel: 0114 2734029

[paul.robinson@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:paul.robinson@sheffield.gov.uk)

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## **PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING**

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The Council is composed of 84 Councillors with one-third elected three years in four. Councillors are democratically accountable to the residents of their Ward. The overriding duty of Councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them

All Councillors meet together as the Council. Here Councillors decide the Council's overall policies and set the budget each year. The Council appoints the Leader and at its Annual Meeting will appoint Councillors to serve on its Committees. It also appoints representatives to serve on joint bodies and external organisations.

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

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

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

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## **FACILITIES**

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

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

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**COUNCIL AGENDA  
23 JANUARY 2013**

**Order of Business**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

To receive the record of the proceedings of the meeting of the Council held on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2012 and to approve the accuracy thereof

**4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

To receive any questions or petitions from the public, or communications submitted by the Lord Mayor or the Chief Executive and to pass such resolutions thereon as the Council Procedure Rules permit and as may be deemed expedient

**5. REPRESENTATION, DELEGATED AUTHORITY AND RELATED ISSUES**

To consider any changes to the memberships and arrangements for meetings of Committees etc., delegated authority, and the appointment of representatives to serve on other bodies

**6. IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT'S COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT CHANGES**

Report of the Executive Director, Resources.

**7. AUDIT COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12**

To receive the Annual Report of the Audit Committee on the work it has undertaken during 2011-12.

The Chair of the Committee (Councillor Ray Satur) will briefly introduce the report.

**8. SCRUTINY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES - UPDATE REPORT**

To receive a report providing an overview of scrutiny activity undertaken so far this Municipal Year by each of the Scrutiny and Policy Development Committees.

The Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees will briefly introduce their respective elements of the report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Rocherde", with a horizontal line underneath it.

Chief Executive

Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of January 2013

**The next ordinary meeting of the Council will be held on 6 February 2013 at the Town Hall**

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## ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

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

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

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

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

You **must**:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



You have a personal interest where –

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

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

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

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

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

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

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# Agenda Item 3

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the City of Sheffield held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH, on Wednesday 5 December 2012, at 2.00 pm, pursuant to notice duly given and Summonses duly served.

## PRESENT

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor John Campbell)  
THE DEPUTY LORD MAYOR (Councillor Vickie Priestley)

1	<i>Arbourthorne Ward</i> Julie Dore John Robson Jack Scott	10	<i>Dore &amp; Totley Ward</i> Keith Hill Joe Otten Colin Ross	19	<i>Mosborough Ward</i> David Barker Isobel Bowler Tony Downing
2	<i>Beauchief Greenhill Ward</i> Simon Clement-Jones Clive Skelton Roy Munn	11	<i>East Ecclesfield Ward</i> Garry Weatherall Steve Wilson Joyce Wright	20	<i>Nether Edge Ward</i> Anders Hanson Nikki Bond
3	<i>Beighton Ward</i> Chris Rosling-Josephs Ian Saunders	12	<i>Ecclesall Ward</i> Roger Davison Diana Stimely Penny Baker	21	<i>Richmond Ward</i> John Campbell Martin Lawton Lynn Rooney
4	<i>Birley Ward</i> Denise Fox Bryan Lodge Karen McGowan	13	<i>Firth Park Ward</i> Alan Law Chris Weldon Shelia Constance	22	<i>Shiregreen &amp; Brightside Ward</i> Sioned-Mair Richards Peter Price Peter Rippon
5	<i>Broomhill Ward</i> Shaffaq Mohammed Stuart Wattam Jayne Dunn	14	<i>Fulwood Ward</i> Andrew Sangar Janice Sidebottom Sue Alston	23	<i>Southey Ward</i> Leigh Bramall Tony Damms Gill Furniss
6	<i>Burngreave Ward</i> Jackie Drayton Ibrar Hussain Talib Hussain	15	<i>Gleadless Valley Ward</i> Cate McDonald Tim Rippon Steve Jones	24	<i>Stannington Ward</i> David Baker Vickie Priestley Katie Condliffe
7	<i>Central Ward</i> Jillian Creasy Mohammad Maroof Robert Murphy	16	<i>Graves Park Ward</i> Ian Auckland Bob McCann	25	<i>Stockbridge &amp; Upper Don Ward</i> Alison Brelford Philip Wood Richard Crowther
8	<i>Crookes Ward</i> Sylvia Anginotti Geoff Smith Rob Frost	17	<i>Hillsborough Ward</i> Janet Bragg Bob Johnson George Lindars-Hammond	26	<i>Walkey Ward</i> Ben Curran Nikki Sharpe Neale Gibson
9	<i>Darnall Ward</i> Harry Harpham Mazher Iqbal Mary Lea	18	<i>Manor Castle Ward</i> Jenny Armstrong Terry Fox Pat Midgley	27	<i>West Ecclesfield Ward</i> Trevor Bagshaw Alf Meade Adam Hurst
				28	<i>Woodhouse Ward</i> Mick Rooney Jackie Satur



**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Qurban Hussain, Helen Mirfin Boukouris, Denise Reaney and Ray Satur.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Bryan Lodge declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item of business number 11 on the Council Summons (concerning City Centre Parking) because he owns a business in the City centre.

Councillor Ben Curran declared a personal interest in item of business number 10 on the Council Summons (concerning Food Banks) because he is a Trustee of Ben's Centre.

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

RESOLVED: On the Motion of Councillor Pat Midgley, seconded by Councillor Gill Furniss, that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2012 be approved as a correct record.

**4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS**

**4.1 Petitions**

**(a) Petition requesting the Government to condemn recent attempts to cause offence to Muslim communities**

Council received a petition requesting the Government to condemn recent attempts to cause offence to Muslim communities.

On behalf of the petitioners, Mohammed Ali addressed the Council. He referred to a film, which had been posted on the You Tube website, which caused deliberate offence to people in the Muslim community and he said that such actions had heightened tensions in communities. He stated that, in Sheffield, the Federation of Mosques had worked with the community and South Yorkshire Police toward a collective approach to building a peaceful society. The petition collected signatures from all Mosques in the City and requested the condemnation of the content of the film which had been posted on You Tube. He asked that this be brought to the Government's attention by the Council and local MPs.

Mr Ali requested that the Council send a message to the Federation of Mosques that it would seek changes to the law relating to respect for people's religious beliefs and does not tolerate people making hateful comments concerning a particular religion.

The Council referred the petition to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore), who thanked the Federation of Mosques for bringing the petition to Council. Councillor Dore stated that she believed that Council were united in joining the petitioners in their outrage, particularly in relation to the content of the film to which Mr Ali had referred.

Councillor Dore referred to existing laws relating to racial hatred and stated that she was aware that the film makers had been questioned by the authorities. In relation to community cohesion, she stated that Sheffield was privileged to have a Muslim community and she praised the way in which the community worked with the Council and other agencies to ensure that we have a safe City.

Councillor Dore referred to the power of film as a medium to reach a mass audience, but believed that this particular case showed the potentially damaging use of film. She stated that people that incite racial or religious hatred should be treated in a robust manner. The Council would write to all of the responsible Secretaries of State in relation to this matter, including the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and will also write to Sheffield MPs.

**(b) Petition objecting to the withdrawal of zero fare bus passes for children attending Church schools**

The Council received a petition objecting to the withdrawal of zero fare bus passes for children attending church schools.

Representations on behalf of the petitioners were made by Jim Conway who referred to anxiety felt by the Catholic community concerning the withdrawal of zero fare bus passes for children attending church schools. The local authority had previously given assurances that free transport would be provided for children attending schools following previous secondary school closures. He stated that this was the basis of trust between the City's elected representatives and the Catholic community.

Free transport for children attending Catholic schools should be provided in line with that provided to pupils attending other schools and he asked why those in the Catholic community should be treated less well. In addition, families on low incomes would be the most disadvantaged by the proposals, especially if the family income was marginally above that which gave entitlement to free school meals. The Equalities Impact Assessment states that there would be adverse impact on some Catholic families in particular.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families (Councillor Jackie Drayton). Councillor Drayton stated that she agreed that the situation was distressing but emphasised that no Councillor wished to discriminate against people of the Catholic faith. The Council had statutory duties in relation to school transport but because of the current financial situation it was having to look at all discretionary provision. She stated that circumstances had changed since the time of the agreement

relating to school closures made in 1976. The Government were making reductions to the Council budget, including a reduction of £6 million from the Early Intervention Grant. The funding reductions were disproportionately affecting places in the north of England.

Councillor Drayton stated that she had read all of the letters and other email correspondence that had been received as part of the consultation and responded to the points that had been raised. She asked if it was possible for schools and the Diocese to come together to consider whether it would be possible to create a hardship fund to help families that are in financial hardship to ensure that their children can continue to attend their school. She added that she valued the work of Catholic schools and the role of people of the Catholic faith in community life and charity projects. It was noted that other faith groups were also alleging that they were being discriminated against in the proposals relating to bus passes. However, the Council needed to look at the budget as a whole.

**(c) Petition requesting the restoration of street art on Eyre Sreet**

The Council received a petition containing 12 signatures and requesting the restoration of street art on Eyre Street.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall).

**(d) Petition requesting the acquisition of land adjacent to 43 Westbrook Road, Chapeltown, by Thorncliffe Cricket and Social Club**

The Council received a petition containing 5 signatures and requesting the acquisition of land adjacent to 43 Westbrook Road, Chapeltown, by Thorncliffe Cricket and Social Club.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall).

**(e) Petition requesting the Council not to reverse the ban on Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) on Bocking Lane**

The Council received a petition containing 390 signatures requesting the Council not to reverse the ban on HGVs using Bocking Lane.

Representations on behalf of the petitioners were made by Stuart Smith. Mr Smith referred to the ban on Heavy Goods Vehicles using Bocking Lane, which was introduced in 2010/11 and the use of Abbey Lane as a preferred route to accommodate HGVs as it was not tree lined and had a comparatively gentle gradient. He was not aware of a change in circumstances which might lead to a reversal of the ban on Bocking Lane. With reference to the school on Abbey Lane, he considered that relatively few HGVs used Abbey Lane during school periods and referred to a survey in September 2011, which showed that there were fewer HGVs using Abbey Lane in 2011 than in 2004. He

stated that petitioners would like to see wider discussion with Derbyshire County Council and reiterated that a reversal of the original HGV ban should not be made on health and safety grounds.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall). Councillor Bramall stated that he appreciated the situation for residents of Bocking Lane, although it was also recognised that people would have different feelings on this matter, depending on where they lived. It would therefore not be responsible to make a decision on the matter in isolation. Councillor Bramall made reference to a Cabinet Highways Committee in June 2011 at which a petition was received proposing an HGV ban on Abbey Lane. There had been a displacement of vehicles onto Abbey Lane from Bocking Lane, due to the restrictions on Bocking Lane. Road safety, particularly around schools, was a priority for the Council and he was also mindful that there was a primary school on Abbey Lane outside which the road narrowed.

A proposed compromise was put to the Community Assembly to maintain the HGV ban on Bocking Lane between the hours of 7pm and 7am and to remove the ban during the daytime, so as to provide respite for Abbey Lane. Notably, Ward Councillors for residents living on the affected roads had put forward opposing views on the issue, depending on which group of residents they represented. HGV counts taken on Abbey Lane had recorded a significant increase in volumes. The proposed compromise, to be considered at the meeting of the Cabinet Highways Committee on 13 December, was an attempt to recognise the views expressed by residents of both Bocking Lane and Abbey Lane.

**(f) Petition opposing cuts to community based Study Support for young people**

The Council received a petition containing 685 signatures opposing cuts to community-based study support for young people.

Representations on behalf of the petitioners were made by Miriam Yafai, who referred to proposed cuts to the provision of Study Support and making particular mention of the Study Support Consortium in Burngreave. People attending Study Support included those from disadvantage backgrounds and the project offered help to people in raising achievement. Study Support developed vital skills such as English and Maths and English as a second language and was supported by three qualified teachers. Students at University and those in Further Education also attended the project. People who might otherwise be disengaged from education became engaged through the project.

She said that she feared for the future, given rising youth unemployment and increases in university tuition fees and withdrawal of Education Maintenance Allowance; and asked what future there was for younger people? Study Support provided a way for young people to raise their GCSE grades, for example.



The Burngreave project was in discussion with schools with a view to providing services to support learning

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families (Councillor Jackie Drayton). Councillor Drayton stated that she believed Miriam to be a wonderful role model for other young people and that study support schemes such as that in Burngreave do a brilliant job in supporting young people and families across the City. The Council had extended funding from the end of March until July 2013 to ensure activities continued until the end of term. There were statutory duties which the Council was obliged to meet for both younger people, disabled people and older people and, only once these were provided for could the Council then look to provide or commission additional services.

She stated that the Government had introduced the Pupil Premium, which was paid direct to schools, although it was effectively funded from other existing budgets, and amounted to approximately £400 per pupil, for those children eligible for free school meals and would rise to £900 per pupil in 2013. Sir Michael Wilshaw, the Chief Inspector of Schools, had questioned whether this funding had been used directly for the benefit of the most disadvantaged school pupils, and that in the future, it should be used for things like study support. She added that officers were working to broker discussions between schools and study support to help them gain funding in the future. She also stated that funding for study support last year had come from Early Intervention Grant which was being cut by £6.5 million this year and being subsumed into the main Council budget allocation which was also being cut.

**(g) Petition requesting the Council to restore the Education Maintenance Allowance for students in Sheffield**

The Council received a petition containing 1247 signatures, requesting the Council to restore the Education Maintenance Allowance for students in Sheffield.

Representations on behalf of the petitioners were made by Chaz Lockett, who stated that the Government had ceased payment of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to students aged 16-18 in full time education. For some, the result was that they were forced to discontinue their studies. He stated that the Council was able to help and could do so by using the money in its financial reserves. He felt that young people were growing up in a world where politics meant cuts, broken promises and corruption. He added that people would support local politicians if they stood up to the Government. It was noted that two London boroughs had provided an equivalent to the EMA to young people aged 16 to 19 years.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families (Councillor Jackie Drayton). Councillor Drayton stated that the Council did protest at the Government's decision to cease the Education Maintenance Allowance from 2011. A national bursary of £180

million to help the most vulnerable young people in further education has been introduced in its place. Sheffield had received a portion of this amount, which is distributed to eligible students in the City. However, Councillor Drayton stated that she considered the EMA to be more effective in keeping young people aged 16 to 19 years in education.

With reference to the Council's financial reserves, the Authority had to act responsibly and had allocated some of the reserves to help mitigate the effects of other funding reductions. For instance, the completion of school building schemes which were formerly part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. The context for the Council was the funding cuts of £50 million, which it had to make in 2013/14 and the related employee reductions, brought about by nationally led budget cuts to local government.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Bryan Lodge) stated that the Council was required by law to maintain a financial reserve and there were commitments which were allocated, including the payment of employee redundancies and responding to the Government's financial settlement. The Council had to act responsibly and for the benefit of the City.

**(h) Petition objecting to the experimental Traffic Regulation Order regarding taxi ranks on Rockingham Street**

The Council received a petition containing 95 signatures objecting to the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order regarding taxi ranks on Rockingham Street.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall).

**(i) Petition objecting to the experimental Traffic Regulation Order regarding taxi ranks on Carver Street**

The Council received a petition containing 13 signatures objecting to the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order regarding taxi ranks on Carver Street.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall).

**(j) Petition requesting the Council to give households with young children priority for ground floor accommodation**

The Council received a petition containing 27 signatures requesting the Council to give households with young children priority for ground floor accommodation.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods (Councillor Harry Harpham).

**4.2 Public Questions**

**(a) Public Questions on School Bus Travel and Catchment Areas**

(i) Anne Donnelly asked why the Council did not think it was being discriminatory against parents and children on the basis of religion through the withdrawal of free bus passes to those children travelling to and from denominational schools?

(ii) Sally Alleway asked, as she would no longer be able to afford the bus fares to Notre Dame School, should free bus passes be withdrawn. She felt that, in light of the fact that she had failed to receive a guarantee that her two children could secure places at King Ecgbert school, which was their local school, the Council's proposal that all children could be offered a place at their local school was not correct. Could this be confirmed?

(iii) Josephine Cain stated that, two months after submitting her application for a place at Notre Dame school for her daughter, she was advised by the Local Education Authority to look for other schools and, therefore, she had contacted three local schools with a view to visiting them. None of them were keen to show her round. She asked how she was able to make an informed decision on the future education of her daughter, if nobody was interested.

(iv) Josephine Cain referred to the fact that she had previously inspected a catchment area map at the Local Education Authority Offices and asked why the use of the map had been abandoned and further, why had All Saints and Notre Dame secondary schools and primary schools not been advised of the abandonment of the map, misleading parents in applying for places at local schools?

(v) Daniel Lafferty asked, did the Council not think that it was choosing an easy target in cutting funding for transport for catholic schools, particularly when Councillors receive discretionary bus passes?

(vi) Brendan O'Connell stated that he lived on the outskirts of the City and that cutting the free bus passes for faith schools would affect his brother's means of transport to school as well as costing his parents much more. He asked how his parents were expected to manage to pay these costs and was not this discrimination against those who wished to pursue education in a faith school?

(vii) Edward Sides referred to the fact that students from Abbeydale Grange School had received priority consideration over other students in applying for schools that were deemed to be full. He asked whether pupils in the area of the former Abbeydale Grange School, who had selected Notre Dame School, would be able to re-select which school they would like to attend and, if it is not their local school, would they be awarded free transport?

(viii) Katrina Love asked why the Council had decided to cut the zero fare? She was a student at Notre Dame and had two siblings who also attended there and should the free bus pass be taken away, the cost of transport to school for all of them would be unaffordable for her parents, leaving them to

walk over six miles per day. She asked what alternatives the Council had considered for students in her position.

(ix) Sue Markham stated that she believed all 84 Councillors received a free bus pass amounting to approximately £480 per annum for each Councillor and she asked whether the Council would like to comment on this in light of the lack of any consultation on the matter.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families (Councillor Jackie Drayton) responded that the law stated that local authorities had a duty to have regard to parents' religious belief based on preference. In particular, Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights states that no person shall be denied the right to education and that the state shall respect the rights of parents to ensure that education and teaching conforms to their own religious convictions. However, this did not confirm the right to study at a specific school. Free bus passes were provided for children attending Catholic schools under the Council's discretionary powers so the withdrawal of such passes was not unfair. Moreover, the Council could not provide a guarantee of a specific school place.

Councillor Drayton added in reference to the question from Mrs Cain, if she would care to leave details of the schools which had shown a lack of interest in her daughter's application for a place, she would contact them to ask them show her round the school. The alleged attitude of the three schools in showing a lack of interest was totally unacceptable.

In terms of helping young people in the Abbeydale area, to find an alternative local school to a faith school, she recognised that when Abbeydale Grange was closed down, assistance was provided to help young people to find a suitable alternative school. She would ask officers to examine if this sort of assistance could be provided in circumstances where young people were having difficulties in accessing their preferred faith school.

With regard to the catchment area map, she stated that, according to officers, none of the Catholic primary schools were catchment schools and All Saints and Notre Dame schools did not have a defined geographical area for Admissions purposes. They operated an open Admissions policy based upon faith or feeder schools rather than on an address, which was the case for those schools which operated a catchment school policy.

Councillor Drayton stated that, as far as she was concerned, there were no easy targets in terms savings and the Council was contemplating some difficult decisions and scrutinising every penny it spent. With regard to travelling from the outskirts of the City, Councillor Drayton stated that there had been some misinformation and scaremongering. The issue concerning discounted travel for children attending denominational schools did not impact in any way on school buses which would still operate. For example, the school bus from Stocksbridge would still operate to All Saints and Notre Dame schools. The current proposals purely dealt with discounted bus passes. She had written to Bishop John, Sheffield Diocese of Hallam, suggesting that all

those families who were eligible should be encouraged to take advantage of free school meals as well as a pass for bus travel.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore) added that the assertion that all 84 Members of the City Council received free bus passes was not true and that information on Councillors' allowances was available on the Council's web site. Allowances included a Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowance and travel expenses and the payment of these had also been part of the Council's budget savings over the past two years and Members would continue to look for further savings with regards the budget for elected Members.

**(b) Public questions relating to Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) ban on Bocking Lane**

(i) Mr D. Hodgson asked how it was proposed to enforce the HGV ban on Bocking Lane between 7.00 p.m. and 7.00 a.m.

(ii) Mr C. Newton asked why the Council was considering relaxing the ban on HGV lorries on Bocking Lane in light of the noise and pollution that such a decision would create?

(iii) Norma Archdale asked whether the Council would, if it decided to lift the ban, consider installing traffic calming measures such as speed humps, traffic lights, pedestrian crossings etc to reduce the speed of traffic on Bocking Lane.

(iv) Keith Archdale asked Councillors to bear in mind that, in respect to concerns about HGVs travelling along Abbey Lane outside the school, schools opened 5 days per week and 38 weeks per year and were affected approximately 20 minutes in the morning and 20 minutes in the afternoon; whereas, the effects of the removal of the HGV ban on Bocking Lane would be felt 24 hours per day, 365 days a year.

(v) Heather Parys asked why the Council was trying to re-route HGVs from a class "B" road to Bocking Lane, which was a previously unclassified road, recently reclassified as a "C" road? She commented that the traffic flow had been recorded as 20, 700 vehicles in a 12 hour period (the highest for a "C" road) whereas, Abbey Lane experienced a quarter of this. She asked should not the Council be looking to reduce the traffic on Bocking Lane, not adding to it.

Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall) responded that there were a number of roads experiencing high levels of congestion but, following investigation of routes used by HGVs across the City, Council officers had come to the conclusion that the compromise of allowing HGVs to use Bocking Lane during the daytime and banning them during the evening and overnight, was the only available compromise.

Councillor Bramall hoped that leaving the ban in place on Bocking Lane

between 7.00 p.m. and 7.00 a.m. would provide some respite for residents. He added that there was no perfect solution to this problem and it would be difficult to satisfy all residents in the area. With respect to traffic calming, if the Cabinet Highways Committee agreed, further improvements could be considered but, in the meantime officers would monitor traffic, including HGVs and would take the necessary action to reduce the speed of traffic if necessary.

Councillor Bramall indicated that some residents were asking why a review of the HGV ban on Bocking lane was being carried out so soon, after implementation. The Council had to take a holistic view of the movement of traffic around the City. Officers had monitored the effects of the ban across the City since its introduction and an external piece of work had been carried out to identify a solution to the problems of HGV traffic in the City and around the Bocking Lane and Abbey Lane area and this had revealed that there was no solution that met the requirements of the both the residents of Abbey Lane and Bocking Lane.

The Council did not wish to increase noise and pollution and was actively seeking to reduce the problem across the City. However, the Council had taken account of the needs of the school on Abbey Lane and residents on Abbey Lane as well as those residents on Bocking Lane and Councillor Bramall stressed there was no perfect solution. He added that any ban on HGV traffic was enforced by the South Yorkshire Police with the Council's support, but not on a permanent basis. However, he had observed that the current ban, whilst not well enforced, had led to a reduction of traffic on Bocking Lane.

Councillor Bramall stated that he was not aware of when the traffic counts referred to had been undertaken. However, a survey of traffic since the ban on Bocking Lane had been introduced had shown a significant increase in HGV traffic on Abbey Lane and a consequent reduction on Bocking Lane. The Council was trying to strike a balance between keeping children attending Abbey Lane School safe, whilst retaining periodic respite from HGV traffic for both residents of Bocking Lane and Abbey Lane.

**(b) Public Questions relating to Energy and Coal Extraction – Former Hesley Wood tip**

(i) Jean Howe referred to the petition submitted to the Council at its meeting in November, opposing proposals requesting the granting of planning permission for the extraction of coal on the site of the former Hesley Wood tip and asked what was the Council's policy regarding reducing the carbon footprint and how did the policy fit with the extraction of coal?

(ii) Geoff Driver suggested that, if large amounts of coal imported into Immingham and transported by (more environmentally friendly) rail to power stations, this could save residents of Chapelton and Ecclesfield from the increased risk of air pollution and flood as well as eliminating the requirement for a large amount of HGV traffic transporting coal extracted from the former

Hesley Wood tip.

(iii) Ian Newton-Smith stated that Eggborough and Drax power stations were committed to converting to Biomass by 2017, so was it appropriate to extract coal and, in particular, participate in coal cleaning operations in Sheffield with its inherent health and pollution problems and increased risk of flooding in a residential area which is already prone to flooding?

(iv) Maureen Edwards referred to the many coal spoil heaps around the City and to the activities of RecyCoal that is extracting coal from such spoil heaps. She asked did the Council consider this activity as a form of extreme energy extraction and, if so, why?

(v) Mick Harrison asked did the Council think it was a good idea to cut down thousands of trees in order to extract coal in an Air Quality area such as Chapeltown?

Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene (Councillor Jack Scott) agreed that there needed to be a move away from coal to the exploration of other sources of energy. He believed that Sheffield was well placed in this respect and the City Council could work with the University to find new low carbon solutions. He understood the points that had been made in relation to the extraction of coal and stated that climate change was the biggest challenge faced by society and people who were poor were most likely to be adversely affected by the consequences of climate change.

In relation to the Drax Power Station, Councillor Scott acknowledged that we should reduce the demand for coal. He had received information on the views of residents in Chapeltown regarding this issue. However, there was a planning application process to follow in this case and it was right that the Planning Committee approached the planning application in an unbiased manner and form a view. He had not spoken to the developer of the scheme and, therefore, he was reluctant to give a view on the scheme as he had only heard one side of the argument. He was, however, working with local Councillors to ensure that the West and North Planning and Highways Committee took account of the views of local people.

Councillor Scott stated that he did not consider the coal extraction scheme proposed on the site of the former Hesley Wood tip to be a form of "extreme energy", which refers to the extraction of fossil fuels, through highly intensive means, such as tar sand or deep sea water mining.

He stated that a solution would be sought which suited Sheffield's interests. The points raised about the demolition of trees, maintenance of air quality and flooding were all matters for the Planning and Highways Committee to take a view on. The Committee would seek strong assurances from the developer on this type of issue. Councillor Scott added that he would be happy to visit the area with local Councillors to discuss local concerns with residents.

**(c) Public Questions relating to Study Support**

(i) Lisa Swift (on behalf of Rukhsana Shabene) commented that study support was a valuable provision and needed to continue. She stated that her child had benefitted from it and she asked where would children go, if such support ceased.

(ii) Sam Morecroft suggested that the Council had £168 million in its Reserves. He asked would the Council use some of these Reserves to fund the payment of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). If it was not prepared to do this, what would this money be used for?

(iii) Arran Benjamin asked what the Council were doing to help support young people to access decent education and employment?

(iv) Richard Brown referred to cuts in education for young people and particularly cuts in adult education and the EMA, as well as the introduction of tuition fees for those over the age of 25, wishing to take Level 3 qualifications, making it harder for unemployed people to re-train. He asked what the Council was going to do for the increasing number of young people who were being affected by funding reductions. He referred to his own experience of attending the Northern College and the risk to the College posed by the introduction of tuition fees for people aged over 25. He asked what was the Council going to do for young people in Sheffield.

(v) Lisa Swift (on behalf of Abtisam Mohammed) referred to the closure of Children's Centres in deprived areas of the City and asked how it was proposed to support parents to get back into work?

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Bryan Lodge) responded that it was too simplistic to suggest that the Council's Reserves be used in the way suggested. The Council had approximately £10.8 million of unallocated financial reserve to cover risks throughout the year. The unearmarked reserve fund represented about 2.3% of the Council's budget and that was considered reasonable. It would be irresponsible to operate without a reserve in place.

Councillor Lodge added that both the current and previous Administrations had also earmarked other elements of the Council's reserve to meet known liabilities. These were used to support such programmes as the Highways Private Finance Initiative (PFI), Building Schools for the Future and Decent Homes and also redundancy payments to those staff leaving the Council. He stated that the level of reserves was a prudent figure based upon a calculation of the risks to which the Council may be exposed in the coming year.

He found a questioner's reference to the current Administration as "willing executioners" offensive and stated that no Councillor had become a Councillor to make cuts. He added that the City's 84 Councillors had been duly elected through the democratic process and invited people to stand for election if they so wished, and to refrain from meaningless sound bites and the heckling of Councillors as just witnessed.



Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet member for Children, Young People and Families) stated that Study Support was funded by the Early Intervention Grant from the Government. This grant also funded early years provision, youth activities and support for families of children with disabilities and had been cut by £6.8 million. Government support had now been transferred directly to schools, through the Pupil Premium and funding had been given for Free Early Learning for 2 year olds and particular groups of 3 and 4 year olds. However, she could not say that cuts in early years funding would not affect families in Sheffield.

Councillor Drayton added that, in answer to the assertion made that there would be no difference if the Council had a Conservative Administration rather than a Labour Administration, this was wrong. According to national evidence, if you were a Conservative-led Council, you received more funding from central Government. She contended that Northern cities were facing disproportionate cuts to their budgets than those in the South.

In terms of improving access to decent education and supporting young people into employment, the Council's policy was to make sure every school was a great school and this had been evidenced by the biggest improvements in education being made in the most disadvantaged areas. The Council had also ensured that support was provided to establish an apprenticeship scheme, which had provided 200 Apprenticeships for young people to provide them with skills and training.

Councillor Drayton said that the Northern College had been established by the four South Yorkshire Metropolitan District Councils to provide educational opportunities for working class people. However, adult education had, like many other services, been the subject of Government cuts and the Council would have to review what it could do to support adult education, if that was possible.

(d) **Public Question on Councillor Attendance at Sheffield Homes Housing Forums**

Mick Daniels asked whether Councillors were aware that, when they were elected, they had the opportunity of attending Sheffield Homes Housing Forums. In asking his questions, Mr Daniels commented that the attendance of Councillors at the Forums had declined and he questioned why this had happened.

Councillor Harry Harpham (Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods) responded that he could not speak for every Councillor, but he attended such meetings. However, he felt he could say that all Councillors were dedicated to serving the people they represented but they might be unable to attend every meeting to which they were invited. Following the transfer of responsibility for Council housing back to the Council, there was a need for discussion about how tenants and Councillors could work together better to create the best housing service in the country. Within these discussions, consideration should

be given to the need to find more innovative ways of delivering services across the City through Community Assemblies or Housing Forums.

**(e) Public Question concerning the Police and Crime Commissioner.**

Mr Nigel Slack commented that the recent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections demonstrated the Government's detachment from the real lives of the majority of the population. He stated that we now have a PCC that was elected by less than 1 in 13 of the electorate (7.5%) and yet will influence the way the Police operate for over 1.3 million citizens throughout South Yorkshire.

He stated that the statistics suggest that, of the 60 Labour Members in the chamber, only 5 voted for the successful candidate. It would, therefore, be somewhat hypocritical for these same members to vote to congratulate the Labour candidate on his totally undemocratic election. The new PCC will operate with no mandate for his decisions, and was already failing to live up to his manifesto promises.

Mr Slack referred to the official PCC site for South Yorkshire and what he termed 'political grandstanding', including a story of the PCC hitting the ground running. However, the site's 'transparency' tab states that in three weeks, the PCC has apparently had no meetings, attended no events and appears to have none planned for the foreseeable future.

Mr Slack asked (i) could the Council tell him who will represent Sheffield on the PCC's Scrutiny Panel and from which political parties they will come; (ii) will the Panel also remind him that failure to make this post work effectively will mean further erosion of the low esteem in which all politicians are currently held and be detrimental to the safety of the public; and (iii) will the Panel immediately admonish the PCC for failing to match up to his election promises?

Councillor Julie Dore (The Leader of the Council) responded that she might have to disagree with Mr Slack's definition of "democracy" as the PCC for South Yorkshire had been democratically elected and, therefore, had a mandate. She referred Mr Slack to a motion to be considered later in the meeting which concerned the recent outcome of the PCC elections and not supporting the system of PCCs which had been imposed by the Government.

She added that the Council's representatives on the Scrutiny Panel comprised Councillors Harry Harpham, Helen Mirfin-Boukouris, Talib Hussain and Sylvia Anginotti together with Councillors from the other South Yorkshire Local Authorities.

In terms of the Scrutiny Panel 'admonishing' the PCC, Councillor Dore indicated them that she could not speak for the Panel Members. However, although she was prepared to take criticism, Mr Slack's comments and questions, including those made below concerning outsourcing were unhelpful for local democracy and raising the level of esteem that local

politicians were held in.

**(f) Public Question on Review of Outsourcing policies.**

Nigel Slack asked, in light of Councillor Penny Baker's motion later in this meeting, will the Council look again at the suggestion that the Council needs to undertake a root and branch review of its policies with respect to outsourcing?

In asking his question, Mr Slack commented that the fact that the Council has been rated as one of the best for transparency does not mean that they are very good at it. It simply means they are the best of a bad bunch. He stated that the Localism Act appeared to be designed to give all the responsibilities to local Government without the resources to carry them out effectively.

He further commented that the Council was lucky enough to have a professional commercial management department, but they still need and should be given a similarly well developed and considered range of policies to guide their operations. He felt a review is necessary and would be beneficial in protecting the Council and its staff from accusations of incompetence.

Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) responded that he was pleased Mr Slack had recognised the professionalism of the Council's commercial department. However, he did not agree with Mr Slack's comment that the Council was best of a 'bad bunch' as regards transparency. He stated that Sheffield was held in high regard and was used as a good example to other local authorities. He agreed that the Localism Act sought to increase local authority responsibilities without the adequate funding and stated that the Chancellor's Autumn Statement would require a further 1% cut in local authority budgets next year.

However, Councillor Lodge disagreed with Mr Slack, that there should be a root and branch review and stood by what he had said previously that the Council had strong policies and procedures in place on procurement and contracting and that officers were working within them and, therefore, it would not be good value for money to carry out a review.

(Note: Mr Slack indicated the withdrawal of his third question on the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee, indicating that he would pursue the matter directly with the appropriate Member/s)

**(g) Public questions concerning the Hillsborough Disaster, Information, future of Council Housing Ballot, Freedom of Speech and Fostering**

Martin Brighton asked the following questions and responses were provided by Members of the Cabinet as follows:

**(i) The Hillsborough Disaster**

Recent publicity exposed 23 years of alleged cover-up and silence by the

police over the Hillsborough Disaster. There appears to be no mirror investigation into the leading local Council elected members, senior officers, or Police Authority members of the time. If there has been such an investigation, where can we see the results, and if not, why not?

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore) responded that the Hillsborough Disaster was the subject of a further Inquiry and the Council would co-operate fully with that Inquiry and further requests for evidence.

**(ii) Supply of Information**

Would all elected Members please consider the wisdom of racking up enormous costs to the ratepayer of the Council's repeated futile attempts at keeping secret the information that, if provided fully at the time of asking, would cost virtually nothing to provide?

The Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods (Councillor Harry Harpham) responded that legal advice had informed the decision taken and he believed that it had been correct to refuse the Freedom of Information request, although the Information Commissioner had disagreed.

**(iii) Future of Council Housing Ballot**

We have seen that tenants were denied both sides of an argument and even then only given partial information before being asked to come to a decision about Council housing. Regardless of the outcome of the Council's ongoing legal action to prevent disclosure of information to tenants will all Members please consider the wisdom of voluntarily striking out the tenant ballot result before being forced to do so?

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore) responded that the tenants' ballot had been supported by a well organised tenant consultation process, providing opportunities for balancing the arguments. The ballot and ensuing decision had been recognised by the Government as a local matter and they had indicated that they would not intervene. She added that the Council had complied with the Government's guidance on consultation and that the ballot figures were robust and tenants had made their views known loud and clear.

**(iv) Freedom of Speech**

Many here today will be aware of the paraphrased quote:  
"I may not agree with what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it." What is the consensus view of this chamber on this issue?

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore) responded that she believed in freedom of speech and she referred to the recent Leveson Inquiry into the role of the press and the police in alleged phone-hacking and that she would await with interest the impact of the Inquiry's recommendations on areas such as Freedom of Speech.

The Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods (Councillor Harry Harpham) added that he believed that limits on free speech were, sometimes, necessary and that he would not defend to the death the right to say anything in any arena and to anybody.

**(v) Fostering case in Rotherham**

How will this Council demonstrate to the decent citizens of Sheffield that what happened in Rotherham over the political interference with fostering can never happen here?

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families (Councillor Jackie Drayton) responded that she did not know the details of the Rotherham case so couldn't comment on it but believed strongly that the young people coming into local authority care were very vulnerable and the Local Authority had a duty to safeguard them. She stated that they should in no way be used in political way and she stated that the matter Mr Brighton referred to would never happen in Sheffield.

Councillor Julie Dore added that the matter referred to in Mr Brighton's question was a matter of speculation and not fact. She had been a Member of the Fostering Panel in Sheffield for several years and the Panel was bound by the strictest confidentiality.

(Note: The Chief Executive advised the Council that the alleged 'political interference' referred to in Mr Brighton's question was, at this point in time, speculation and not established fact.)

**5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

**5.1 Urgent Business**

There were no questions relating to urgent business under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.6 (ii).

**5.2 Questions**

A schedule of questions to Cabinet Members, submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16, and which contained written answers, was circulated and supplementary questions under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.4 were asked and were answered by the appropriate Cabinet Members.

**5.3 South Yorkshire Joint Authorities**

There were no questions relating to the discharge of the functions of the South Yorkshire Joint Authorities for Fire and Rescue, Integrated Transport, Pensions or Police under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.6 (i).

**6. REPRESENTATION, DELEGATED AUTHORITY AND RELATED ISSUES**

RESOLVED: On the Motion of Councillor Pat Midgley, seconded by Councillor Gill Furniss, that (a) approval be given to the following changes to the memberships of Committees, Panels, Groups, etc:-

Planning Policy Advisory Group - Councillors Leigh Bramall and Chris Rosling-Josephs to fill vacancies; and

(b) approval be given to the appointment of representatives to serve on other bodies as follows:-

Mental Health Partnership Board - Councillor Clive Skelton to replace Councillor David Barker.

Southey/Owlerton Area Regeneration Board - Councillor Adam Hurst to replace Councillor Leigh Bramall.

**7. GAMBLING ACT 2005 - STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES (POLICY)**

RESOLVED: That on the Motion of Councillor Isobel Bowler, seconded by Councillor Steven Wilson, and as recommended by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2012, the Statement of Principles (Policy) to be published under the Gambling Act 2005, as detailed in the report now submitted, be approved.

**8. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR PENNY BAKER**

**THE MANAGEMENT OF COUNCIL HOUSING**

It was moved by Councillor Penny Baker, seconded by Councillor Bob McCann, that this Council:-

- (a) welcomes the vote of tenants on the Future of Council Housing, which showed overwhelming support to return the management of Council housing to the Council;
- (b) reaffirms that the previous Administration had no preferred option for the management of Council housing and was dedicated to putting tenants in control of their future;
- (c) notes the ruling of the Information Commissioner that documents relating to the change, specifically the Project Business Case, should have been released when requested;

- (d) notes the report in The Sheffield Star on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2012, which accused the Council of trying to “suppress publication of the report”, claimed the Council has “very serious questions” to answer, and stated that “
- “There were legitimate concerns [the Council] should have put before the tenants in an open and honest way – rather than to have tried to sweep it under the carpet and resist making it public”;*
- (e) believes the current Administration, and in particular the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods, misled tenants by failing to provide them with fair, impartial and balanced information;
- (f) is disappointed that it appears that the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods did not trust the tenants of this City to make an informed judgement and regrets that, as a result of his Administration’s reckless actions, the vote may now be open to legal challenge;
- (g) feels that the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods has made a mockery of the Leader of the Council’s pledge that her Administration would be open and transparent; and
- (h) believes that the seriousness of these failings warrants an independent investigation and recommends that one is instigated without delay.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Harry Harpham, seconded by Councillor Tony Damms, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of paragraphs (b) to (h) and the addition of new paragraphs (b) to (j) as follows:-

- (b) remembers that the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods was fully committed to listening to the result of the ballot and stated that the most important views were those of tenants;
- (c) believes that information provided throughout the consultation process was thoroughly fair, impartial and balanced, which was demonstrated through the literature produced and events held where tenants were given information on both an Arms Length Management Organisation and an in-house model;
- (d) notes that the consultation exercise and information supplied through the process was assessed against Government guidance and complied with this guidance;
- (e) notes that the information referred to in media reports was not included in the consultation as it was created at the start of the process and refers to proposals the Council is no longer working towards;
- (f) accepts that, as this information is now out of date and does not relate to the proposal taken to tenants, the document was not released for

reasons of good intention and was part of an attempt to ensure that tenants were given accurate information based on realistic, deliverable proposals instead of supplying information about proposals that were not being considered;

- (g) regrets that the previous Administration demonstrated no leadership or vision for the future of Council housing and believes that the reason they remained silent on the issue for so long was to cover up what this Council believes was their secret preferred option of stock transfer, which they consistently refused to rule out despite overwhelming opposition amongst Sheffield tenants;
- (h) remembers the previous Administration's shocking and incompetent mismanagement of Council housing which included fiascos such as the Sheffield Homes Board Game and the Decent Homes scandal which caused outrage amongst tenants;
- (i) believes that the main opposition group stand for no values except for merciless political opportunism and are merely seeking to exploit this issue for political gain without any genuine interests in the future of Council housing or the welfare of tenants; and
- (j) welcomes that the present Administration will continue to stand up for Sheffield tenants and are getting on with the job of transferring housing management to the Council, which will result in a better service through joining up with other Council services, providing greater democratic accountability, and making savings to management and back office costs, building on the housing service that Sheffield Homes has provided over the last eight years to provide a service that works even more effectively, in line with what our tenants and staff have told us they want.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

After a right of reply from Councillor Penny Baker, the original Motion, as amended, was put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) welcomes the vote of tenants on the Future of Council Housing, which showed overwhelming support to return the management of Council housing to the Council;
- (b) remembers that the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods was fully committed to listening to the result of the ballot and stated that the most important views were those of tenants;
- (c) believes that information provided throughout the consultation process was thoroughly fair, impartial and balanced, which was demonstrated through the literature produced and events held where tenants were



- given information on both an Arms Length Management Organisation and an in-house model;
- (d) notes that the consultation exercise and information supplied through the process was assessed against Government guidance and complied with this guidance;
  - (e) notes that the information referred to in media reports was not included in the consultation as it was created at the start of the process and refers to proposals the Council is no longer working towards;
  - (f) accepts that, as this information is now out of date and does not relate to the proposal taken to tenants, the document was not released for reasons of good intention and was part of an attempt to ensure that tenants were given accurate information based on realistic, deliverable proposals instead of supplying information about proposals that were not being considered;
  - (g) regrets that the previous Administration demonstrated no leadership or vision for the future of Council housing and believes that the reason they remained silent on the issue for so long was to cover up what this Council believes was their secret preferred option of stock transfer, which they consistently refused to rule out despite overwhelming opposition amongst Sheffield tenants;
  - (h) remembers the previous Administration's shocking and incompetent mismanagement of Council housing which included fiascos such as the Sheffield Homes Board Game and the Decent Homes scandal which caused outrage amongst tenants;
  - (i) believes that the main opposition group stand for no values except for merciless political opportunism and are merely seeking to exploit this issue for political gain without any genuine interests in the future of Council housing or the welfare of tenants; and
  - (j) welcomes that the present Administration will continue to stand up for Sheffield tenants and are getting on with the job of transferring housing management to the Council, which will result in a better service through joining up with other Council services, providing greater democratic accountability, and making savings to management and back office costs, building on the housing service that Sheffield Homes has provided over the last eight years to provide a service that works even more effectively, in line with what our tenants and staff have told us they want.

(Note: The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Vickie Priestley) and Councillors Simon Clement Jones, Shaffaq Mohammed, Rob Frost, Sylvia Anginotti, Colin Ross, Joe Otten, Keith Hill, Penny Baker, Diana Stimely, Roger Davison, Sue Alston, Andrew Sangar, Janice Sidebottom, Ian Auckland, Bob McCann, Anders Hanson, Katie Condliffe, David Baker, Alison Brelsford and Trevor

Bagshaw voted for Paragraph (a) and against all of the remaining Paragraphs of the Substantive Motion and asked for this to be recorded.)

**9. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR LEIGH BRAMALL**

**DEVELOPING THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

It was moved by Councillor Leigh Bramall, seconded by Councillor Bob Johnson, that this Council:-

- (a) believes that developing the local economy and bringing the jobs, industries and businesses of the future to our area is a central challenge facing Sheffield and fully supports, advocates and endorses the key priority of the present Administration of being a business friendly Council with a focus on jobs;
- (b) supports the present Administration's ambition for Sheffield to be the most business friendly city in the UK, through supporting businesses to succeed in Sheffield, offering support to help start and grow businesses and taking care of businesses using Council services;
- (c) notes that the present Administration and key members of the business community have worked hard to developed constructive and productive relationships and believes that this partnership working has never been stronger, something key to supporting job creation and business development in the City;
- (d) further welcomes that one of the first actions of the present Administration was to hold a business summit to listen to the views and asks of the business community and notes that the Council now holds three business summits every year;
- (e) welcomes the introduction of other measures to engage with the business community including a business visits programme, aimed at sharing information about the Council and business and to listen to what the Council can do better to support business;
- (f) notes that Sheffield is primarily a small and medium sized enterprise economy, with 97% of the business base employing fewer than 50 employees and to develop the local economy it is essential to help businesses grow, and help new businesses to start up, in addition to ensuring established businesses are sustained;
- (g) welcomes the focus of the present Administration on skills as key to supporting business and creating jobs in the City, noting the importance of providing the right skills to meet business needs and to support growth and provide a better future for Sheffield's people;

- (h) further welcomes work with local businesses to create employment opportunities for young people and wholeheartedly supports the Sheffield Apprenticeship Programme where the Council has worked with many small businesses offering a subsidy to get young people into employment alongside the opportunity to study for a Level 2 qualification;
- (i) remembers this is in stark contrast to the previous Administration who's Leader broke a promise to commit £1 million of Council resources to support the previous Government's Future Jobs Fund;
- (j) is proud that the Sheffield Apprenticeship Programme pioneered the City Deal for skills which adopts the model used in the Sheffield Apprenticeship Programme to create 4,000 apprenticeships in small and medium sized enterprises by 2016 and welcomes that the vision of the present Administration is responsible for this;
- (k) further welcomes the present Administration's Keep Sheffield Working Fund which supports projects facilitating job creation such as the recently announced export scheme, helping Sheffield business expand into international markets and welcomes the collaboration between the Council, Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, South Yorkshire International Trade Forum and UK Trade and Investment in supporting the project;
- (l) welcomes the commitment of the present Administration to the regeneration of the City Centre and supports their efforts to reinvigorate the Sevenstone development, which had been held back under the previous Administration and by the present Government's abysmal economic mismanagement;
- (m) regrets that the development was hindered by this present Government, of which the Member of Parliament for Sheffield Hallam is Deputy Prime Minister, whose lack of commitment to the development was demonstrated through their decision to cut £12 million of support to the development as one of their first actions in Government and believes that actions speak louder than the Deputy Prime Minister's empty words;
- (n) recalls with regret that the previous Administration completely failed to stand up for Sheffield when this decision was taken at the same time the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills cancelled the £80 million loan for Sheffield Forgemasters and regrets that the main opposition group continue to put party interests before the City;
- (o) regrets that this Government's short sighted economic approach was again demonstrated recently through their refusal to invest in proposals for a 650MW "clean coal" power station at Hatfield Colliery, near Doncaster, with public money and recalls that the scheme had

previously been picked out by the EU as the most advanced Carbon, Capture and Storage project in Europe, putting it in pole position for a grant of around £250m from Brussels;

- (p) supports the development of the Moor Market and welcomes that work on the market is currently progressing well and welcomes the recent positive reports about the wider development of The Moor in the local media;
- (q) further supports the decision of the present Administration to support local market traders through reversing the shocking decision of the previous Administration to remove the subsidy on the rents for market traders, leading to a huge increase in rents for traders and recalls comments from traders that this move could have left Sheffield without any market at all;
- (r) further supports other measures supporting City Centre traders such as the introduction of a Shopper Rate for car parking over the Christmas period and the Chapel Walk project which aims to give start up businesses support to become stand alone High Street retailers;
- (s) further supports the actions taken by the present Administration to clamp down on street trading in the City Centre which threatens many businesses and is extremely concerned about reports that the Liberal Democrat MP, Jo Swinson, is advocating giving 'pedlars' a new freedom to trade and believes that this has the potential to sabotage the work undertaken by the present Administration to eradicate this practice and believes that this policy would be anti-business;
- (t) notes the consultation on the economic growth strategy for Sheffield and welcomes the vision articulated for Sheffield's economy which includes a dynamic private sector, world class, high technology sectors, a skilled and productive workforce, an unrivalled quality of place, an inclusive economy and an enhanced reputation; and
- (u) resolves to continue to work to support the local economy and to develop the economic strategy working with local businesses to bring much needed jobs and business growth to the City.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Ian Auckland, seconded by Councillor Joe Otten, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by:-

1. the deletion of paragraphs (c) to (f) and (h) to (u);
2. the re-lettering of paragraph (g) as a new paragraph (h);
3. the addition of the new paragraphs (c) to (g) and (i) to (p) as follows:-
  - (c) however, regrets that yet again the actions of the current Administration do not live up to their rhetoric;

- (d) recalls that when the majority group were last in control of the Council, Sheffield was labelled the worst place to do business in South Yorkshire;
- (e) notes that, even since adopting their business-friendly mantra, the current Administration have rejected a number of policies that would have supported local businesses, including:
  - (i) creating a Sheffield Investment Fund to help local business access finance;
  - (ii) bringing forward a Cabinet report on meeting the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce three point manifesto;
  - (iii) repeating the previous Administration's free parking scheme in district and local centres;
  - (iv) providing additional parking capacity for Millhouses traders over the Christmas period; and
  - (v) containing economic impacts of decisions in all future Cabinet reports;
- (f) contrasts this record with that of the previous Administration, who introduced the following policies:
  - (i) created First Point for Business;
  - (ii) reformed the Council's Planning Department and Transport & Highways Department to make them more responsive to local businesses;
  - (iii) initiated Showcase Sheffield and Buy Local policies;
  - (iv) funded a £250,000 Economic Fighting Fund and a BiG initiative, which helped people to set up in business and supported sustainable business growth;
  - (v) organised "Access to Finance" summits;
  - (vi) supported schemes to encourage footfall in the city-centre such as the Food Festival, Tramlines, a Christmas ice-rink and the Wheel of Sheffield; and
  - (vii) helped to develop a Local Enterprise Partnership for Sheffield, described as one of the strongest bids in the country;
- (g) believes these actions, among many others, helped to transform

Sheffield – in the opinion of local businesses – from the worst place to do business in South Yorkshire to the best;

- (i) reiterates that all participants on the Sheffield Apprenticeship Programme will receive at least Level 2 training, which will be funded by the Coalition Government, and thanks the Government for this support;
- (j) reminds Members that it was the main opposition group that first suggested doubling the number of young people on the Sheffield Apprenticeship Programme;
- (k) is pleased that a radical apprenticeship scheme forms a key pillar of the Government's City Deal with Sheffield and thanks Liberal Democrats in Government, in particular the Deputy Prime Minister, for helping to secure the deal;
- (l) believes the Sheffield City Deal is a radical agreement and the boldest step the Government have taken to truly put the region in the driving seat for economic growth;
- (m) however, for the avoidance of doubt, highlights the following Government measures which have also supported the local economy:
  - (i) £65 million that was recently awarded within Sheffield City Region, as part of the third round of the Government's Regional Growth Fund, following similarly successful bids in the first two rounds;
  - (ii) an enterprise zone for Sheffield City Region, which could produce as many as 12,000 new jobs;
  - (iii) £9.9 million for the construction of Sheffield University Technical College, which will provide the next generation of Sheffielders with the skills the City requires;
  - (iv) £1.2 billion to allow Sheffield's Streets Ahead project to proceed;
  - (v) millions of pounds invested in Sheffield's buses, trams, trains and highways;
  - (vi) millions of pounds to support construction and infrastructure through the New Homes Bonus and the Growing Places Fund; and
  - (vii) over £100,000 through the High Street Innovation Fund, which will fund the Administration's Chapel Walk project.

- (n) furthermore, welcomes the Tax Increment Financing that the Government has made available that should enable the Sevenstones development to progress and hopes the current Administration will ensure work is finally started on the project;
- (o) believes the current Administration continue to use our great city as a political battering ram against the Government, instead of supporting jobs and the local economy; and
- (p) recommends the current Administration adopt a mature and constructive relationship with the Government to ensure Sheffielders get the best possible deal.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was negated.

It was then moved by Councillor Jillian Creasy, seconded by Councillor Robert Murphy, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by:-

1. the insertion of a new paragraph (g) as follows, and the re-lettering of original paragraphs (g) to (k) as new paragraphs (h) to (l):-
  - (g) notes however that a large proportion of the Council's contracted out services are with a handful of multinational companies whose profits leave the City rather than being reinvested in the local economy;
2. the deletion of original paragraphs (l) and (m) and the addition of a new paragraph (m) as follows:-
  - (m) believes it is time to rethink the future of the city centre and to look away from multinational shopping chains and towards the needs of local shops and businesses, a wider range of entertainment and greater resilience in terms of community cohesion, energy supply and flooding;
3. the deletion of original paragraph (o) and the addition of a new paragraph (o) as follows:-
  - (o) will work to attract all possible funding to the City for projects which increase energy efficiency, sustainability and self sufficiency and which create jobs in the green economy.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was negated.

After a right of reply from Councillor Leigh Bramall, the original Motion was put to the vote and carried, as follows:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) believes that developing the local economy and bringing the jobs,

industries and businesses of the future to our area is a central challenge facing Sheffield and fully supports, advocates and endorses the key priority of the present Administration of being a business friendly Council with a focus on jobs;

- (b) supports the present Administration's ambition for Sheffield to be the most business friendly city in the UK, through supporting businesses to succeed in Sheffield, offering support to help start and grow businesses and taking care of businesses using Council services;
- (c) notes that the present Administration and key members of the business community have worked hard to develop constructive and productive relationships and believes that this partnership working has never been stronger, something key to supporting job creation and business development in the City;
- (d) further welcomes that one of the first actions of the present Administration was to hold a business summit to listen to the views and asks of the business community and notes that the Council now holds three business summits every year;
- (e) welcomes the introduction of other measures to engage with the business community including a business visits programme, aimed at sharing information about the Council and business and to listen to what the Council can do better to support business;
- (f) notes that Sheffield is primarily a small and medium sized enterprise economy, with 97% of the business base employing fewer than 50 employees and to develop the local economy it is essential to help businesses grow, and help new businesses to start up, in addition to ensuring established businesses are sustained;
- (g) welcomes the focus of the present Administration on skills as key to supporting business and creating jobs in the City, noting the importance of providing the right skills to meet business needs and to support growth and provide a better future for Sheffield's people;
- (h) further welcomes work with local businesses to create employment opportunities for young people and wholeheartedly supports the Sheffield Apprenticeship Programme where the Council has worked with many small businesses offering a subsidy to get young people into employment alongside the opportunity to study for a Level 2 qualification;
- (i) remembers this is in stark contrast to the previous Administration who's Leader broke a promise to commit £1 million of Council resources to support the previous Government's Future Jobs Fund;
- (j) is proud that the Sheffield Apprenticeship Programme pioneered the City Deal for skills which adopts the model used in the Sheffield



Apprenticeship Programme to create 4,000 apprenticeships in small and medium sized enterprises by 2016 and welcomes that the vision of the present Administration is responsible for this;

- (k) further welcomes the present Administration's Keep Sheffield Working Fund which supports projects facilitating job creation such as the recently announced export scheme, helping Sheffield business expand into international markets and welcomes the collaboration between the Council, Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, South Yorkshire International Trade Forum and UK Trade and Investment in supporting the project;
- (l) welcomes the commitment of the present Administration to the regeneration of the City Centre and supports their efforts to reinvigorate the Sevenstone development, which had been held back under the previous Administration and by the present Government's abysmal economic mismanagement;
- (m) regrets that the development was hindered by this present Government, of which the Member of Parliament for Sheffield Hallam is Deputy Prime Minister, whose lack of commitment to the development was demonstrated through their decision to cut £12 million of support to the development as one of their first actions in Government and believes that actions speak louder than the Deputy Prime Minister's empty words;
- (n) recalls with regret that the previous Administration completely failed to stand up for Sheffield when this decision was taken at the same time the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills cancelled the £80 million loan for Sheffield Forgemasters and regrets that the main opposition group continue to put party interests before the City;
- (o) regrets that this Government's short sighted economic approach was again demonstrated recently through their refusal to invest in proposals for a 650MW "clean coal" power station at Hatfield Colliery, near Doncaster, with public money and recalls that the scheme had previously been picked out by the EU as the most advanced Carbon Capture and Storage project in Europe, putting it in pole position for a grant of around £250m from Brussels;
- (p) supports the development of the Moor Market and welcomes that work on the market is currently progressing well and welcomes the recent positive reports about the wider development of The Moor in the local media;
- (q) further supports the decision of the present Administration to support local market traders through reversing the shocking decision of the previous Administration to remove the subsidy on the rents for market traders, leading to a huge increase in rents for traders and recalls comments from traders that this move could have left Sheffield without

- any market at all;
- (r) further supports other measures supporting City Centre traders such as the introduction of a Shopper Rate for car parking over the Christmas period and the Chapel Walk project which aims to give start up businesses support to become stand alone High Street retailers;
  - (s) further supports the actions taken by the present Administration to clamp down on street trading in the City Centre which threatens many businesses and is extremely concerned about reports that the Liberal Democrat MP, Jo Swinson, is advocating giving 'pedlars' a new freedom to trade and believes that this has the potential to sabotage the work undertaken by the present Administration to eradicate this practice and believes that this policy would be anti-business;
  - (t) notes the consultation on the economic growth strategy for Sheffield and welcomes the vision articulated for Sheffield's economy which includes a dynamic private sector, world class, high technology sectors, a skilled and productive workforce, an unrivalled quality of place, an inclusive economy and an enhanced reputation; and
  - (u) resolves to continue to work to support the local economy and to develop the economic strategy working with local businesses to bring much needed jobs and business growth to the City.

(Note: 1. The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Vickie Priestley) and Councillors Simon Clement Jones, Shaffaq Mohammed, Rob Frost, Sylvia Anginotti, Colin Ross, Joe Otten, Keith Hill, Penny Baker, Diana Stimely, Roger Davison, Sue Alston, Andrew Sangar, Janice Sidebottom, Ian Auckland, Bob McCann, Anders Hanson, Katie Condliffe, David Baker, Alison Brelsford and Trevor Bagshaw voted for Paragraphs (a) (b) (f) (g) (h) (p) (t) and (u); and against Paragraphs (c), (d), (e), (l), (j), (k), (l), (m), (n), (o), (q), (r) and (s) of the Substantive Motion and asked for this to be recorded.

2. Councillors Jillian Creasy and Robert Murphy voted for Paragraphs (a) to (h), (j), (k), (p) (q) (s) (t) and (u); against Paragraph (o) and abstained on Paragraphs (i), (l), (m), (n) and (r) of the Substantive Motion and asked for this to be recorded.)

## **10. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR SHEILA CONSTANCE**

### **FOOD BANKS**

At the request of Councillor Sheila Constance and with the consent of the Council, the Notice of Motion Numbered 10 on the Summons for this meeting was withdrawn.

**11. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR SIMON CLEMENT JONES**  
**CHRISTMAS SHOPPER CAR PARKING CHARGES**

It was moved by Councillor Simon Clement Jones, seconded by Councillor Diana Stimely, that this Council:-

- (a) believes that Christmas trading provides an important boost and seasonal cheer to local businesses, particularly retailers in Sheffield's City and District Centres;
- (b) notes that other local authorities, including neighbouring Rotherham and Barnsley and nearby Chesterfield, have announced that they will be offering free parking in the run up to Christmas this year;
- (c) recalls the budget amendment of the main opposition group, which proposed to allocate funds for the provision of free Christmas parking;
- (d) welcomes the decision to cut parking charges but believes if the current Administration were serious about their pledge to be "business-friendly" they would go further and provide a repeat of the previous Administration's free Christmas parking scheme in Sheffield's City and District Centres;
- (e) furthermore questions the decision of Town Hall "scrooges" to deny traders in Millhouses additional parking provision over the Christmas period; and
- (f) calls upon the Administration to reconsider their Christmas parking policy with immediate effect.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Leigh Bramall, seconded by Councillor Chris Rosling-Josephs, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of paragraphs (b) to (f) and the addition of new paragraphs (b) to (f) as follows:-

- (b) is pleased to promote the Christmas shopper parking rate of £3 for 6 hours, which will apply to selected city centre car parks, and is a discount from the current rates of up to £9.30 for 6 hours in city centre car parks;
- (c) notes that the Administration is offering this discounted rate despite devastating Government cuts to the Council's budget, to support businesses over the Christmas period;
- (d) notes that parking changes came into force after the Christmas lights switch on, meaning the rate has been in place from Monday 19th November and will be in place throughout the Christmas period, not

just on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays like the previous Administration's schemes when they were in power;

- (e) is committed to being a business friendly Council and believes it is vital for our City's economy to have a vibrant city centre, which is why the current Administration is taking action to support businesses in the short term through reduced parking charges and projects like Chapel Walk; and
- (f) is also committed to securing the City's long term future through key projects such as the Moor redevelopment and continuing its work to deliver Sevenstone.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The original Motion, as amended, was then put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) believes that Christmas trading provides an important boost and seasonal cheer to local businesses, particularly retailers in Sheffield's City and District Centres;
- (b) is pleased to promote the Christmas shopper parking rate of £3 for 6 hours, which will apply to selected city centre car parks, and is a discount from the current rates of up to £9.30 for 6 hours in city centre car parks;
- (c) notes that the Administration is offering this discounted rate despite devastating Government cuts to the Council's budget, to support businesses over the Christmas period;
- (d) notes that parking changes came into force after the Christmas lights switch on, meaning the rate has been in place from Monday 19th November and will be in place throughout the Christmas period, not just on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays like the previous Administration's schemes when they were in power;
- (e) is committed to being a business friendly Council and believes it is vital for our City's economy to have a vibrant city centre, which is why the current Administration is taking action to support businesses in the short term through reduced parking charges and projects like Chapel Walk; and
- (f) is also committed to securing the City's long term future through key projects such as the Moor redevelopment and continuing its work to deliver Sevenstone.

**12. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR HARRY HARPHAM**

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS**

It was moved by Councillor Harry Harpham, seconded by Councillor Ibrar Hussain, that this Council:-

- (a) congratulates the new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Shaun Wright, for his election victory last month;
- (b) notes that Commissioner Wright won the election with 51% of the vote;
- (c) believes this Coalition Government policy was a complete shambles;
- (d) regrets that these elections cost £75m and saw the lowest ever turnout in a national poll;
- (e) is not surprised that with all ballots counted, turnout was approximately 14.9%;
- (f) believes the PCC elections were wrongly timed, under publicised and lacked the support to make the elections credible;
- (g) is concerned that the Electoral Commission described it as "a concern for everyone who cares about democracy";
- (h) believes that the cost of the elections could have paid for thousands of frontline police officers;
- (i) is concerned that since the election, two Chief Constables have already resigned from their posts, suggesting the new position does not work well with the existing structure;
- (j) will work with our new PCC to ensure the vision that "people of South Yorkshire can live, work and learn in a place of safety and peace" is a reality;
- (k) supports the Commissioner in his aim to further develop neighbourhood policing, make sure victims and witnesses get a better deal, renew our focus on preventing crime and re-offending and ensure better co-ordination, communication and partnership between agencies; and
- (l) believes that despite the shambles of the PCC Elections, the Council is committed to working together with our elected PCC to ensure the safety of local residents and the effective running of South Yorkshire Police.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Sylvia Anginotti, seconded by Councillor Penny Baker, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be

amended by the deletion of all the words after the words "That this Council" and the substitution of the following words therefor:-

- (a) notes that the three largest political parties in Britain went into the 2010 general election, pledging to make local police forces more responsive and accountable;
- (b) maintains that the best way of achieving this would have been through the Liberal Democrat plan for directly-elected police authorities and retains concerns about the consequences of placing too much power in the hands of one individual;
- (c) believes that, at the national level, the Police and Crime Commissioner elections held on November 15<sup>th</sup> were poorly managed and could have been promoted in a much more effective manner;
- (d) hopes that South Yorkshire's first Police and Crime Commissioner will work hard to protect front-line services, and refuse to use our great city as a pawn in national political spats;
- (e) encourages South Yorkshire's first Police and Crime Commissioner to not waste money that could have been spent on front-line services, appointing a Deputy Commissioner; and
- (f) furthermore, calls upon members on the new Police and Crime Panel to effectively hold the new Commissioner to account and ensure Sheffield gets a fair deal from South Yorkshire police.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was negatived.

It was then moved by Councillor Robert Murphy, seconded by Councillor Jillian Creasy, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by:-

1. the deletion of paragraphs (a) and (b) and the re-lettering of paragraphs (c) to (e) as new paragraphs (a) to (c);
2. the addition of a new paragraph (d) as follows:-
  - (d) notes there was a significant number of spoilt ballot papers;
3. the deletion of original paragraph (f) and the addition of new paragraphs (e) to (i) as follows:-
  - (e) believes the post of Police Commissioner goes against the Government's stated agenda of bringing power closer to local people;
  - (f) believes that it is wrong that the head of local police commissioning should be a single person drawn from a single political party;

- (g) further believes that it is impossible for such a person to fully represent the many diverse communities in South Yorkshire;
  - (h) believes that the post would have been better served by a good independent candidate, but believes the high cost of the deposit and lack of free post mailing prevented such a possibility;
  - (i) believes the public has shown contempt for the position of Police Commissioner and the role should be abolished as soon as possible;
4. the re-lettering of original paragraphs (g) to (l) as new paragraphs (j) to (o);
5. the addition of a new paragraph (p) as follows:-
- (p) resolves to send a copy of this motion to all Sheffield MPs and the Home Secretary.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was negated.

The original Motion was put to the vote and carried, as follows:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) congratulates the new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Shaun Wright, for his election victory last month;
- (b) notes that Commissioner Wright won the election with 51% of the vote;
- (c) believes this Coalition Government policy was a complete shambles;
- (d) regrets that these elections cost £75m and saw the lowest ever turnout in a national poll;
- (e) is not surprised that with all ballots counted, turnout was approximately 14.9%;
- (f) believes the PCC elections were wrongly timed, under publicised and lacked the support to make the elections credible;
- (g) is concerned that the Electoral Commission described it as "a concern for everyone who cares about democracy";
- (h) believes that the cost of the elections could have paid for thousands of frontline police officers;
- (i) is concerned that since the election, two Chief Constables have already resigned from their posts, suggesting the new position does not work

- well with the existing structure;
- (j) will work with our new PCC to ensure the vision that “people of South Yorkshire can live, work and learn in a place of safety and peace” is a reality;
  - (k) supports the Commissioner in his aim to further develop neighbourhood policing, make sure victims and witnesses get a better deal, renew our focus on preventing crime and re-offending and ensure better co-ordination, communication and partnership between agencies; and
  - (l) believes that despite the shambles of the PCC Elections, the Council is committed to working together with our elected PCC to ensure the safety of local residents and the effective running of South Yorkshire Police.

(Note: The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Vickie Priestley) and Councillors Simon Clement Jones, Shaffaq Mohammed, Rob Frost, Sylvia Anginotti, Colin Ross, Joe Otten, Keith Hill, Penny Baker, Diana Stimely, Roger Davison, Sue Alston, Andrew Sangar, Janice Sidebottom, Ian Auckland, Bob McCann, Anders Hanson, Katie Condliffe, David Baker, Alison Brelsford and Trevor Bagshaw voted for Paragraphs (j) and (l) and against all of the remaining Paragraphs of the Motion and asked for this to be recorded.)

**13. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR NEALE GIBSON**

**ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN CONFLICT**

It was moved by Councillor Neale Gibson, seconded by Councillor Jackie Drayton, that this Council:-

- (a) welcomes the news that a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas has now been agreed;
- (b) hopes this temporary ceasefire can be turned into a durable peace;
- (c) condemns the recent violence which resulted in the death of 158 people including women and children;
- (d) supports calls for a full scale UN diplomatic initiative to end the violence, urging the Secretary General of the United Nations to travel to the region and believes sustained international engagement will be vital in helping to bring this conflict to an end;
- (e) believes this is due to deeper causes of the latest crisis, reflecting the failure over years and decades to achieve a two-state solution;
- (f) is thankful that a full-scale ground invasion was avoided as it would



have been a disaster for the peoples of both Gaza and Israel, risking escalating the death toll and further damaging the hope for peace and security;

- (g) believes that real security for the citizens of Israel and Gaza will only be achieved through the re-invigoration of a serious political dialogue, aimed at establishing a lasting and regional peace; and
- (h) further believes that now the violence has stopped, talking should start so that progress can be made towards agreeing a negotiated two-state solution which will bring the security and peace that the people of the region deserve.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Jillian Creasy, seconded by Councillor Robert Murphy, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the addition of new paragraphs (i) to (k) as follows:-

- (i) welcomes that the UN has given the Palestinian Authority non-member observer status;
- (j) regrets that this was immediately followed by Israel announcing the establishment of more illegal settlements; and
- (k) congratulates the Sheffield Palestine Solidarity Campaign for organising Palestine Culture Week and for their continuing humanitarian support for the Palestinian people.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The original Motion, as amended, was put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) welcomes the news that a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas has now been agreed;
- (b) hopes this temporary ceasefire can be turned into a durable peace;
- (c) condemns the recent violence which resulted in the death of 158 people including women and children;
- (d) supports calls for a full scale UN diplomatic initiative to end the violence, urging the Secretary General of the United Nations to travel to the region and believes sustained international engagement will be vital in helping to bring this conflict to an end;
- (e) believes this is due to deeper causes of the latest crisis, reflecting the failure over years and decades to achieve a two-state solution;

- (f) is thankful that a full-scale ground invasion was avoided as it would have been a disaster for the peoples of both Gaza and Israel, risking escalating the death toll and further damaging the hope for peace and security;
- (g) believes that real security for the citizens of Israel and Gaza will only be achieved through the re-invigoration of a serious political dialogue, aimed at establishing a lasting and regional peace;
- (h) further believes that now the violence has stopped, talking should start so that progress can be made towards agreeing a negotiated two-state solution which will bring the security and peace that the people of the region deserve;
- (i) welcomes that the UN has given the Palestinian Authority non-member observer status;
- (j) regrets that this was immediately followed by Israel announcing the establishment of more illegal settlements; and
- (k) congratulates the Sheffield Palestine Solidarity Campaign for organising Palestine Culture Week and for their continuing humanitarian support for the Palestinian people.

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR JILLIAN CREASY**

**ENERGY BILL**

It was moved by Councillor Jillian Creasy, seconded by Councillor Robert Murphy, that this Council:-

- (a) notes that, despite the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions and expand the green economy, the Energy Bill will not include a decarbonisation target for electricity production for 2030 and relies on gas power stations in the short to medium term;
- (b) recognises that the unreliable supply and high price of imported gas is likely to increase demand for UK shale gas despite the fact that the method of producing it ("fracking") makes it one of the most carbon-hungry and environmentally damaging fossil fuels, akin to tar sands and arctic drilling, which have all been described as "extreme extraction";
- (c) will lead the way in our own region by declaring our opposition to "extreme extraction" methods which involve using disproportionate amounts of energy to extract the fuel, and which destabilise and pollute the ground, water and atmosphere; and
- (d) will instead work to attract all possible funding to the City for projects which increase energy efficiency, sustainability and self sufficiency and

which create jobs in the green economy.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor David Baker, seconded by Councillor Andrew Sangar, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of paragraphs (b) to (d) and the addition of new paragraphs (b) to (f) as follows:-

- (b) nevertheless welcomes the Bill as a roadmap for the UK's switch to "a low-carbon economy" and believes the Bill is a victory for Liberal Democrats in Government;
- (c) hopes that whoever forms the next Government will legislate for an effective 2030 decarbonisation target in 2016;
- (d) welcomes comments from the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Ed Davey MP, that "The right wing of the Tory party are trying to make out shale gas is the answer but I'm afraid the evidence does not bear it out";
- (e) believes at a local level this Council should promote green and sustainable methods of energy production; and
- (f) reaffirms its commitment to become the country's first decentralised energy city, entirely reliant on green energy produced within the City.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was negatived.

It was then moved by Councillor Jack Scott, seconded by Councillor Jayne Dunn, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of all the words after the words "That this Council" and the substitution of the following words therefor:-

- (a) notes that the Energy Bill announced last week shows a complete lack of commitment by the Government to address environmental issues;
- (b) further notes that, despite the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions and expand the green economy, the Energy Bill will not include a decarbonisation target for electricity production for 2030 and relies on gas power stations in the short to medium term;
- (c) regrets that to encourage green energy, the Government is permitting an increase in energy bills of £20 a year reaching over £100 extra a year in 2020, and that this Government is putting the cost of infrastructure projects onto the already squeezed general public while energy companies make millions in profits;
- (d) further regrets that this has come at a time when energy bills have already increased on average by £200 in the last two years;
- (e) believes the energy companies should be investing in carbon reducing

projects;

- (f) is disappointed that this Government refuses to address the issue of reducing our carbon footprint, leaving targets out of the report, and believes this omission of targets is proof that the Liberal Democrats in Government have no influence over their Coalition partners to affect a policy they have previously championed;
- (g) regrets that this Government's short sighted economic approach was again demonstrated recently through their refusal to invest in proposals for a 650MW "clean coal" power station at Hatfield Colliery, near Doncaster, with public money and recalls that the scheme had previously been picked out by the EU as the most advanced Carbon Capture and Storage project in Europe, putting it in pole position for a grant of around £250m from Brussels;
- (h) further notes that this project would have put the Sheffield City Region and the Yorkshire and Humber Energy Intensive Industries on a more secure footing;
- (i) notes that by not setting targets it causes uncertainty for businesses and investors, and that the Emission Performance Standards (EPS) said the target needed to be set realistically to encourage investment;
- (j) is committed to reducing energy demand to reduce carbon emissions and reduce the burdens on family budgets;
- (k) has delivered a city-wide free insulation programme covering over 30,000 homes over the past four years and welcomes that the current Administration is now planning how to deliver even greater benefits by delivering the Green Deal and developing the City's heat networks;
- (l) welcomes the Administration's plans to undertake England's largest energy switch next year, to help Sheffield people get better deals on their energy bills;
- (m) believes it is more important than ever that the country has a competitive energy market that delivers fair prices and works in the public interest, and notes that this is why the Labour Party has called for an overhaul to the energy market and the creation of a tough new watchdog with powers to force energy companies to pass on price cuts;
- (n) urges this Government to hold the energy companies to account instead of making policy that benefits them, noting that this Energy Bill doesn't do enough to tackle the growing energy crisis that is taking hold of the country and that increasing the burden on family budgets is not fair when the energy companies are making millions in profit;
- (o) is committed to working towards the Green Deal to attract green industry to Sheffield and helping to tackle fuel poverty in the City; and

- (p) supports Ian Lavery MP who is bringing forward an Early Day Motion to debate this Bill further.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The original Motion, as amended, was then put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) notes that the Energy Bill announced last week shows a complete lack of commitment by the Government to address environmental issues;
- (b) further notes that, despite the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions and expand the green economy, the Energy Bill will not include a decarbonisation target for electricity production for 2030 and relies on gas power stations in the short to medium term;
- (c) regrets that to encourage green energy, the Government is permitting an increase in energy bills of £20 a year reaching over £100 extra a year in 2020, and that this Government is putting the cost of infrastructure projects onto the already squeezed general public while energy companies make millions in profits;
- (d) further regrets that this has come at a time when energy bills have already increased on average by £200 in the last two years;
- (e) believes the energy companies should be investing in carbon reducing projects;
- (f) is disappointed that this Government refuses to address the issue of reducing our carbon footprint, leaving targets out of the report, and believes this omission of targets is proof that the Liberal Democrats in Government have no influence over their Coalition partners to affect a policy they have previously championed;
- (g) regrets that this Government's short sighted economic approach was again demonstrated recently through their refusal to invest in proposals for a 650MW "clean coal" power station at Hatfield Colliery, near Doncaster, with public money and recalls that the scheme had previously been picked out by the EU as the most advanced Carbon Capture and Storage project in Europe, putting it in pole position for a grant of around £250m from Brussels;
- (h) further notes that this project would have put the Sheffield City Region and the Yorkshire and Humber Energy Intensive Industries on a more secure footing;
- (i) notes that by not setting targets it causes uncertainty for businesses

- and investors, and that the Emission Performance Standards (EPS) said the target needed to be set realistically to encourage investment;
- (j) is committed to reducing energy demand to reduce carbon emissions and reduce the burdens on family budgets;
  - (k) has delivered a city-wide free insulation programme covering over 30,000 homes over the past four years and welcomes that the current Administration is now planning how to deliver even greater benefits by delivering the Green Deal and developing the City's heat networks;
  - (l) welcomes the Administration's plans to undertake England's largest energy switch next year, to help Sheffield people get better deals on their energy bills;
  - (m) believes it is more important than ever that the country has a competitive energy market that delivers fair prices and works in the public interest, and notes that this is why the Labour Party has called for an overhaul to the energy market and the creation of a tough new watchdog with powers to force energy companies to pass on price cuts;
  - (n) urges this Government to hold the energy companies to account instead of making policy that benefits them, noting that this Energy Bill doesn't do enough to tackle the growing energy crisis that is taking hold of the country and that increasing the burden on family budgets is not fair when the energy companies are making millions in profit;
  - (o) is committed to working towards the Green Deal to attract green industry to Sheffield and helping to tackle fuel poverty in the City; and
  - (p) supports Ian Lavery MP who is bringing forward an Early Day Motion to debate this Bill further.

(Note: 1. The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Vickie Priestley) and Councillors Simon Clement Jones, Shaffaq Mohammed, Rob Frost, Sylvia Anginotti, Colin Ross, Joe Otten, Keith Hill, Penny Baker, Diana Stimely, Roger Davison, Sue Alston, Andrew Sangar, Janice Sidebottom, Ian Auckland, Bob McCann, Anders Hanson, Katie Condliffe, David Baker, Alison Brelsford and Trevor Bagshaw voted for Paragraphs (j), (k), (l) and (o) and against all of the remaining Paragraphs of the Substantive Motion and asked for this to be recorded.

2. Councillors Jillian Creasy and Robert Murphy voted for Paragraphs (a) to (e), (i) to (l), (n) and (o), against Paragraphs (g) and (h) and abstained on Paragraphs (f), (m) and (p) and asked for this to be recorded.)

**15. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR ROB FROST**

## **DEMENTIA SERVICES**

It was moved by Councillor Rob Frost, seconded by Councillor Sylvia Anginotti, that this Council:-

- (a) recalls the motion proposed by Councillor Clive Skelton on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012, which urged the current Administration to rule out the closure of Bole Hill View Dementia Resource Centre;
- (b) notes with disappointment that the current Administration have now confirmed their plan to consult on closing Bole Hill View in March 2014;
- (c) believes Bole Hill View provides an invaluable service of help and support to those who suffer from dementia and their families;
- (d) thanks those who have already publicly shared their experiences of Bole Hill View, alongside the hundreds of local people who have signed petitions in support of the Centre;
- (e) welcomes the decision of the trade union UNISON to oppose the closure of Bole Hill View; and
- (f) urges the current Administration to reassess its spending priorities in order that Bole Hill View remains open.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Mary Lea, seconded by Councillor Clive Skelton, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of all the words after the words "That this Council" and the substitution of the following words therefor:-

- (a) has a strong commitment to improving and developing services for people with dementia and their families and notes that the Council invests over £19m in these services in the City;
- (b) has endeavoured to protect adult social care services where it can, as part of its commitment to supporting and protecting communities and vulnerable people and notes that the spending cut for adult social care overall is less than that for many other Council services;
- (c) is aware that the policy of reviewing resource centres was started by the previous Administration, leading to a Cabinet report in 2010 which recommended that Cabinet give permission to consult on the future of Foxwood and Ravenscroft and a further recommendation was that Cabinet "recognises that further consideration will be needed on the future of all the existing resource centres and that a report should be brought to Cabinet in due course.";
- (d) notes that the consultation resulted in the closure of Foxwood and Ravenscroft in March 2011, under the previous Administration and deplores the hypocrisy and merciless political scaremongering by the

main opposition group, who demonstrably followed this policy whilst in administration;

- (e) further notes that at the same time, the implementation of self-directed support has also seen people with dementia and their families choosing to use other services for their day and respite care and this has an impact on the remaining resource centres;
- (f) regrets that due to devastating budget cuts by the Coalition Government, the Administration has been forced to consider reducing the funding for the remaining resource centres by £385k (out of a total £3.9m budget for the three resource centres) and this has led to the proposals to decommission Norbury and Bole Hill;
- (g) notes that the Administration has conducted a review of the services the Council provides for people with dementia and asked people about the services that they need, and that, working with the Sheffield Alzheimer's Society, people with dementia were asked for their views on what services are currently available, their experiences of them and where they would like to see changes, and furthermore, that carers were also invited to an event at the Town Hall as well as a 'Talk to Us' day at Sheffield Showcase exhibition space in the city centre;
- (h) is aware that the results of the feedback showed that for people with dementia and their carers, the important areas they would like to see more investment in is to support earlier access to diagnosis and treatment, better information and advice and support, more opportunities for carer breaks and the development of integrated, flexible and personalised support for people with dementia who are living at home;
- (i) is pleased that this information has been fed into a wide-ranging review of dementia services in the City and how they could be used to help Sheffield become a dementia friendly city by 2015;
- (j) notes that resulting from these proposals, the Administration can give a clear commitment that no-one who currently attends these Centres will have their overall service reduced through any changes that may happen; and
- (k) will continue to do all it can to support and protect people with dementia and their families; to consult with them; and to fund services, in the face of unprecedented cuts in the funding which this City receives from the Government.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The original Motion, as amended, was then put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-



RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) has a strong commitment to improving and developing services for people with dementia and their families and notes that the Council invests over £19m in these services in the City;
- (b) has endeavoured to protect adult social care services where it can, as part of its commitment to supporting and protecting communities and vulnerable people and notes that the spending cut for adult social care overall is less than that for many other Council services;
- (c) is aware that the policy of reviewing resource centres was started by the previous Administration, leading to a Cabinet report in 2010 which recommended that Cabinet give permission to consult on the future of Foxwood and Ravenscroft and a further recommendation was that Cabinet "recognises that further consideration will be needed on the future of all the existing resource centres and that a report should be brought to Cabinet in due course.";
- (d) notes that the consultation resulted in the closure of Foxwood and Ravenscroft in March 2011, under the previous Administration and deplores the hypocrisy and merciless political scaremongering by the main opposition group, who demonstrably followed this policy whilst in administration;
- (e) further notes that at the same time, the implementation of self-directed support has also seen people with dementia and their families choosing to use other services for their day and respite care and this has an impact on the remaining resource centres;
- (f) regrets that due to devastating budget cuts by the Coalition Government, the Administration has been forced to consider reducing the funding for the remaining resource centres by £385k (out of a total £3.9m budget for the three resource centres) and this has led to the proposals to decommission Norbury and Bole Hill;
- (g) notes that the Administration has conducted a review of the services the Council provides for people with dementia and asked people about the services that they need, and that, working with the Sheffield Alzheimer's Society, people with dementia were asked for their views on what services are currently available, their experiences of them and where they would like to see changes, and furthermore, that carers were also invited to an event at the Town Hall as well as a 'Talk to Us' day at Sheffield Showcase exhibition space in the city centre;
- (h) is aware that the results of the feedback showed that for people with dementia and their carers, the important areas they would like to see more investment in is to support earlier access to diagnosis and treatment, better information and advice and support, more opportunities for carer breaks and the development of integrated,

flexible and personalised support for people with dementia who are living at home;

- (i) is pleased that this information has been fed into a wide-ranging review of dementia services in the City and how they could be used to help Sheffield become a dementia friendly city by 2015;
- (j) notes that resulting from these proposals, the Administration can give a clear commitment that no-one who currently attends these Centres will have their overall service reduced through any changes that may happen; and
- (k) will continue to do all it can to support and protect people with dementia and their families; to consult with them; and to fund services, in the face of unprecedented cuts in the funding which this City receives from the Government.

(Note: Councillors Jillian Creasy and Robert Murphy voted for paragraphs (a) to (c) and (e) to (k) and abstained on Paragraph (d) of the Substantive Motion and asked for this to be recorded.)

## **16. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR LEIGH BRAMALL**

### **REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT**

It was moved by Councillor Chris Rosling Josephs, seconded by Councillor Terry Fox, that this Council notes with great concern recently published figures indicating the failure of the Government's Work Programme, with only 3.53% of people enrolled on the scheme finding a job, missing the 5.5% target.

Whereupon, it was be moved by Councillor Ian Auckland, seconded by Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of all the words after the words "That this Council" and the substitution of the following words therefor:-

- (a) recalls the failure of the last Government to tackle the scandal of youth unemployment, with numbers rising steadily from 2004 onwards, reaching almost half a million prior to the economic crash; and
- (b) welcomes the steps the Coalition Government are taking to help and support people back into work, in particular, young people.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was negatived.

It was then moved by Councillor Leigh Bramall, seconded by Councillor Adam Hurst, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of all the words after the words "That this Council" and the substitution

of the following words therefor:-

- (a) notes with great concern recently published figures indicating the failure of the Government's Work Programme, with only 3.53% of people enrolled on the scheme finding a job, missing the 5.5% target;
- (b) is concerned about the Government's model, which sees a number of third sector groups paid on results under pressure, leading them to leave the Work Programme or go out of business;
- (c) notes that despite the Work Programme, long term unemployment has continued to increase year on year and is therefore concerned that this is not the best way to help reduce unemployment;
- (d) deplores the secrecy around the statistical data around the Work Programme's success, and believes that such a policy offers little opportunity for transparency and scrutiny of the Programme and prevents actions to co-ordinate activities that would make work to reduce unemployment more effective;
- (e) expects the situation to get worse with the Government cuts to welfare, which will see tens of millions of pounds less coming into the Sheffield economy;
- (f) urges the Government to adopt innovative schemes such as the Sheffield 100 Apprenticeship Scheme to effectively reduce unemployment; and
- (g) urges the Government to immediately review the Work Programme model and take urgent action to boost the economy and create more jobs such as adopting Labour's five point plan for jobs and growth.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The original Motion, as amended, was then put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) notes with great concern recently published figures indicating the failure of the Government's Work Programme, with only 3.53% of people enrolled on the scheme finding a job, missing the 5.5% target;
- (b) is concerned about the Government's model, which sees a number of third sector groups paid on results under pressure, leading them to leave the Work Programme or go out of business;
- (c) notes that despite the Work Programme, long term unemployment has continued to increase year on year and is therefore concerned that this is not the best way to help reduce unemployment;

- (d) deplores the secrecy around the statistical data around the Work Programme's success, and believes that such a policy offers little opportunity for transparency and scrutiny of the Programme and prevents actions to co-ordinate activities that would make work to reduce unemployment more effective;
- (e) expects the situation to get worse with the Government cuts to welfare, which will see tens of millions of pounds less coming into the Sheffield economy;
- (f) urges the Government to adopt innovative schemes such as the Sheffield 100 Apprenticeship Scheme to effectively reduce unemployment; and
- (g) urges the Government to immediately review the Work Programme model and take urgent action to boost the economy and create more jobs such as adopting Labour's five point plan for jobs and growth.

**17. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN BY COUNCILLOR DAVID BAKER**

**WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING**

It was moved by Councillor David Baker, seconded by Councillor Colin Ross, that this Council:-

- (a) notes the slump in green waste recycling in 2012 in the peak months of April to September and believes this is a result of the current Administration's decision to end the free collection of green waste and their mismanagement of local recycling centres;
- (b) further notes the report of The Sheffield Star on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2012, which stated:  
  
*"Coun Jack Scott, Sheffield Council cabinet member responsible for environment, said the fall had coincided with the authority taking a tougher line on the problem. But he has now revealed the decrease is partly due to a change in how Sheffield Homes records figures for dumping on estates."*
- (c) reminds Members that these latest embarrassments follow a string of failures under the tenure of the current Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene, including:
  - (i) a failure to effectively communicate changes, despite spending £400,000, which resulted in hundreds of families missing their first black bin collection under the new fortnightly system;
  - (ii) utter confusion over an amnesty on closed lids and additional

- sacks, which saw the Council and Veolia offering contradictory advice;
- (iii) over a thousand complaints a day during the first week of fortnightly bin collections;
  - (iv) complete mismanagement of local recycling centres and the failure to avoid strikes; and
  - (v) a swift u-turn on a proposal to offer the charged-for green bin service across the City, but only after 14,000 greens bins had already been chipped and pelleted;
- (d) believes this represents one of the most inept starts to a Cabinet career in Sheffield City Council history;
  - (e) feels that this farcical catalogue of errors was reflected in a recent poll on The Star's website, which saw 54% of local people state that waste collections were not working in Sheffield;
  - (f) notes the announcement of funds awarded under the Coalition Government's £250 million Weekly Collection Support Scheme, which saw a number of councils awarded over £10 million;
  - (g) laments the decision of the current Administration in refusing to swallow their pride and submit a more ambitious bid to the fund, which could have saved local services for thousands of Sheffielders;
  - (h) believes that the current Administration failed to stand up for Sheffield by not submitting a more ambitious bid, and regrets that it will now be extremely difficult to revert back to weekly black bin collections; and
  - (i) calls upon the Administration to undertake a genuine review of the City's waste services as opposed to the Administration's last consultation on waste services, which was criticised in the local press for its "weighted" questions.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Jack Scott, seconded by Councillor Ibrar Hussain, as an amendment, that the Motion now submitted be amended by the deletion of all the words after the words "That this Council" and the substitution of the following words therefor:-

- (a) fully opposes the Government's record level of cuts to Sheffield City Council, noting that the Government's cuts are targeted at Councils in the north of England whilst some of the wealthiest councils in the country receive almost no cuts at all, and which have necessitated changes to the waste management service to bring in savings of at least £4 million;
- (b) further notes the opinion of The Sheffield Star on 23rd November 2012,

which stated:

“the Lib Dems merely buried their heads in the sand and pretended the problem would go away. Labour may have taken an unpopular decision, but decisions were needed.”

- (c) is committed to supporting Sheffielders to recycle and therefore deplores the record of the previous Administration who increased recycling by less than 2.5% between 2008 and 2011 and believes this is just another example of their three wasted years;
- (d) notes that these poor recycling levels under the previous Administration are despite spending an additional £2 million on recycling services which was made possible due to the investment in local public services by the previous Government;
- (e) believes that the incompetence of the previous Administration contributed to this failure to significantly improve recycling rates, which is demonstrated by ill-thought through initiatives which clearly made it harder for Sheffielders to recycle, such as the blue boxes for paper and card, a decision made when the present Leader of the main opposition group was the Cabinet Member for waste management between 2008-2010;
- (f) welcomes the present Administration’s campaign to improve recycling in Sheffield whilst moving to Alternate Week Collections, with measures such as the roll out of flexible choice for blue bins and boxes, increasing staffing in the Veolia call centre and the work of the liaison team to support Sheffield people to use the full range of facilities available;
- (g) welcomes recent reductions in the amount of waste sent to landfill and acknowledges that this now at a record low under the present Administration;
- (h) notes the reduction in green waste recycling in 2012 in the months of April to September is a result of unprecedented wet weather, with the wettest summer on record;
- (i) notes that the Government’s fund to protect weekly collections was a public relations stunt from the start, and that Sheffield City Council wrote to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government twice and also to the Deputy Prime Minister asking for confirmation that this would give the Council the money to keep weekly collections in Sheffield, and that if the Coalition had given the Council this guarantee the Council would not have moved to alternate week collections, but the guarantee never came;
- (j) further notes that, out of 216 local authorities, only 90 are receiving funding from the bin fund, and that of these 90, there is a clear bias towards London and the South with almost two thirds of councils

receiving funding in comparison to less than 18% in the North; and

- (k) believes that despite some teething problems, the change to alternate week collection has gone smoothly, and notes that the change is now saving at least £2.4m per year, which is money the current Administration will use to protect other vital services from this Government's reckless cuts.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The original Motion, as amended, was then put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) fully opposes the Government's record level of cuts to Sheffield City Council, noting that the Government's cuts are targeted at Councils in the north of England whilst some of the wealthiest councils in the country receive almost no cuts at all, and which have necessitated changes to the waste management service to bring in savings of at least £4 million;
- (b) further notes the opinion of The Sheffield Star on 23rd November 2012, which stated:  
  
"the Lib Dems merely buried their heads in the sand and pretended the problem would go away. Labour may have taken an unpopular decision, but decisions were needed."
- (c) is committed to supporting Sheffielders to recycle and therefore deplores the record of the previous Administration who increased recycling by less than 2.5% between 2008 and 2011 and believes this is just another example of their three wasted years;
- (d) notes that these poor recycling levels under the previous Administration are despite spending an additional £2 million on recycling services which was made possible due to the investment in local public services by the previous Government;
- (e) believes that the incompetence of the previous Administration contributed to this failure to significantly improve recycling rates, which is demonstrated by ill-thought through initiatives which clearly made it harder for Sheffielders to recycle, such as the blue boxes for paper and card, a decision made when the present Leader of the main opposition group was the Cabinet Member for waste management between 2008-2010;
- (f) welcomes the present Administration's campaign to improve recycling in Sheffield whilst moving to Alternate Week Collections, with measures such as the roll out of flexible choice for blue bins and boxes, increasing

- staffing in the Veolia call centre and the work of the liaison team to support Sheffield people to use the full range of facilities available;
- (g) welcomes recent reductions in the amount of waste sent to landfill and acknowledges that this now at a record low under the present Administration;
  - (h) notes the reduction in green waste recycling in 2012 in the months of April to September is a result of unprecedented wet weather, with the wettest summer on record;
  - (i) notes that the Government's fund to protect weekly collections was a public relations stunt from the start, and that Sheffield City Council wrote to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government twice and also to the Deputy Prime Minister asking for confirmation that this would give the Council the money to keep weekly collections in Sheffield, and that if the Coalition had given the Council this guarantee the Council would not have moved to alternate week collections, but the guarantee never came;
  - (j) further notes that, out of 216 local authorities, only 90 are receiving funding from the bin fund, and that of these 90, there is a clear bias towards London and the South with almost two thirds of councils receiving funding in comparison to less than 18% in the North; and
  - (k) believes that despite some teething problems, the change to alternate week collection has gone smoothly, and notes that the change is now saving at least £2.4m per year, which is money the current Administration will use to protect other vital services from this Government's reckless cuts.

(Note: Councillors Jillian Creasy and Robert Murphy voted for Paragraphs (d), (f) and (g); against Paragraph (h) and abstained on Paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (e) and (i) to (k) of the Substantive Motion and asked for this to be recorded.)





## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Report to Council

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**Report of:** Laraine Manley – Executive Director of Resources

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**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013

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**Subject:** Implementing the Government's Council Tax Benefit Changes

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**Author of Report:** Jon West

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**Summary:**

From April 2013, the government will abolish Council Tax Benefit (CTB) and the Council will be required to replace it with its own local scheme of Council Tax Support (CTS).

Cabinet recommended that Council should approve the CTS scheme presented to Members on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012. The proposed scheme, for working age taxpayers, 'capped' CTS at 80% of council tax liability. However, the report acknowledged that given the uncertainty around the local government financial settlement, the maximum level of support under the scheme for these taxpayers may need to be capped at a different rate.

Since that time, the government has published details of the financial settlement prompting a review of the Council's CTS scheme.

Following this review, and the objective of implementing a scheme that reflects the reduction in government funding, it is proposed that for 2013-14, CTS is capped at 77% for working age taxpayers.

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**Recommendations:**

That Council approve the Council's Council Tax Support scheme as set out in Appendix D to this report, to come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

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**Background Papers:** None

**Category of Report:** OPEN

## Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

<b>Financial implications</b>
YES Cleared By Eugene Walker
<b>Legal implications</b>
YES Cleared by Brendan Twomey
<b>Equality of Opportunity implications</b>
YES Cleared by Adele Robinson
<b>Tackling Health Inequalities implications</b>
NO
<b>Human rights implications</b>
NO
<b>Environmental and Sustainability implications</b>
NO
<b>Economic impact</b>
NO
<b>Community safety implications</b>
NO
<b>Human resources implications</b>
NO
<b>Property implications</b>
NO
<b>Area(s) affected</b>
ALL
<b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in</b>
NOT APPLICABLE
<b>Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?</b>
YES
<b>Press release</b>
NO

## **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

### **IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT'S COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT CHANGES**

#### **1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 From April 2013, the government will abolish Council Tax Benefit (CTB) and the Council will be required to replace it with its own local scheme of Council Tax Support (CTS).
- 1.2 Cabinet recommended that the Council should approve the CTS scheme presented to Members on 17th October 2012 (see report attached at Appendix A). The proposed scheme, for working age taxpayers and some non-protected pensioners, capped CTS at 80% of Council tax liability. However, the report acknowledged that given the uncertainty around the local government financial settlement, the maximum level of support under the scheme for these taxpayers may need to be 'capped' at a different rate.
- 1.3 Since that time, the government has published details of the financial settlement prompting a review of the Council's CTS scheme.
- 1.4 Following this review, based on the figures in the table in Appendix B, the objective of implementing a scheme that reflects the reduction in government funding, and taking into account Members' wish to operate a 'hardship fund' for people in severe financial hardship, the cap needs to be set at 77% for 2013-14.
- 1.5 By way of example, a 77% cap means that a family living in a Band A property will have to pay at least £4.32 per week (£225 per year) towards their Council Tax and a single person at least £3.24 per week (£169 per year). Some further examples of the impact on taxpayers are given at Appendix C.
- 1.6 For the avoidance of doubt, the cap does not apply to pensioners who the government requires to be protected.
- 1.7 Furthermore, on October 15th, the government announced plans for a transitional grant scheme to support councils in making the transition from CTB to CTS. For Sheffield, this would mean a one-off grant of about £1.1m for 2013-14.
- 1.8 However, in order to meet the government's conditions to qualify for this grant, the Council would have to significantly revise its scheme at a cost of over £2.5m for 2013-14.
- 1.9 Also, as the transitional grant is fixed for one year only, redesigning the proposed CTS scheme in order to qualify, does not present the Council with a scheme which is sustainable for future years.

- 1.10 Consequently, this option has not been recommended. Instead, a 'hardship fund' is proposed as a more effective use of Council funds to support claimants through the transition from CTB to CTS.
- 1.11 The Council recognises that collecting the extra £5.5m in Council Tax from those taxpayers in receipt of CTS will be challenging and will reduce the overall collection rate. Consequently the provision of the hardship fund will support those taxpayers and aid the rate of collection.
- 1.12 However, the current recovery policy of taking robust action against the 'won't pays' while supporting the 'can't pays' will be maintained.
- 1.13 The draft scheme considered by Cabinet has been revised, to accommodate the 77% cap in respect of working age clients and to properly refer to the default CTS scheme as described below. The proposed scheme is set out in Appendix D to this note.

## **2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 There are no further financial implications to add to those already detailed in the report to Cabinet (Appendix A).

## **3 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The Council's proposed scheme, with some changes (including the 77% cap), is intended to mirror the CTB regulations. On 18<sup>th</sup> December 2012, the government introduced a set of Default Scheme Regulations which mirror the CTB regulations. Upon consideration of the Default Scheme Regulations, it is considered that the default CTS scheme, with amendments, makes for a clearer, more certain scheme, while achieving the same policy objectives required by Members. It is therefore proposed that the Council's CTS scheme incorporates the default CTS scheme, amended to accommodate the Council's policy aims (see Appendix D).
- 3.2 There are no further legal implications to add to those already detailed in the report to Cabinet (Appendix A).

## **4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no further environmental implications to add to those already detailed in the report to Cabinet (Appendix A).

## **5 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no further equality of opportunity implications to add to those already detailed in the report to Cabinet (Appendix A) and Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix E).

## **6 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 The announcement of the financial settlement in December 2012 has confirmed that, in real terms, the shortfall in government funding for CTS in 2013/14 is higher than originally anticipated.
- 6.2 The overall message from the assessment of the Council's medium term financial position is that services are facing significant reductions in 2013/14 and beyond. If the reductions in funding for CTS are not achieved through the design of the scheme itself, then this will add to the forecast budget gap and will require even larger reductions in service provision and/or increases in other charges to customers. Hence the recommendation that the 'cap' in respect of working age taxpayers is set at 77%.
- 6.3 Adopting the scheme as proposed in this report will ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligation to provide a local scheme for Council Tax Support.

## **7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 That Council approve the Council's Council Tax Support scheme as set out in Appendix D to this report, to come into force on 1st April 2013.

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# SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

## Cabinet Report

**Report of:** Laraine Manley

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**Subject:** Implementing the Government's Council Tax Benefit Changes

**Author of Report:** Jon West (37762)

### Summary:

- 1.1 Sheffield City Council pays Council Tax Benefit (CTB) to over 60,000 households in the city.
- 1.2 From April 2013, as part of a wide ranging welfare reform programme the government will abolish CTB and the Council will be required to replace it with its own local scheme of Council Tax Support (CTS).
- 1.3 This is one of the key changes of at least 40 other changes to the welfare system that the government has introduced since January 2011 or will introduce by October 2013 including the abolition of Housing Benefit (HB), the introduction of Universal Credit, the 'Benefit Cap' on the overall level of combined benefits and credits a household can receive and the transfer of discretionary elements of the Social Fund to local authorities from April 2013.
- 1.4 The government is making a cut of about £500m to the annual CTB budget so for CTS, the government will provide councils with fixed grants to fund awards of CTS which will only be about 90% of what they currently receive for CTB. For Sheffield, based on current estimates, this means a cut in government funding of about £4.6m.
- 1.5 Also, this grant will need to last all year, and unlike CTB, we will not receive any more funding if demand for CTS increases, for example, if people lose their jobs or their income reduces. Because of this gap in funding, the Council will need to make some difficult decisions about the amount of CTS people will receive and take care to ensure that whatever scheme it decides on, it is able to meet the financial demands of that scheme throughout the year.

- 1.6 It is also clear that going forward, the 90% funding is not guaranteed with the government already indicating its intention for future funding of CTS to be provided through general government grant, which it is signalling will be subject to further cuts in future years. This means that, in effect, funding for CTS will be cut by more than 10% over the next few years.
- 1.7 In view of this, at the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> July 2012, Sheffield City Council passed a resolution stating its opposition to the Government proposals on council tax support localisation, expressing concerns that the policy will impact greatest on councils in the most deprived areas of the country and will hit the most vulnerable in society the hardest.
- 1.8 Furthermore, the 2010 Spending Review, together with recent announcements on CTS funding and the rolling up of specific grants into general grant, indicate that reductions in grant of about £35m are likely in 2013/14 with further reductions in subsequent years.
- 1.9 These budget reductions will need to be achieved through a combination of reductions in spending on Council services and increased income from other sources such as fees and charges. Also, the Council's ability to raise Council Tax is constrained by the requirements of the Localism Act to conduct a local referendum if the Tax were to increase above a level prescribed by the Secretary of State.
- 1.10 The overall message from the assessment of the medium term position is that services are facing significant reductions in 2013/14 and beyond. If the reductions in funding for CTS are not achieved through the design of the scheme itself, then this will add to the forecast budget gap and will require even larger reductions in service provision and/or increases in other charges to customers.
- 1.11 Furthermore, the government requires that pensioners are "protected" so that they are no worse off than they would have been under CTB. Therefore, unless there are other ways to deal with the shortfall, for the Council to implement the 10% cut in grant, the shortfall would have to be shared among those taxpayers under pensionable age. In Sheffield, based on current projections, this equates to an average reduction of about 20% for each non pensioner who currently receives CTB. Based on current levels this means a family living in a Band A property will pay an additional £3.76 per week or someone getting single person discount, an extra £2.82.
- 1.12 It should also be noted that the government has not included any changes to the scheme of Single Person's Discount as part of this reform, which can reduce a person's Council tax charge by 25% if they live alone regardless of whether they are on a low income. Neither have they changed the rules for granting discounts or exemptions from Council Tax on those properties which are occupied by students.
- 1.13 Most councils have now gone public with their proposed schemes which, like Sheffield's draft scheme, overwhelmingly align closely to the existing CTB scheme.



1.14 If Sheffield's draft scheme is adopted, for working age claimants, the maximum amount of CTS would be limited to 80% of their council tax liability. This would:

- i. Spread the burden of the cut equitably across all working age claimants and, by applying the means test already established by CTB and HB, ensure that those with greatest need continue to receive the greatest level of support.
- ii. Take account of the fact that the majority of customers receiving CTS will also receive HB . By aligning the rules for CTS to the current rules for HB, awards will be based on rules with which customers are already familiar.
- iii. Avoid the need for claimants to submit a 'new claim' for CTS in the run up to April 2013.
- iv. Provide continuity for those already claiming CTB and ensure transition arrangements will be the least disruptive and least confusing for customers.

1.15 Inevitably some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. The Council is therefore considering ways that additional support may be provided to meet the needs of those particularly vulnerable households experiencing severe financial hardship.

1.16 In accordance with statutory requirements, the Council published its draft scheme and undertook a public consultation exercise between July and September. During this time, the Council sought views on its draft scheme and, reassuringly, the majority of respondents agreed with the Council's proposals. A summary of questions and responses is attached at Appendix 1.

1.17 The Council will continue to regularly review its scheme and consider feedback from its customers to:

- i. understand how the introduction of Universal Credit impacts on our CTS claimants
- ii. look more closely at other options and if necessary
- iii. develop an alternative scheme which will suit the future needs of the Council and its taxpayers.

1.18 The Government have been reviewing the way in which resources are allocated to Councils as part of the Local Government Resource Review. Proposals relating to the retention of business rates and the localisation of Council Tax support are two of the main elements of the Local Government Finance Bill. These will represent the most significant changes in local government finance for decades. The complexity and lack of clarity relating to these arrangements, aspects of which are still open to consultation, has introduced a high level of uncertainty that will not be resolved until early December 2012 when the Local Government Finance Settlement will be announced.

1.19 Although there is considerable uncertainty, which extends to the level of shortfall in government funding for the CTS scheme, the Council needs to prepare for CTS based on the most likely position.

1.20 Consequently, Members should be mindful that the 80% CTS eligibility limit for working age claimants described in this report is based on current projections of the estimated shortfall in funding for the scheme. In order to mitigate this shortfall, the scheme proposed in this report, limits the amount of CTS a working age taxpayer can receive to 80% of their liability for council tax. However, there are a number of factors and risks which may lead to an increase in the funding gap and result in a change to the 80% maximum level of support which is recommended to Members when the scheme is presented to Council for final approval and the Local Government Finance Settlement is known.

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### **Reasons for Recommendations:**

There are very significant legislative, IT, time and cost issues which mean that it will be in the best interests of the Council to establish a CTS scheme which, from 2013, aligns as closely as possible to the current CTB scheme.

This will:

- i. Provide more confidence that we will be able to deliver the scheme within the government's timescales and within its funding provision.
- ii. Spread the burden of the cut equitably across all working age claimants.
- iii. Be relatively simple to administer.
- iv. Minimise disruption to taxpayers.

Adopting the scheme as proposed in this report will ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations to provide a local scheme of Council Tax Support.

### **Recommendations**

That Cabinet note the proposed Council Tax support scheme detailed in this report and set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

That Cabinet recommend to Council that it approve the scheme, to come into force on 1 April 2013.

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**Background Papers:** n/a

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**Category of Report:** OPEN

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## Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

<b>Financial Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Eugene Walker
<b>Legal Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Brendan Twomey
<b>Equality of Opportunity Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Adele Robinson / Michael Bowles
<b>Tackling Health Inequalities Implications</b>
NO
<b>Human rights Implications</b>
NO:
<b>Environmental and Sustainability implications</b>
NO
<b>Economic impact</b>
NO
<b>Community safety implications</b>
NO
<b>Human resources implications</b>
NO
<b>Property implications</b>
NO
<b>Area(s) affected</b>
ALL
<b>Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader</b>
Cabinet Member for Finance
<b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in</b>
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
<b>Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?</b>
YES
<b>Press release</b>
No

## REPORT TO CABINET

### IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT'S COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT CHANGES

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 Sheffield City Council pays Council Tax Benefit (CTB) to over 60,000 households in the city.
- 1.2 From April 2013, as part of a wide ranging welfare reform programme the government will abolish CTB and the Council will be required to replace it with its own local scheme of Council Tax Support (CTS).
- 1.3 This is one of the key changes of at least 40 other changes to the welfare system that the government has introduced since January 2011 or will introduce by October 2013 including the abolition of Housing Benefit (HB), the introduction of Universal Credit, the 'Benefit Cap' on the overall level of combined benefits and credits a household can receive and the transfer of discretionary elements of the Social Fund to local authorities from April 2013.
- 1.4 The government is making a cut of about £500m to the annual CTB budget so for CTS, the government will provide councils with fixed grants to fund awards of CTS which will only be about 90% of what they currently receive for CTB. For Sheffield, based on current estimates, this means a cut in government funding of about £4.6m.
- 1.5 Also, this grant will need to last all year, and unlike CTB, we will not receive any more funding if demand for CTS increases, for example, if people lose their jobs or their income reduces. Because of this gap in funding, the Council will need to make some difficult decisions about the amount of CTS people will receive and take care to ensure that whatever scheme it decides on, it is able to meet the financial demands of that scheme throughout the year.
- 1.6 It is also clear that going forward, the 90% funding is not guaranteed with the government already indicating its intention for future funding of CTS to be provided through general government grant, which it is signalling will be subject to further cuts in future years. This means that, in effect, funding for CTS will be cut by more than 10% over the next few years.
- 1.7 In view of this, at the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> July 2012, Sheffield City Council passed a resolution stating its opposition to the Government proposals on council tax support localisation, expressing concerns that the policy will impact greatest on councils in the most deprived areas of the country and will hit the most vulnerable in society the hardest.
- 1.8 Furthermore, the 2010 Spending Review, together with recent announcements on CTS funding and the rolling up of specific grants into general grant, indicate that reductions in grant of about £35m are likely in 2013/14 with further reductions in subsequent years.
- 1.9 These budget reductions will need to be achieved through a combination of reductions in spending on Council services and increased income from other sources such as fees and charges. Also, the Council's ability to raise Council

Tax is constrained by the requirements of the Localism Act to conduct a local referendum if the Tax were to increase above a level prescribed by the Secretary of State.

- 1.10 The overall message from the assessment of the medium term position is that services are facing significant reductions in 2013/14 and beyond. If the reductions in funding for CTS are not achieved through the design of the scheme itself, then this will add to the forecast budget gap and will require even larger reductions in service provision and/or increases in other charges to customers.
- 1.11 Furthermore, the government requires that pensioners are “protected” so that they are no worse off than they would have been under CTB. Therefore, unless there are other ways to deal with the shortfall, for the Council to implement the 10% cut in grant, the shortfall would have to be shared among those taxpayers under pensionable age. In Sheffield, based on current projections, this equates to an average reduction of about 20% for each non pensioner who currently receives CTB. Based on current levels this means a family living in a Band A property will pay an additional £3.76 per week or someone getting single person discount, an extra £2.82.
- 1.12 It should also be noted that the government has not included any changes to the scheme of Single Person’s Discount as part of this reform, which can reduce a person’s Council tax charge by 25% if they live alone regardless of whether they are on a low income. Neither have they changed the rules for granting discounts or exemptions from Council Tax on those properties which are occupied by students.
- 1.13 Most councils have now gone public with their proposed schemes which, like Sheffield’s draft scheme, overwhelmingly align closely to the existing CTB scheme.
- 1.14 If Sheffield’s draft scheme is adopted, for working age claimants, the maximum amount of CTS would be limited to 80% of their council tax liability. This would:
  - i. Spread the burden of the cut equitably across all working age claimants and, by applying the means test already established by CTB and HB, ensure that those with greatest need continue to receive the greatest level of support.
  - ii. Take account of the fact that the majority of claimants receiving CTS will also receive HB . By aligning the rules for CTS to the current rules for HB, awards will be based on rules with which claimants are already familiar.
  - iii. Avoid the need for claimants to submit a ‘new claim’ for CTS in the run up to April 2013.
  - iv. Provide continuity for those already claiming CTB and ensure transition arrangements will be the least disruptive and least confusing for claimants.
- 1.15 Inevitably some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. The Council is therefore considering ways that additional support may be

provided to meet the needs of those particularly vulnerable households experiencing severe financial hardship.

- 1.16 In accordance with statutory requirements, the Council published its draft scheme and undertook a public consultation exercise between July and September. During this time, the Council sought views on its draft scheme and, reassuringly, the majority of respondents agreed with the Council's proposals. A summary of questions and responses is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.17 The Council will continue to regularly review its scheme and consider feedback from its customers to:
- i. understand how the introduction of Universal Credit impacts on our CTS claimants
  - ii. look more closely at other options and if necessary
  - iii. develop an alternative scheme which will suit the future needs of the Council and its taxpayers.
- 1.18 The Government have been reviewing the way in which resources are allocated to Councils as part of the Local Government Resource Review. Proposals relating to the retention of business rates and the localisation of Council Tax support are two of the main elements of the Local Government Finance Bill. These will represent the most significant changes in local government finance for decades. The complexity and lack of clarity relating to these arrangements, aspects of which are still open to consultation, has introduced a high level of uncertainty that will not be resolved until early December 2012 when the Local Government Finance Settlement will be announced.
- 1.19 Although there is considerable uncertainty, which extends to the level of shortfall in government funding for the CTS scheme, the Council needs to prepare for CTS based on the most likely position.
- 1.20 Consequently, Members should be mindful that the 80% CTS eligibility limit for working age claimants described in this report is based on current projections of the estimated shortfall in funding for the scheme. In order to mitigate this shortfall, the scheme proposed in this report, limits the amount of CTS a working age taxpayer can receive to 80% of their liability for council tax. However, there are a number of factors and risks which may lead to an increase in the funding gap and result in a change to the 80% maximum level of support which is recommended to Members when the scheme is presented to Council for final approval and the Local Government Finance Settlement is known.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The Council pays CTB to over 60,000 households in the city.

2.2 The government's Welfare Reform Act 2012 revokes CTB from April 2013. From this date, CTB will be replaced by a local scheme of "Council Tax support" designed and implemented by Local Authorities within a national framework of specific requirements and broad principles.

- 2.3 The government will provide a fixed grant to fund awards of Council Tax support which will be roughly equivalent to 90% of our 2011-12 CTB expenditure. This is approximately £4.6m less than we currently receive for CTB. However, the grant will not be ringfenced.
- 2.4 Legislation will require that current and future low income pensioners are “protected” under a local scheme so that they are no worse off than they would have been under CTB. This means that the 10% shortfall in grant will have to be shared among those taxpayers under pensionable age. In Sheffield, this equates to an average reduction of about 20% for each non pensioner.

### **3. What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?**

- 3.1 Given that the government will not be providing additional funding for protecting pensioners, the cut in support available to working age claimants will be around 20%.
- 3.2 The reduction in government grant means that we will have to collect at least an additional £4.6m each year in Council Tax. Depending on the design of our local scheme, it is likely that this will include collecting from customers who currently receive the maximum level of support and therefore pay no Council Tax.
- 3.3 Should the Council also decide to protect all those working age ‘passported’ claimants who are receiving full CTB, then the cut in support for those remaining claimants who currently receive CTB would be around 90%.

### **4. Sheffield’s Local Scheme**

- 4.1 Sheffield’s proposed scheme is detailed at Appendix 2.
- 4.2 As required by the government, Sheffield’s scheme will ‘protect’ pensioners by providing them with the same level of support which they would have received under the CTB scheme. For this purpose, the government has defined a pensioner as a person who, amongst other things, has reached the qualifying age for state pension credit and they or their partner are not in receipt of certain income related benefits. Therefore, a taxpayer who has reached state pension credit age but is in receipt of a relevant income related benefit will not be protected and will be treated in the same way as working age claimants when calculating their entitlement to CTS as described below.
- 4.3 In this report the term “working age claimant” shall apply to a person who is liable to pay Council Tax and who has not reached the qualifying age for state pension credit or if they have, they or their partner are in receipt of a relevant income related benefit.
- 4.4 It is proposed that Sheffield’s Council Tax support scheme for working age taxpayers will generally follow the same rules as those for CTB except that, as a starting point for assessing entitlement, it will restrict the Council Tax liability covered by the scheme to 80%. This means that all working age claimants will be faced with paying at least 20% of their Council Tax charge (see Appendix 3 for examples).

4.5 Aligning CTS with the CTB scheme provides a number of advantages including:

- i. It makes forecasting Council Tax support expenditure relatively straight forward.
- ii. It provides more confidence that we will be able to deliver the savings required (subject to probable losses on collection).
- iii. It spreads the burden of the cut equally across all working age claimants.
- iv. It is relatively simple to administer.
- v. It can be implemented quickly, allowing sufficient time to carry out appropriate testing.
- vi. To date, IT providers have only focused on developing solutions that align with CTB. Therefore there will be little opportunity for IT providers to develop solutions that will be able to deliver radically different schemes.
- vii. The majority of claimants receiving Council Tax support will also receive HB. By aligning the rules for Council Tax support to current rules for HB, awards will be based on rules with which claimants are already familiar.
- viii. The current administrative efficiencies of processing 'combined' HB and CTB cases will be maintained (subject to government confirmation that data can be shared)
- ix. Training and development requirements for Council Tax and Benefits staff will be minimised.
- x. The scheme can be delivered on the existing IT processing system (which we will still be using for the delivery of HB and Council Tax support for Pension Age claimants).
- xi. System changes are expected to be relatively straightforward to implement.
- xii. Transition arrangements will be the least disruptive and least confusing for claimants.
- xiii. It will avoid the need to undertake a massive data capture exercise or for claimants to submit a 'new claim' for Council Tax support in the run up to April 2013.
- xiv. It will minimise the risk of failing to migrate from one scheme to another in the timescales permitted.

4.6 It is also proposed that under the scheme, in respect of working age taxpayers, the second adult rebate will not apply. Second adult rebate is a form of CTB that can be paid instead of, but not as well as, the main type of CTB. Regardless of their own income, someone can claim second adult rebate if they live with someone, other than their partner, who is on a low income. The Council will invite taxpayers in receipt of second adult rebate to claim CTS.



- 4.7 Furthermore, it is proposed that war widows pension, war widower's pension and war disablement pension are disregarded in full when assessing a taxpayer's income for CTS purposes. This mirrors the Council's treatment of these pensions under the HB scheme.
- 4.8 There are a number of changes we could make to current system parameters which would produce a CTS scheme" based on the existing CTB scheme. These include:
- i. Amending capital limits and tariff income
  - ii. Amending earnings disregards
  - iii. Amending non-dependant charges
  - iv. No longer disregarding certain income (e.g. war pensions, child benefit)
  - v. Capping Council Tax support to a certain Council Tax band
  - vi. No longer paying second adult rebate
  - vii. Amending the taper (the rate at which support is reduced as income increases)<sup>1</sup>
- 4.9 However, an initial analysis of the first six of these options indicates that they would not deliver the £4.6m shortfall in funding. They would also increase the complexity of administration and add confusion to claimants. This would be exacerbated by the extremely challenging timescales in which we have to develop the scheme.
- 4.10 Amending the taper (option vii) effectively provides 'protection' to all those CTB claimants who are entitled to a 100% rebate.
- 4.11 However, although amending the taper may deliver the £4.6m savings, this will be at the cost of drastically reducing or removing the level of support of many of the remaining taxpayers currently receiving some CTB.

*For example, a single customer aged 40 works 16 hours per week and earns £91.20 per week. Currently they receive £10.37 in CTB based on a weekly Council Tax liability of £14.11 per week.*

*Under the new scheme, if the taper was increased to 65% (equivalent to the HB taper), their support would go down to £1.96 per week. They would be left to pay Council Tax of £12.15 per week (£631.80 per year), which is 13.3% of their gross income.*

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<sup>1</sup> Currently Council Tax Benefit (CTB) entitlement is calculated by comparing household income with the amount the government says the household needs to live on. This figure is known as the "applicable amount". Generally, if a household's income is equal or less than the applicable amount full CTB is awarded equivalent to 100% of the Council Tax liability. However, if income is higher than the applicable amount, CTB is reduced by 20p for every £1 of additional income. This is the "taper" and is set at 20%.

4.12 Amending the taper also significantly increases the financial risk to the Council of any sudden increase in demand for Council Tax support at the non-tapered maximum rate, for example, where taxpayers qualified for Job Seekers Allowance.

4.13 Also, some of these options for example, no longer disregarding income such as child benefit or war widows pension, may not easily fit with wider Council principles such as fairness.

## **5. Other Considerations**

### ***Reviewing the Scheme***

5.1 We are expected to develop a scheme that supports the aims of Universal Credit however, the government timetable means that our scheme must be up and running 6 months before Universal Credit is implemented. Furthermore there is a statutory requirement that authorities, each financial year, consider revising their scheme. Therefore we will keep the scheme under review as is statutorily required which will give us the opportunity to:

- i. review the effectiveness of the proposed model and assess its impact as a result of equalities impact monitoring
- ii. gain a greater understanding of how Universal Credit will interact with our scheme
- iii. look more closely at alternative models and if necessary
- iv. develop a scheme which will suit the future needs of the Council and its taxpayers.

### ***Mitigating Hardship***

5.2 Over 90% of our working age taxpayers currently receiving CTB live in Band A properties. Based on current Council Tax charges, this would mean under the proposed scheme that they would have to pay an extra £3.76 per week towards their Council Tax (or an extra £2.82 if they were entitled to a single person discount).

5.3 Inevitably some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support may be provided to these households.

## **6. Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 There are a number of other options available to the Council including:

- i. Doing nothing

- ii. Introducing a discount support scheme linked to income bands
- iii. Adopting a completely discretionary financial assistance scheme.

6.2 An analysis of each of these options is shown below:

### **Doing Nothing**

6.3 Any authority which does not agree a local scheme by January 2013 will have to adopt a government imposed 'default' scheme based on the current CTB scheme. In effect, this means that Councils in default will be forced to meet the full cost of expenditure that such a scheme generates. It would also need to make provision for any future increase in demand.

6.4 This option is not being recommended because it comes with a high degree of financial risk, would be reputationally damaging and takes control of the scheme away from the Council.

### **Discount Scheme Linked to Income Bands**

6.5 Under this type of scheme Council Tax support would be provided at a level equivalent to a household's full Council Tax liability if their income was below a certain amount, e.g. £100 per week, with stepped reductions in support as income rises. An illustrative example of how this could look is shown below:

Household income up to £100	=	100% council tax support
Household income up to £150	=	75% council tax support
Household income up to £200	=	50% council tax support
Household income up to £250	=	25% council tax support
Household income above £250	=	no support.

6.6 The advantages of this approach include:

- i. The scheme would be clear to claimants and easy to understand.
- ii. There could be some people who would be better off than under the current scheme.
- iii. Once established, it would be fairly simple to administer.

6.7 However, this option is not being recommended because:

- i. It is a fairly 'blunt' tool, for example, the level of support takes no account of the number of people in a household, so for example, a single person with an income of £180 would get the same level of support as a family with 2 children in the same income band. This calls into question the fairness of this approach.
- ii. The level of support is not very responsive to changes in income, for example, a household income of £200 could attract 50% support. If the next income band below £200 was £150, a reduction in weekly income of up to £50 would not result in an increase in Council Tax support.

- iii. Some claimants would face very high reductions in support based on slight increases in income. For example, a household income of £99 may get 100% support whilst an income of £101 may only get 75% support.
- iv. To overcome issues of 'fairness', there may be a temptation to introduce additional criteria (e.g. capital limits, income disregards, allowances for special needs). However, this added complexity would soon mean that the 'advantages' of a discount scheme would be lost.
- v. At this stage it is highly unlikely the IT changes required to support this approach could be delivered within the required timescales.
- vi. There is a risk that the migration of existing CTB claimants to this scheme would not be achieved in the required timescales.

### **A Completely Discretionary Financial Assistance Scheme**

6.8 This approach would look to make awards of Council Tax support on an individual basis.

6.9 Under this type of scheme it would be possible to bring together several different income streams in order to provide a holistic approach. Council Tax support would form one element of such a scheme with other funding such as free school meals, Discretionary Housing Payments, Social Fund Loans, Community Care Grants, homeless prevention funding and even supporting people funding.

6.10 This approach would in effect bring together all of the Councils' "unringfenced" discretionary payment schemes under one scheme. The advantages of such an approach include:

- i. The ability to take an overall view of a household's financial circumstances, using one assessment and one set of data, would increase efficiency, benefit customers who don't need to access different services, and would fit in with the Council's aim of a whole household service offer to different customer groups.
- ii. The scheme could be extended to providing help advice and support to customers who need to access non Council services such as Department for Work and Pensions administered benefits and pensions.

6.11 However, this option is not being recommended because:

- i. The scheme would require highly knowledgeable, skilled staff supported by sophisticated systems and processes. The degree of training and the time needed for this, the time and cost of developing the system needed to support the scheme and the challenge of integrating into one team staff from a number of services do not fit within the timescales the Council will have to work too.
- ii. The need to individually reassess 60,000 plus claimants against a wide ranging financial assessment significantly increases the risk that the Council will not be able to migrate from one system to another on time.

- iii. Not all recipients of Council Tax support will need or indeed be eligible for wider financial support. Including Council Tax support in a wider package of corporate financial support could add complexity, delay assessments and impact on Council Tax collection.
- iv. Operating a discretionary based scheme with little or no reference to regulatory criteria would increase significantly the risk of legal challenge to the Council. Such legal challenge could require significant resources to deal with and could lead to cases progressing to Judicial Review, which would further increase any financial and reputational risk to the Council.
- v. It would not comply with the minimum legislative requirements of a local scheme including that the scheme must specify the class of persons entitled to assistance and set out the reduction to which persons in each class will be entitled to.
- vi. This approach would be highly resource intensive and every decision would need to be made individually with little or no “automatic processing” to support decision making. Failure to assess each case on an individual basis would see the Council fettering its discretion and leave it open to successful legal challenge on every decision.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 The Government has been reviewing the way in which resources are allocated to Councils as part of the Local Government Resource Review. Proposals relating to the retention of business rates and the localisation of Council Tax support are two of the main elements of the Local Government Finance Bill. These will represent the most significant changes in local government finance for decades. The complexity and lack of clarity relating to these arrangements, aspects of which are still open to consultation, has introduced a high level of uncertainty that will not be resolved until early December 2012 when the Local Government Finance Settlement will be announced.

7.2 Although there is considerable uncertainty, which extends to the level of shortfall in government funding for the CTS scheme, the Council needs to prepare plans for the medium term based on the most likely position.

7.3 Consequently, Members should be mindful that the 80% CTS eligibility limit for working age claimants described in this report is based on current projections of the estimated shortfall in funding for the scheme. In order to mitigate this shortfall, the scheme proposed in this report, limits the amount of CTS a working age taxpayer can receive to 80% of their liability for council tax. However, there are a number of factors and risks which may lead to an increase in the funding gap and result in a change to the 80% maximum level of support which is recommended to Members when the scheme is presented to Council for final approval and the Local Government Finance Settlement is known.

7.4 These factors include:

- i. The government has yet to confirm the actual amount of grant for funding Council Tax support payments. Therefore there may be an increase in the anticipated £4.6m.

- ii. Changes to the local or national economy may increase demand. The grant allocation is not subject to demand fluctuations so there must be contingency built into any scheme to meet any unpredicted demand. If we fund this contingency from the government grant, it will effectively result in a further cut in the support we can offer.
- iii. Increases in demand for CTS from 'protected pensioners'.
- iv. The full set-up and implementation costs of introducing a new scheme are not yet known, although our IT supplier has assessed their initial costs for system development as £59k. Although more is expected, the government has so far only provided each authority with £84k towards implementation costs.
- v. The government has not confirmed how much (or whether) it will contribute to councils' costs of administering their local schemes.
- vi. The cost of administering Council Tax collection may increase as more taxpayers fail to keep up with their payments.
- vii. The percentage of Council Tax collected is likely to decrease if we fail to collect from those least able to pay.
- viii. The Council will need to consider increasing its Council Tax bad debt provision.
- ix. Although the government has yet to provide confirmation, it is likely that the Council will not be compensated for the loss of other income it receives under the current CTB subsidy scheme, for example, about £250k for overpaid benefit each year.
- x. The government assumes that any financial risk will be shared with major precepting authorities (in Sheffield this would be the Police and Fire Authorities).

7.5 Officers will provide a full assessment of these risks and impacts as and when the government provides more clarification about the scheme and build them into the Council's financial strategy.

7.6 In the summer, the Local Government Association published an analysis of the impact of CTS. In it they suggest that some councils may be able to protect their taxpayers by making up the 10% cut by raising income from ending discounts for second homes and empty properties. The government has recently changed the legislation to allow more flexibility in this area.

7.7 However, councils and residents in poorer and more deprived areas of the country, like Sheffield, where the numbers of second and holiday homes are usually low and the number of benefits claimants high, are unlikely to be able to provide protection in this way. Areas like Sheffield therefore have less ability to use this flexibility. An initial analysis shows that the £4.6m gap in CTS funding could not be plugged by use of these flexibilities.

7.8 Sheffield does recognize that this is an important potential source of income for the Council though, and one that could be used to mitigate cuts in any number of Council services. One option would be to mitigate the impact of benefits cuts, but the Council will also be faced with difficult choices about reductions in other services affecting vulnerable people such as the elderly or children in care. In addition, changing the discounts would mean increasing taxes for some residents and the measures could present the council with added problems associated with tax avoidance and non payment.

## **8. Legal Implications**

8.1 The primary legislation in respect of Council Tax support is the Local Government Finance Bill (the Bill), which is expected to be enacted shortly. The Bill provides that local authorities must design and implement local Council Tax support schemes, to be approved by 31 January 2013 and to come into force on 1 April 2013. Where a local authority does not comply with this requirement, a statutory default scheme shall be imposed. The Bill, by amendments to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, provides that approval of a scheme is not an executive decision and must be decided by Council. In line with the report's recommendation, the intention is to refer the scheme proposals and the scheme set out in this report to Council for approval, once the Bill is enacted. When Council have approved the scheme, the above requirement will have been met.

8.2 The Bill required local authorities to publish their draft scheme and to consult on their scheme proposals. The Council has complied with these requirements.

8.3 The Bill and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations (when in force) set out the required content of Council Tax support schemes. The proposed scheme based on the principles proposed in this report, and set out in Appendix 2 to this report, complies with this legislation.

## **9. Equality of Opportunity Implications**

9.1 There is a commitment to fairness and social justice at the heart of the Council's values. We believe that everyone should get a fair and equal chance to succeed in Sheffield however we recognise that some people and communities need extra support and help to reach their full potential, particularly when they face multiple layers of disadvantage and discrimination. It is inevitable when funding levels are reduced that there will be an impact on the services we deliver, including some of the work we do with groups who share a protected equality characteristic. As far as practically possible within the confines of a reduced financial settlement, we have tried to minimise the impact on these groups.

9.2 The Council, in the implementation of the scheme, will need to be mindful of its legal duties toward certain groups and give careful consideration to the assessment of equalities implications including its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

9.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken to support the development and implementation of our local scheme and takes into account feedback from the formal consultation process. The EIA is at Appendix 4.

9.4 The consultation exercise closed on 17<sup>th</sup> September. Responses show that there is majority support for the Council's proposed scheme with over 80% of those who expressed a preference, agreeing that the scheme should mirror CTB and over 60% agreeing with limiting the discount for working age claimants to 80%. The greatest level of agreement is shown for the proposal to provide extra support for people in severe hardship with almost 90% of respondents in agreement. However, a minority of respondents do not agree with the Council's proposals with many of them expressing concerns about the impact on financially vulnerable taxpayers. Officers will review the issues raised in the consultation exercise and take them into account when developing the plan to implement the scheme and the communication strategy which will accompany it. A summary of responses to the consultation are shown at Appendix 1.

9.5 The implementation of the scheme will be underpinned by a strong communications strategy which, as a minimum, will ensure all affected customers are individually contacted to explain how the changes affect them.

## **10. Human Resources Implications**

10.1 It is not anticipated that there will be major staffing implications for Council staff as a result of this change although this has yet to be fully assessed. However, there may be implications for Capita staff who currently administer the CTB scheme and the Council Tax service.

## **11. Environmental Implications**

11.1 It is not anticipated that there will be environmental implications from the introduction of Council Tax support. On-line, self service options will be promoted reducing the need for paper forms and the need for claimants to travel to appointments.

## **12. Contractual Implications**

12.1 Discussions are underway with our Council Tax service provider, Capita, in order to prepare for the implementation of the new scheme and to ensure that any contractual variations are agreed. A programme team has been established and officers are in discussion in order to finalise implementation plans.

## **13. Reasons for Recommendation**

13.1 There are very significant legislative, IT, time and cost issues which mean that it will be in the best interests of the Council to establish a CTS scheme which, from 2013, aligns as closely as possible to the current CTB scheme.

13.2 This will:

- i. Provide more confidence that we will be able to deliver the scheme within the government's timescales and within its funding provision.
- ii. Spread the burden of the cut equitably across all working age claimants.



- iii. Be relatively simple to administer.
  - iv. Minimise disruption to taxpayers.
- 13.3 Adopting the scheme as proposed in this report will ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations to provide a local scheme of Council Tax Support.

#### **14. Recommendations**

That Cabinet note the proposed Council Tax support scheme detailed in this report and set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

That Cabinet recommend to Council that it approve the scheme, to come into force on 1 April 2013.

**Consultation questions and background information**

**Council Tax Benefit is changing**

From April 2013, the Government has announced that it will end Council Tax Benefit. Instead, councils will need to replace it with their own local Council Tax Support schemes. Like Council Tax Benefit, Council Tax Support will reduce the amount of council tax people need to pay. Therefore we are consulting with you on our draft scheme for Council Tax Support.

No changes have been made to existing discounts such as the 25% Single Persons Discount and student exemptions. However there will be some changes and some of these have been set by the Government:

- A 10% reduction in funding for Council Tax Support. This equates to a reduction of about £4.6 million in the first year in Sheffield.
- Only working age residents will be affected because the Government has told councils that pensioners who receive Council Tax Benefit will be protected from the changes.
- Pensioners will continue to receive the same level of Council Tax Support as they currently receive through Council Tax Benefit.
- An average cut in support of 20% for working age customers.
- If demand for Council Tax Support increases, for example, if people lose their jobs or their income reduces, the Government will not give us any more money for our scheme.

We have some difficult choices to make and we need your views.

**Our draft scheme:**

- Matches as closely as possible to the Council Tax Benefit scheme so:
  - residents will not have to make a new claim for Council Tax Support before April 2012.
  - those already claiming Council Tax Benefit will not have to make a new claim.
  - there will be less disruption and confusion for customers.
  - we can use our existing IT system and claims will be processed quicker than if we needed to introduce a new system.
  - people who move off benefits into work are supported.
- Does not replace the “Second Adult Rebate” part of Council Tax Benefit.
- Gives all working age residents who qualify for Council Tax support a discount of up to 80% off their Council Tax bill.
- Provides extra help to our most vulnerable citizens.
- Will be reviewed each year to make sure that it is working well.

### Question 1

- **Do you agree that our scheme should match as far as possible the Council Tax Benefit scheme?**

Strongly Agree ; Agree ; Neither Agree/Disagree ; Disagree ; Strongly Disagree

### Level of support

We are facing a huge gap in funding across all of our services. This means that we have to make some very difficult decisions about how that funding should be spent.

If we are to avoid funding the £4.6m cut in Council Tax Support from money that could be spent on other services, we will need to limit the amount of Council Tax Support we pay out.

One way of doing this is to give all working age residents who qualify for Council Tax Support a discount of up to 80% off their Council Tax bill. This means that all working age customers who qualify for Council Tax Support will have to pay at least 20% of their council tax. Based on current levels this means a family living in a Band A property will pay an additional £3.76 of Council Tax per week and residents in a Band A property getting single person discount will pay an extra £2.82 per week.

For example, a resident who has a weekly council tax liability of £18.81, and currently receives Council Tax Benefit of £18.81 each week, has 100% of their liability covered by Council Tax Benefit. Under Council Tax Support, they will only receive support based on 80% of their liability, this amounts to £15.05. They will therefore have to make payments of £3.76 per week towards their council tax ( $£18.81 - £15.05 = £3.76$ ).

This spreads the burden of the cut equally across all working age customers. Importantly, it also ensures that the most vulnerable and those in greatest need, for example those with children or with disabilities, will still get a greater share of the support that is available.

### Question 2

**Given the reduction in funding available for Council Tax Support, do you agree that we should give all working age residents who qualify for Council Tax support a maximum discount of 80% off their Council Tax bill?**

Strongly Agree ; Agree ; Neither Agree/Disagree ; Disagree ; Strongly Disagree

### Hardship

We recognise that this change may be more difficult for some residents to manage than others and that a cut in support may place some residents in severe hardship. Therefore we are proposing extra support to meet the needs of those vulnerable residents.

### Question 3

## **Do you agree that we should provide extra support for people in severe financial hardship?**

Strongly Agree ; Agree ; Neither Agree/Disagree ; Disagree ; Strongly Disagree

### **Moving into work**

We want Council Tax Support to help people move into work. Therefore, like Council Tax Benefit, our scheme will continue to support residents moving into work by continuing to pay them the same amount of support they receive for the first 4 weeks of employment.

#### **Question 4**

Do you agree that when someone moves into work we should pay the same level of support for the first 4 weeks of employment?

Strongly Agree ; Agree ; Neither Agree/Disagree ; Disagree ; Strongly Disagree

### **Second Adult Rebate**

Second adult rebate is a form of Council Tax Benefit that can be paid instead of, but not as well as, the main type of Council Tax benefit. Regardless of their own income, someone can claim second adult rebate if they live with someone, other than their partner, who is on a low income. The Government will abolish second adult rebate from April 2013. We will invite people who are getting second adult rebate to claim Council Tax Support from April 2013 but we do not intend to operate a scheme which mirrors second adult rebate.

#### **Question 5**

Do you agree that that we should not operate a separate scheme that mirrors second adult rebate?

Strongly Agree ; Agree ; Neither Agree/Disagree ; Disagree ; Strongly Disagree

### **Further information**

The Government requires us to publish and consult on a draft local scheme of Council Tax Support. Our draft scheme is available at [www.sheffield.gov.uk/lcts](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/lcts).

For more information about council tax click on [council tax](#) or visit [www.sheffield.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/counciltax)

The government's statement of intent for localising support for council tax can be found at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/localisingsupportcounciltax>

Council Tax Support – Summary of survey responses excluding those who neither agreed or disagreed

	Strongly agree	Agree	Total who are in agreement	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total who disagree
Do you agree that our scheme should match as far as possible the CTB scheme?	45%	37%	<b>82%</b>	10%	8%	<b>18%</b>
Do you agree that we should give all working age residents who qualify a maximum discount of 80%?	35%	27%	<b>62%</b>	18%	20%	<b>38%</b>
Do you agree that we should provide extra support for people in severe financial hardship?	60%	28%	<b>88%</b>	6%	6%	<b>12%</b>
Do you agree that when someone moves into work we should pay the same level of support for the first 4 weeks?	43%	34%	<b>77%</b>	16%	7%	<b>23%</b>
Do you agree that we should not operate a separate scheme that mirrors second adult rebate?	37%	40%	<b>77%</b>	10%	13%	<b>23%</b>

**Council Tax Support – Summary of survey responses including those who neither agreed nor disagreed**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Total who are in agreement	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total who disagree
Do you agree that our scheme should match as far as possible the CTB scheme?	39%	36%	<b>75%</b>	<b>12%</b>	8%	5%	<b>13%</b>
Do you agree that we should give all working age residents who qualify a maximum discount of 80%?	34%	25%	<b>60%</b>	<b>6%</b>	16%	18%	<b>34%</b>
Do you agree that we should provide extra support for people in severe financial hardship?	26%	25%	<b>81%</b>	<b>7%</b>	7%	5%	<b>12%</b>
Do you agree that when someone moves into work we should pay the same level of support for the first 4 weeks?	39%	31%	<b>70%</b>	<b>11%</b>	13%	5%	<b>19%</b>
Do you agree that we should not operate a separate scheme that mirrors second adult rebate?	25%	30%	<b>54%</b>	<b>30%</b>	7%	8%	<b>15%</b>

## **SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL'S COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

Sheffield City Council (the Council), in accordance with S13 A (1) (a) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 is required to provide a Council Tax Reduction Scheme, that complies with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012 (the CTS Regulations). This scheme, entitled Sheffield City Council's Council Tax Support Scheme (the Scheme) complies with that requirement. Assistance under the Scheme shall be referred to as Council Tax Support (CTS). In the event of any conflict between the provisions in the CTS Regulations and the Scheme, including any other legislation referred to in the Scheme, the provisions in the CTS Regulations shall apply.

### **Administration of the Scheme**

The administration of the Scheme including,

- how a claim is to be made,
- who can make a claim,
- decision making,
- notification of changes in circumstances,
- notification of decisions,

shall in respect of a claimant that is a pensioner, as defined by regulation 3 CTS Regulations (Pensioner claimants) be in accordance with the CTS Regulations, and in respect of a claimant who is not a pensioner, within the meaning of regulation 3 CTS Regulations (Working Age claimants) in accordance with the CTS Regulations and Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 and related legislation as were in force on 31 March 2013, (the CTB Regulations). For the purpose of the administration of the scheme, referred to above, the CTB regulations except where this document indicates otherwise are incorporated into this Scheme. The CTB Regulations, therefore, when considered in relation to the Scheme, should be read and interpreted as if they apply to the Scheme; for example the word "Benefit" should be read as "CTS" and "relevant authority" should be read as the "Council".

### **Calculation of entitlement to CTS**

Where a claimant is entitled to CTS, the amount of the entitlement shall be assessed in accordance with the Schedule to the Scheme.

Section 13A (1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides the Council with the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability, in addition to any reductions awarded under the Scheme, to such extent as it thinks fit. A person may apply for a reduction under this power and any such application shall be

made to the Council in writing (including by electronic means) at its designated office. The application should provide such details as are reasonable and necessary to enable the Council to properly consider the application. This should include, but is not limited to:

- the reason for the application,
- the period for which the application is made and;
- the context and circumstances in which the application is made.

### **Review and Appeals of decisions made**

A person who is aggrieved by any decision of the Council under the Scheme relating to his entitlement to CTS or the amount of his CTS entitlement may request a review of the decision by serving a written notice, detailing the grievance, on the Council at its designated office within one calendar month of the decision,.

The Council will carry out a review the decision and notify the aggrieved person of the outcome of the review in writing.

The Council may consider written notices received outside the one calendar month time limit where it is satisfied that there were special circumstances that made it impractical for the person to appeal within the time limit.

Where upon receipt of the Council's notification of the outcome of the review, the person remains aggrieved, or if the Council fails to notify the aggrieved person of the outcome of its review within 2 months of the service of their notice, he may appeal to the valuation tribunal.

## **SCHEDULE TO THE SCHEME**

### **CALCULATION OF ENTITLEMENT TO COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT**

Under the Scheme, a Pensioner Claimant's entitlement to CTS shall be determined, except where this document indicates otherwise, in accordance with the CTS regulations and that claimant's Council Tax liability will be reduced by the CTS amount. In respect of Schedule 5 (1) (a) and (b) of the CTS Regulations, the amount to be disregarded in respect of war widow's pension, war widower's pension or war disablement pension shall be the full pension.

The rest of this section deals with the assessment of CTS entitlement in respect of Working Age Claimants. CTS shall be available in respect of a claimant's Eligible Council Tax. Eligible Council Tax is 80% of the claimant's net Council Tax liability (i.e. net of any other discounts and relevant deductions).

A claimant's entitlement to CTS and the amount of their CTS entitlement shall be determined in accordance with the following process and the relevant provisions under the CTS Regulations.

The Council will assess whether a claimant would have been entitled to Council Tax Benefit (CTB) and the amount of that entitlement, in accordance with s131



Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, the CTB Regulations and related legislation as was in force on 31 3 13 (the CTB Legislation). However in that assessment of entitlement, for a claimant's Council Tax liability, substitute their Eligible Council Tax. The assessment will be referred to in the Scheme as the "CTS Assessment". For the purposes of the CTS Assessment Regulation 62 (alternative maximum council tax benefit), Regulation 60 C Extended Payments - Movers and Regulation 61 C Extended Payments (qualifying contributory benefits) – movers, of the CTB Regulations, shall not apply. Also in respect of Schedule 4 (16) (a) and (b) of the CTB Regulations, the amount to be disregarded in respect of war widow's pension, war widower's pension or war disablement pension shall be the full pension.

Where a claimant would not have been entitled to CTB under the CTS Assessment, then that claimant does not have an entitlement to CTS under the Scheme. Where the claimant would have had an entitlement to CTB under the CTS Assessment, then the claimant shall be entitled the CTS. The amount of the claimant's CTS entitlement shall be the amount of entitlement assessed under the CTS assessment. The claimant's Council Tax liability shall be reduced by the CTS amount.

### Examples

#### Impact of Proposed Option (basing Council Tax support on 80% liability).

- 1 A single customer aged 24 receiving Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) of £53.45 per week and a 25% Council Tax Single Person Discount (SPD). Currently they receive £14.11 per week in Council Tax Benefit, as entitlement to JSA means that the customer is entitled to benefit that covers 100% of their Council Tax Liability

Under the proposed scheme, if support for Council Tax is limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £11.29 per week. The new shortfall would be £2.82 per week (£146.64 per year), which is 5.3% of the customer's gross income. Previously this customer had not had to make any payments towards their Council Tax account.

- 2 A single customer aged 35 who is receiving JSA of £67.50 per week and SPD. Currently they receive £14.11 per week in Council Tax Benefit, as entitlement to JSA means that the customer is entitled to benefit that covers 100% of their Council Tax Liability.

Under the new scheme, if support for Council Tax was limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £11.29 per week. The new shortfall would be £2.82 per week (£146.64 per year), which is 4.2% of the customer's gross income. Previously this customer had not had to make any payments towards their Council Tax account.

- 3 A single customer aged 35 who is receiving Incapacity Benefit of £99.85 per week and SPD. Currently they receive £13.41 in Council Tax Benefit based on a weekly Council Tax liability of £14.11.

Under the new scheme, if support for Council Tax was limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £10.59 per week. The existing shortfall increases to £3.52 per week (£183.04 per year), which is 3.5% of the customer's gross income.

- 4 A single customer aged 35 who receives Incapacity Benefit of £108.05 per week, an occupational pension of £48.39 per week, and Disability Living Allowance of £93.15 per week (this is disregarded for Council Tax Benefit purposes) and a SPD. This gives the customer a total weekly income of £249.59 per week. Because of the premiums the customer is entitled to due to their disability, the award of Council Tax Benefit meets their weekly liability in full and they receive Council Tax Benefit of £14.11.

Under the new scheme, if support for Council Tax was limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £11.29 per week. The shortfall would be £2.82 per week (£146.64 per year), which is 1.1% of the customer's gross income.

- 5 A single customer aged 40 works 16 hours per week and earns £91.20 per week. Currently they receive £10.37 in Council Tax Benefit based on a weekly Council Tax liability of £14.11 per week (SPD has been awarded)

Under the new scheme, if support for Council Tax was limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £7.55 per week. The existing shortfall

increases to £6.56 per week (£341.12 per year), which is 7.2% of the customer's gross income.

- 6 A single parent with 2 children works part time and earns £114.45 per week, they also receive Tax Credits of £171.47 per week, and £33.70 Child Benefit (which is disregarded for Council Tax Benefit purposes), which gives the customer a total weekly income of £319.62. SPD has been awarded. Currently they receive £7.26 per week in Council Tax Benefit based on a weekly liability of £14.11.

Under the new scheme if support for Council Tax was limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £4.44 per week. The existing shortfall increases to £9.67 per week (£502.84 per year), which is 3% of the customer's gross income.

- 7 A couple with no children and the husband works part time, and earning £120.29 per week. Currently they receive £15.88 per week in Council Tax Benefit based on a weekly liability of £18.81.

Under the new scheme, if support for Council Tax was limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £13.06 per week. The existing shortfall increases to £5.75 per week (£299.00 per year), which is 4.9% of the customer's gross income.

- 8 A couple with one child, and the husband is self employed and earns £95.96, they also receive Tax Credits of £142.76 per week, and £20.30 Child Benefit (which is disregarded for Council Tax Benefit purposes), which gives the customer a total weekly income of £259.02. Currently they receive £13.62 per week in Council Tax Benefit based on a weekly liability of £18.81.

Under the new scheme if support for Council Tax was limited to 80% of the customer's liability, the support would be £10.80 per week. The existing shortfall increases to £8.01 per week (£416.52 per year), which is 3.1% of the customer's gross income.

- 9 The following table shows how much extra a taxpayer claiming support in each Council Tax Band would have to pay compared with current levels of Council Tax Benefit:

Council Tax Band	Annual Liability	Weekly Liability (no Single Person Discount)	20% extra to pay (no Single Person Discount)	Weekly Liability (with Single Person Discount)	20% extra to pay (with Single Person Discount)
<b>A</b>	£983.49	£18.81	<b>£3.76</b>	£14.11	<b>£2.82</b>
<b>B</b>	£1,147.41	£21.95	<b>£4.39</b>	£16.46	<b>£3.29</b>
<b>C</b>	£1,311.33	£25.08	<b>£5.02</b>	£18.81	<b>£3.76</b>
<b>D</b>	£1,475.25	£28.22	<b>£5.64</b>	£21.16	<b>£4.23</b>
<b>E</b>	£1,803.08	£34.49	<b>£6.90</b>	£25.86	<b>£5.17</b>
<b>F</b>	£2,130.90	£40.75	<b>£8.15</b>	£30.57	<b>£6.11</b>
<b>G</b>	£2,458.74	£47.03	<b>£9.41</b>	£35.27	<b>£7.05</b>
<b>H</b>	£2,950.49	£56.43	<b>£11.29</b>	£42.32	<b>£8.46</b>

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## Appendix B

### Council Tax Support 'cap' requirement.

<b>2013/14</b>	
CTS grant (including Police & Fire)	<b>£41,450,545</b>
Pensioner CTS spend (including 1% caseload increase)	<b>£21,216,903</b>
Less Hardship fund	<b>£500,000</b>
Working age budget (CTS grant remaining for working age after pensioner spend)	<b>£19,733,641</b>
Working age CTS spend no cap (including 1% caseload increase)	<b>£25,727,042</b>
Funding Gap	<b>£5,993,401</b>
<b>CAP</b>	<b>77%</b>

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### Impact of 77% liability cap on Sheffield households from April 2013

- 1 A single customer aged 24 receiving Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) of £56.80 per week and a 25% Council Tax Single Person Discount (SPD) on a Band A property. Currently he receives £14.11 per week in Council Tax Benefit, as entitlement to JSA means that the customer is entitled to benefit that covers 100% of their Council Tax Liability.

Under the proposed scheme, if support for Council Tax is limited to 77% of the customer's liability, the support would be £10.87 per week. The new shortfall would be £3.24 per week (£168.94 per year), which is 5.7% of the customer's gross income. Previously this customer had not had to make any payments towards their Council Tax account.

- 2 A single parent with 2 children works part time and earns £114.45 per week, they also receive Tax Credits of £171.47 per week, and £33.70 Child Benefit (which is disregarded for Council Tax Support purposes), which gives the customer a total weekly income of £319.62. SPD has been awarded on a Band A property. Currently, they receive £7.26 per week in Council Tax Benefit based on a weekly liability of £14.11.

Under the new scheme if support for Council Tax was limited to 77% of the customer's liability, the support would be £4.02 per week. The existing shortfall increases to £10.09 per week (£526.12 per year), which is 3.2% of the customer's gross income.

- 3 A couple with no children and the husband works part time, and earning £120.29 per week. Currently they receive £15.88 per week in Council Tax Benefit based on a weekly liability of £18.81 for a Band A property.

Under the new scheme, if support for Council Tax was limited to 77% of the customer's liability, the support would be £11.56 per week. The existing shortfall increases to £7.25 per week (£378.04 per year), which is 6.3% of the customer's gross income.

\* Please note these examples are based on current claims for Council Tax Benefit. The benefit rate for JSA has been updated to the anticipated amount for 2013/14. It is not possible to estimate the amount that Tax Credits will be increased by, and the other incomes used are also subject to change.

\* The examples are all based on there being a freeze in Council Tax.

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**SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL'S COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME**

1. Sheffield City Council (the Council), in accordance with S13 A (1) (a) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 is required to provide a council tax reduction scheme, that complies with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012. This scheme, entitled Sheffield City Council's Council Tax Support Scheme, complies with that requirement.
2. Subject to paragraphs 3 and 4 of this document, the administration of this scheme, including the assessment of whether an applicant is eligible for a reduction under this scheme and the amount of that reduction, shall be in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Default Scheme) 2013 as set out in the schedule to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012. For that purpose the following parts of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Default Scheme) 2013, (including any schedule referred to in the part), are incorporated into this scheme;
  1. Introduction
  2. Interpretation
  3. Procedural matters
  4. Classes of person entitled to a reduction under this scheme
  5. Classes of person excluded from this scheme
  6. Applicable amounts
  7. Maximum council tax reduction for the purposes of calculating eligibility for a reduction under this scheme and amount of reduction
  8. Alternative maximum council tax reduction for the purposes of calculating eligibility for a reduction under this scheme and amount of reduction
  9. Amount of reduction under this scheme
  10. Income and capital for the purposes of calculating eligibility for a reduction under this scheme and amount of reduction
  11. Students
  12. Extended reductions
  13. When entitlement begins and change of circumstances
  14. Applications (including duties to notify authority of change of circumstances)
  15. Decisions by authority
  16. Circumstances in which a payment may be made.
3. A person that was in receipt of Council Tax Benefit (CTB) on 31 3 2013, or on or before that date, has made a claim for CTB, which complies with the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 and related legislation as were in force on 31 March 2013, which is awaiting a decision by the Council on entitlement, will be treated as having made an application for a reduction under this scheme.
4. This paragraph details, how, for the purpose this scheme, the application of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Default Scheme) 2013 shall be varied.

- 4.1 At part 2 paragraph 2 (1), the definition of “the authority” shall be varied so that it reads “means Sheffield City Council”.
- 4.2 Part 2 paragraph 3 (1) (b), where it reads “classes D to F” shall be varied so that it reads “classes D to E”.
- 4.3 Part 2 paragraph 18, shall not apply. For the avoidance of doubt, persons who are not pensioners will not be entitled to alternative maximum council tax reduction, under this scheme.
- 4.4 Part 5 paragraph 24, shall be varied so it reads “The class of person described in this paragraph consists of any student to whom paragraph 75(1) applies.”.
- 4.5 Part 6 paragraph 29 (1) (a), shall be varied so it reads “ A, in respect of pensioners, is the amount set by the authority as the council tax for the relevant financial year in respect of the dwelling in which he is a resident and for which he is liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate to that dwelling under the 1992 Act and in respect of persons who are not pensioners , is 77% of the amount set by the authority as the council tax for the relevant financial year in respect of the dwelling in which he is a resident and for which he is liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate to that dwelling under the 1992 Act; and”.
- 4.6 Part 8 paragraph 31, shall be varied so that the title to that paragraph reads “Alternative maximum council tax reduction under this scheme: pensioners”. Also that subparagraph (1) be varied so that it reads “ Subject to subparagraphs (2) and (3), the alternative maximum council tax reduction in respect of a day where the conditions set out in paragraph 15 (alternative maximum council tax reduction: pensioners) are fulfilled, is the amount determined in accordance with Schedule 4 (amount of alternative council tax reduction).”.
- 4.7 Part 9 paragraph 32, shall be varied so that the title to that paragraph reads “Amount of reduction under this scheme: Classes A to E”. Also that subparagraph (4) where it reads “class` C or F” should be varied so that it reads “class C”.
- 4.8 Part 10 paragraph 52 (6), where it reads “classes D to F” shall be varied so that it reads “classes D to E”.
- 4.9 Part 12 paragraphs 98 and 103 shall not apply. For the avoidance of doubt, persons who are not pensioners who are movers will not be entitled to extended reductions, under this scheme.
- 4.10 Part 12 paragraph 95 where it reads “classes D to F” shall be varied so that it reads “classes D to E”.
- 4.11 Part 12 paragraph 97 where it reads “classes D to F” shall be varied so

that it reads “classes D to E”.

- 4.12 Part 12 paragraph 99 shall be varied so that the title to that paragraph reads “Relationship between extended reduction and entitlement to a reduction by virtue of classes D to E”. Also that subparagraph (2) be varied so that it reads “Paragraphs 106 and 107 do not apply to any extended reduction payable in accordance with paragraph 95(1)(a).”.
- 4.13 Part 12 paragraph 100 where it reads “classes D to F” shall be varied so that it reads “classes D to E”.
- 4.14 Part 12 paragraph 102 where it reads “classes D to F” shall be varied so that it reads “classes D to E”.
- 4.15 Part 12 paragraph 104 shall be varied so that the title to that paragraph reads “Relationship between extended reduction (qualifying contributory benefits) and entitlement to reduction by virtue of classes D to E”. Also that subparagraph (2) be varied so that it reads “Paragraphs 106 and 107 (dates on which entitlement begins and change of circumstances take effect) do not apply to any extended reduction (qualifying contributory benefits) payable in accordance with paragraph 102(1)(a).”.
- 4.16 Schedule 4 paragraph 1 (1) (a), shall be varied so it reads ““second adult” means any person or persons residing with the applicant to whom paragraph 15(2) (class C) (as the case may be) applies; and”.
- 4.17 At Schedule 6 paragraph 1 (a) and (b), the amount to be disregarded in respect of war widow’s pension, war widower’s pension or war disablement pension shall be the full pension.
- 4.18 At Schedule 8 paragraph 20 (a) and (b), the amount to be disregarded in respect of war widow’s pension, war widower’s pension or war disablement pension shall be the full pension.

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# Sheffield City Council Equality Impact Assessment



[Guidance for completing this form is available on the intranet](#)

Help is also available by selecting the grey area and pressing the F1 key

**Name of policy/project/decision:** Local Council Tax Support Scheme

**Status of policy/project/decision:** New

**Name of person(s) writing EIA:** John Squire

**Date:** 18/09/12

**Service:** Finance

**Portfolio:** Resources

**What are the brief aims of the policy/project/decision?** Under the Welfare Reform Act 2012, Council Tax Benefit will be abolished. From April 2013, all local authorities will have to introduce a Local Scheme for Council Tax Support (CTS) to replace Council Tax Benefit (CTB). The scheme will be designed and implemented within a national framework of specific requirements and broad principles. The scheme in Sheffield will be aligned as closely as possible to the current CTB scheme. There are several reasons for this, with the main one being that this will ensure that the most vulnerable customers will continue to receive the highest level of support, as the current scheme is structured to achieve this aim.

The grant for CTS will be paid up front to the Council as a fixed grant that, unlike CTB, is unresponsive to demand. The Government will cut the funding it gives the Council for CTS. This cut will be at least 10% (£4.6m) lower than funding for CTB and this gap will need to be addressed. The Council will have to meet both this shortfall and any additional increases in the level of CTS payments above the level of the grant received. The Council can meet this shortfall in a number of ways. It can choose to cut funding to other services, increase Council Tax or reduce the amount it currently pays out in CTB. The Council has considered these options and has decided that cutting funding to other services is not an option it can take due to the potential detrimental impact on frontline services. Equally, increasing Council Tax purely to fund the gap in benefit is not an option the Council can implement as wider budget pressures mean that any Council Tax increase will need to be used to meet these cost pressures and therefore continue the funding of existing services. The Council therefore intends to fund this change by reducing the amount of financial help provided to customers who will be eligible for CTS.

The Council was required to consult on its draft scheme for CTS. Responses to the consultation strongly supported the Council's intention to align the scheme as closely as possible to the current CTB scheme. An overall analysis of the responses to the consultation exercise has not highlighted any specific significant concerns regarding the impact of this change on those groups that are included within the scope of this EIA, although the Council does recognise that some respondents have expressed concerns regarding the impact that this change may have on poverty levels within the City, particularly amongst the most vulnerable.

**Are there any potential Council staffing implications, include workforce diversity?** No

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#), we have to pay due regard to: "Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations." [More information is available on the council website](#)

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
Age	Neutral	High	<p>Regulations will prescribe that current, and the vast majority, of future customers of a pensionable age are protected so that they are no worse off than they would have been should they have continued to receive CTB.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, the government has defined a pensioner as a person who, amongst other things, has reached the qualifying age for state pension credit and they or their partner are not in receipt of certain income related benefits. Therefore, a taxpayer who has reached state pension credit age but is in receipt of a relevant income related benefit will not be protected and will be treated in the same way as working age claimants when calculating their entitlement to CTS.</p> <p>This is a positive impact for those customers defined as pensioners who currently represent around 46% of our CTB caseload. This is high impact because the funding we will receive for CTS will be reduced by at least 10% based on our CTB expenditure for 11/12. Pensioners being protected means that this cut will fall on working age customers and at present the cut to working age customers is expected to be around 20%. Should our pensioner caseload increase then either the cut in support to working age customers would increase, or the Council would need to meet the additional costs.</p> <p>The local scheme sets out that the cut in CTS grant will be met by increasing the amount of council tax to be paid by existing working age customers who are now in receipt of CTB. This would be achieved by using 80% of a customer's net Council Tax liability to assess entitlement to CTS. This would mean that all working age customers would be expected to pay at least 20% of their Council Tax liability. Over 90% of working age customers live in Band A properties. Based on current Council Tax charges this would mean they would have to pay an additional £3.76 pw (or £2.82 if they receive Single Person Discount). Of our working age caseload, around 24,000 customers will have to pay some amount of Council Tax when previously this would have all been paid by CTB.</p> <p>By aligning our local scheme as closely as possible to the current CTB scheme the most vulnerable customers will continue to receive the highest available level of CTS. In addition, the Council intends to continue to disregard as income war widow and widower's pension (regardless of the age of the pension recipient) when assessing entitlement to CTS.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that some households will find a</p>

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
			cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.
<b>Disability</b>	Negative	Medium	<p>Pension age customers with a disability will not be adversely impacted by this change. Working age customers with a disability will be affected as they will have their CTS award based on 80%, rather than 100%, of their Council Tax Liability. The Council recognises that this may cause hardship for customers in this group. However by aligning the scheme with the current CTB scheme, customers in receipt of disability benefits will continue to receive the highest possible level of CTS.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p> <p>Equally, some disabled customers or households may have a higher net income than other groups and although the Council recognises that this income is intended to meet their wider needs, they may still be in a better position to meet their Council Tax Liability than customers on non disability welfare benefits. In addition the Council intends to continue to disregard as income Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and War Disablement Pension when assessing a customer's eligibility to CTS.</p>
<b>Pregnancy/maternity</b>	Negative	Low	<p>Pregnant customers claiming CTS will have their award based on 80% rather than 100% of their Council Tax Liability. They therefore may have to pay some Council Tax for the first time or pay more than they are currently paying. By aligning the Local Scheme to current CTB, once these customers give birth their change in circumstances will be positively reflected in the level of CTS that they will receive. The Council also intends to continue to disregard as income child benefit when assessing a customer's eligibility to CTS.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p>

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
<b>Race</b>	Neutral	Low	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that assessing CTS based on 80% of Council Tax liability as opposed to 100% of Council Tax liability will have a greater or lesser impact on customers purely as a result of their racial origin. The current CTB scheme meets all current equality legislation. By basing the scheme on the current CTB scheme we will ensure that the CTS scheme continues to meet these equality objectives.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p>
<b>Religion/belief</b>	Neutral	Low	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that assessing CTS based on 80% of Council Tax liability as opposed to 100% of Council Tax liability will have a greater or lesser impact on customers purely as a result of their religion or beliefs. The current CTB scheme meets all current equality legislation. By basing the scheme on the current CTB scheme we will ensure that the CTS scheme continues to meet equality legislation.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p>
<b>Sex</b>	Neutral	Low	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that assessing CTS based on 80% of Council Tax liability as opposed to 100% of Council Tax liability will have a greater or lesser impact on customers purely as a result of their sex. By basing the scheme on the current CTB scheme we will ensure that the CTS scheme continues to meet equality legislation.</p> <p>However, it is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Neutral	Low	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that assessing CTS based on 80% of Council Tax liability as opposed to 100% of Council Tax liability will have a greater or</p>



Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
			<p>lesser impact on customers purely as a result of their sexual orientation. By basing the scheme on the current CTB scheme we will ensure that the CTS scheme continues to meet equality legislation.</p> <p>However, it is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p>
<b>Transgender</b>	Neutral	Low	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that assessing CTS based on 80% of Council Tax liability as opposed to 100% of Council Tax liability will have a greater or lesser impact on Transgender customers purely as a result of their gender. By basing the scheme on the current CTB scheme we will ensure that the CTS scheme continues to meet equality legislation.</p> <p>However, it is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p>
<b>Financial inclusion, poverty, social justice, cohesion or carers</b>	Negative	High	<p>It is intended that the CTS scheme is based on the current CTB regulations. These regulations provide for the maximum financial support being made available to those with the greatest financial need. They protect some of the income of the disabled and of families whilst providing assistance to those people who move off benefits into paid employment. The Council recognises however that requiring all working age customers to pay a minimum of 20% of their Council Tax may cause financial hardship amongst some households. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p> <p>The Council also recognises that it will need to review the way in which Council Tax is recovered from those most impacted by this change in order to wherever possible minimise the level of indebtedness that this change may bring about.</p>
<b>Voluntary, community &amp; faith sector</b>	Neutral	Low	<p>The Revenues and Benefits service has close links with this sector, particularly with advice agencies and supported housing providers. The service has engaged with many organisations within this sector</p>

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
			when consulting on the draft scheme and will continue to engage with them in order to review and refine the scheme in order to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose.
<b>Other/additional: Landlords</b>	Negative	Medium	Landlords may be impacted by this change as tenants who have to pay some council tax for the first time, or pay more council tax, may struggle to meet their rent liabilities.
<b>Other/additional: Internal stakeholders (such as Housing Solutions, Housing Independence Service, Adult Social Care etc )</b>	Neutral	Low	CTS will have no direct impact on internal stakeholders. However if there is a significant amount of non payment this could impact the future funding of services.

**Overall summary of possible impact (to be used on EMT, cabinet reports etc):** The introduction of Council Tax Support has meant that the Council has had to make some difficult financial decisions. The Council believes that its Local Council Tax Support scheme spreads the burden of this change fairly across working age customers. The Council has consulted on its proposed scheme and will continue to evaluate the scheme and consult on significant changes to the design of the scheme once it has been implemented in April 2013. The Council considers that the scheme it intends to introduce will be relatively simple to administer and that the transition to CTS from CTB will be accomplished with minimum disruption and inconvenience to customers whilst confusion amongst customers regarding the change will be minimised as a result of aligning the scheme to the current CTB scheme.

If you have identified significant change, med or high negative outcomes or for example the impact is on specialist provision relating to the groups above, or there is cumulative impact you **must** complete the action plan.

**Review date:**                      **Q Tier Ref**    tbc                      **Reference number:** tbc

**Entered on Qtier:** -Select-                      **Action plan needed:** Yes

**Approved (Lead Manager):** Jon West    **Date:** 05/10/12

**Approved (EIA Lead person for Portfolio):** Michael Bowles    **Date:** 05/10/12

**Does the proposal/ decision impact on or relate to specialist provision:** no

**Risk rating:** Medium

# Action plan

Area of impact	Action and mitigation	Lead, timescale and how it will be monitored/reviewed
All groups	<p>The Council will develop and implement a Communications Strategy which will ensure that all those affected by this change are made aware of the impact on them. We will also provide advice on how and where customers can pay their Council Tax and we will work with advice and support agencies to ensure customers have access to money advice services. In order to promote financial inclusion and reduce poverty we will work with the Credit Union to promote the take up of low cost saving and borrowing.</p> <p>However, it is acknowledged that some households will find a cut in support harder to manage than others. Therefore in the run up to the implementation of the scheme the Council will consider ways that additional support, for example through the development of an additional hardship scheme, may be provided to these households.</p> <p>We will review the Council Tax Recovery policy and procedures to try where possible to minimise any increase in indebtedness.</p>	<p>Development and Implementation of a Communications Strategy John Squire 2012 - April 2013</p> <p>Development of an additional hardship scheme - John Squire November 2012 - April 2013.</p> <p>Review of the Council Tax Recovery policy John Squire November 2012- April 2013</p>
Disability	<p>We will work to establish a baseline which shows the proportion of Disabled customers in receipt of CTB in order to support the work we will undertake to monitor the impact of this change on disabled customers.</p> <p>We will develop a system to monitor the impact of this change on disabled customers</p>	<p>John Squire October 2012 - April 2013</p> <p>John Squire April 2013- March 2014</p>
Race	<p>We will work to establish a baseline which shows the proportion of BME customers in receipt of CTB in order to support the work we will undertake to monitor the impact of this change on BME customers.</p> <p>We will develop a system to monitor the impact of this change on BME customers</p>	<p>John Squire October 2012 - April 2013</p> <p>John Squire April 2013- March 2014</p>
Sex	<p>We will work to establish a baseline which shows the proportion of female customers in receipt of CTB in order to support the work we will undertake to monitor the impact of this change on female customers</p> <p>We will develop a system to monitor the impact of this change on female customers.</p>	<p>John Squire October 2012 - April 2013</p> <p>John Squire April 2013- March 2014</p>

Area of impact	Action and mitigation	Lead, timescale and how it will be monitored/reviewed
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		

**Approved (Lead Manager): Jon West Date: 05/10/12**

**Approved (EIA Lead Officer for Portfolio): Michael Bowles Date: 05/10/12**

# AUDIT COMMITTEE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

To be considered at the Council Meeting on 23 January 2013



## FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this report to Council on the work of the Audit Committee in 2011/2. The report shows how the Committee has contributed to monitoring and improving the Council's governance and internal controls.

There have been five busy meetings this year. The Committee continued with its core business, such as approving the Accounts, and it was pleasing to note that the External Auditor had issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements for 2010/11 and an unqualified value for money conclusion. We also strengthened the way we consider High Opinion Audit Reports and commented on the revised Corporate Risk Register.

Over the past two years the Committee has been monitoring the financial and commercial risks associated with the Council's major external relationships. This year we also established a Working Group to take a closer look at the financial and commercial risks of one of those organisations, Museums Sheffield. The Committee made useful recommendations relating to the clarity of the governance structure and reporting back arrangements and the role of councillors on Trust Boards.

I would also like to place on record my thanks to Paul Billington and David Macpherson from Culture and Environment, Paul Schofield from Finance and Kim Streets and Helen Morris from Museums Sheffield. They attended the Working Group and provided helpful information and were open and honest in answering questions from members of the Committee.

This has been the first year with our two independent members, Rick Plews and Beryl Seaman. I have enjoyed working with them both and feel the decision to recruit independent members to the Committee has proved the right one. They bring additional skills and experience and an external perspective to the workings of the Council and have added value to the Committee's work.

The Committee could not function without the hard work of its members. They provided robust challenge and scrutiny to the reports and issues that were considered during the year. I would like to thank the Deputy Chair, Councillor Joe Otten, for his support and assistance.

I would also like to thank the Council officers that support the Committee and the External Auditor and his team. I look forward to working with KPMG who were appointed as the External Auditor for the Council from September 2012.

Finally, I confirm that there are no specific issues or areas of concern I wish to draw to the attention of Council and I recommend that Council receives this report on the work of the Audit Committee in 2011/12.



**Councillor Ray Satur, Chair of the Audit Committee**

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the fifth year of the Audit Committee. The Annual Report highlights the work of the Audit Committee and how it has contributed to monitoring and improving the Council's corporate governance and internal controls.

## 2. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

### 2.1 Meetings/Membership

- 2.1.2 There were five meetings of the Committee and the Members were:

- Councillor Ray Satur (Chair)
- Councillor Joe Otten (Deputy Chair)\*
- Councillor Martin Lawton
- Councillor Bob Johnson
- Councillor Jack Scott
- Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed
- Rick Plews - Independent non-voting co-opted member
- Beryl Seaman - Independent non-voting co-opted member

\*replaced Councillor Paul Scriven in November 2011

### 2.2 Support to the Committee

- 2.2.1 As in previous years, the Committee has benefitted from being well supported by Council Officers. This included the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director of Resources, Director of Finance, Chief Internal Auditor, Deputy Director of Finance, Director of Modern Governance, Director of Legal Services and officers in Finance, Internal Audit, Modern Governance and other Directorates. There has also been close working with the External Auditor (the Audit Commission) and his Audit Manager.

## 3. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE DURING THE YEAR

- 3.1 This section contains a summary of the work undertaken during the year. The Committee's terms of reference and a list of the items considered are attached as appendices to the report.

### 3.2 **Work Programme**

- 3.2.1 At the start of the year there is discussion with senior officers and the Chair and Deputy of the Committee on the work programme for the year. This is based around the terms of reference and items the Committee requests during the year. The work programme is then reviewed at each Committee meeting.

### 3.3 **Internal Audit Activity**

- 3.3.1 The Committee considered:

- Internal Audit Planning Report 2012/13
- Progress on High Opinion Audit Reports



- The Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Report 2010/11
- Summary of Internal Audit Reports
- Audit Plan 2011/12

#### Internal Audit Planning Report 2012/13

- 3.3.2 The Chief Internal Auditor's report set out Internal Audit's future strategy and Work Programme for 2012/13, in light of the budget reductions in 2011/12 and over the next two years. The strategy would focus on some specific areas of activity which could provide assurance that risk and internal control issues were being properly managed by Directors in service areas. Following discussions with the Director of Finance and the Executive Director Resources, a fundamental shift in the utilisation of Internal Audit's resources was proposed.
- 3.3.3 In terms of building in resilience, initial discussions had been held with the Core Cities Authorities who were all receptive to the development of a protocol to govern resource sharing and this would be explored further with neighbouring authorities. Also the planning process would be very challenging and need to be much more flexible and responsive than in previous years.
- 3.3.4 Whilst endorsing Internal Audit's Work Programme, the Committee were keen to monitor the impact of delivering the new approach to audit activity and requested the Chief Internal Auditor to submit a progress report to each meeting of the Committee.
- #### High Opinion Audit Reports
- 3.3.5 An auditable area receiving a 'High Opinion' was considered by Internal Audit to be an area where the risk of the activity not achieving its objectives is high and sufficient controls to manage risks were not present at the time of the review.
- 3.3.6 The Committee received two progress reports on the seven High Opinion Audit Reports that had been issued relating to:
- Schools ICT
  - Urban Traffic Control
  - Section 106 Planning Income
  - Sheffield Is My Planet Project
  - Creative Sheffield - Application of Procedures
  - Health and Safety - Fire Safety
  - Partnership Arrangements for Sheffield Homes
- 3.3.7 Members expressed concern as to the progress against the recommendations reported relating to Section 106 Planning Income. A report providing further detail and progress in response to the recommendations was considered in May 2012. The Head of Planning and Director of Finance were requested to undertake further work on the reconciliation of the databases to improve on the 93% of the value of the Section 106 Agreements that had been reconciled. A further report on this work was submitted to the Committee in August 2012.
- 3.3.8 Following an issue raised by the independent members of the Committee, a process was agreed that members of the Committee would receive the final version of the High Opinion Audit Reports. There would be the opportunity to ask questions at the next meeting of the Committee and the relevant Director or Senior Manager from the service could be asked to attend the meeting.

### Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Report 2010/11

- 3.3.9 The report highlighted the work that had been undertaken by Internal Audit during the year and supported the Council's Annual Governance Statement. The Chief Internal Auditor was satisfied that the core systems included control arrangements which were adequate to allow the Council to conduct its business properly.

## 3.4 **External Audit**

- 3.4.1 The Committee considered:

- Audit Plan 2011/12
- Annual Audit Letter 2010/11
- Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2010/11

### Audit Plan 2011/12

- 3.4.2 The External Auditor submitted his Audit Plan for 2011/12 that included the significant and specific risks, an outline of the proposed work, timetable and planned outputs as well as details of the audit fee. As the Audit Practice staff were due to transfer to a new employer by 31 October 2012, it was intended to complete the 2011/12 Audit by that date.

### Annual Audit Letter 2010/11

- 3.4.3 The External Auditor submitted his formal report following the conclusion of the 2010/11 audit. He had issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements for 2010/11 and an unqualified value for money conclusion which confirmed that the Council had satisfactory corporate arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

- 3.4.4 In relation to the 'Section 11' recommendation in the report relating to debt due from the other South Yorkshire Councils, the Chief Executive outlined the process intended to conclude the matter and confirmed that progress would be reported to Full Council in March 2012. The Council Meeting accepted the External Auditor's Section 11 recommendation.

### Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2010/11

- 3.4.5 The External Auditor submitted a report on the certification work on the Council's claims and returns for 2010/11 in relation to grants and subsidies it received from the Government and grant paying bodies. Fifteen claims had been certified with a total value of £494m and, arising from the work, nine had been certified without amendment, compared with five for the previous year. The report included the recommendations arising from the work and details of progress made in implementing the recommendations arising from previous certification work.

## 3.5 **Regulatory Framework and Risk Management**

- 3.5.1 The Committee considered:

- Annual Governance Statement 2010/11
- Compliance With International Auditing Standards
- Financial/Commercial Monitoring of External Relationships
- Audit Commission Report - Protecting The Public Purse
- Corporate Risk Management
- Corporate Risk Register

- Revised Code of Corporate Governance

#### Annual Governance Statement 2010/11

- 3.5.2 The Director of Modern Governance submitted the Council's Annual Governance Statement which formed part of the Council's Statutory Accounts. The Statement explained how the City Council complied with the Code of Corporate Governance and also met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, as amended, in relation to the publication of the Statement.
- 3.5.3 In January 2012, the Committee received a report on the progress on five significant control weaknesses had been identified, relating to:
- Museums Sheffield
  - Elections
  - Reviewing Policy and Practice in the Administration of Medication in Adult Social Care
  - Consistency of Property Policies and Procedure Across All Council Premises
  - People Management Procedures – Consistency of Approach, Payroll and HR Connect.
- 3.5.4 Arising from that report, the Committee requested a report about Human Resources/Payroll procedures. This was submitted to the Committee in August 2012.

#### Compliance With International Auditing Standards

- 3.5.5 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report that highlighted to the Committee how it could demonstrate to the External Auditors that it had exercised the required oversight in order to meet the requirements of the International Standards on Auditing. The Committee confirmed that it has a significant overview at the highest level of the Council's systems of internal control, so it is assured that it is fulfilling the requirements of "those charged with governance" under the International Auditing Standards.
- 3.5.6 Arising from the report:
- the Chief Internal Auditor was requested to examine how reports that are made available to Members and Officers on the Council's intranet, such as the Fraud Response Plan, are made available to the Committee's Independent Members. Intranet access was subsequently provided to both the Independent Members.
  - the Director of Legal Services and the Director of Human Resources were requested to examine having a simple form to assist people that want to whistleblow.
  - The revised Whistleblowing Policy was submitted to the Committee in August 2012.

#### Commercial/Financial Monitoring of External Relationships

- 3.5.7 In 2009, the Committee received a report on a number of actions taken and processes developed to strengthen the Council's management of its numerous relationships with external bodies. This was in a response to a number of recommendations made by the Council's Internal and External Auditors and supported the Council's aim of promoting good governance arrangements. The Executive Management Team has been ensuring that the Council continues to have

a clear picture at a corporate level of what these relationships are, and ensures that they are structured and managed appropriately and effectively and that they are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

- 3.5.8 The Committee continued to receive progress reports on the commercial and financial monitoring of the 26 major external relationships.
- 3.5.9 This year the Committee decided to undertake a more detailed examination of the financial and commercial risks of a small number of the Council's major external relationships. It was agreed that Museums Sheffield would be the first partnership to be considered and that that this would be undertaken through a Working Group of the Committee. Two issues arose from that piece of work relating to the clarity of the governance structure and reporting back arrangements and the role of councillors on Trust Boards.
- 3.5.10 Arising from the Committee's recommendations:-
- The Director of Modern Governance reviewed the role of Councillors on all Trust Boards and a report on external appointments was submitted to the Committee in September 2012.
  - The Director of Culture and Environment prepared a diagram that showed clear, simple and transparent reporting arrangements and governance structure for the Council's relationship with Museums Sheffield. This was also used as a template to explain the reporting arrangements and governance structures for the Council's relationship with all the other Trust Boards.

#### Audit Commission Report - Protecting The Public Purse

- 3.5.11 A report of the Executive Director, Resources informed the Committee of the contents and key recommendations of the Audit Commission's annual report on 'Protecting the Public Purse' and provided an update of fraud investigation activity within the Council, including a completed checklist for 'those responsible for governance' that identified the key fraud risks.
- 3.5.12 The Committee supported Internal Audit's ongoing implementation of counter-fraud initiatives throughout the authority.

#### Corporate Risk Management/Corporate Risk Register

- 3.5.13 In November 2011, the Director of Transformation Services and Performance submitted a report indicating that the Council was formalising and improving its approach to managing risk as an organisation. The report set out the current approach to risk management, together with a number of proposed improvements to the risk approach that included restating what was expected in terms of risk at a service, Portfolio and corporate level, consolidating existing risk registers and adopting a common approach to support risk reporting.
- 3.5.14 The Director was requested to report a number of suggestions from this Committee to the Council's Task and Finish Group on Corporate Risk Management
- 3.5.15 The Committee also received a report of the Director of Performance and Communications in January 2012 which set out the current approach to risk management and presented the latest version of the consolidated Corporate Risk Register. The Committee noted that appropriate processes were in place for

managing risk.

#### Revised Code of Corporate Governance

- 3.5.16 The Committee received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive that contained a revised Code of Corporate Governance. The Code outlined why good governance was important, how the Council defined this and how it would ensure that it took place. The report explained that good governance ensured that the Council fulfilled its purpose wisely and openly with all due accountability to local people. The Code was a key tool for ensuring the quality of the Council's governance arrangements and a clear public statement of the principles the Council would follow. The revised Code had been approved by the Council Leader and was shorter and fit for purpose.
- 3.5.17 Arising from consideration of the report, the Director of Human Resources agreed to include a shorter version of the Code in advice to managers for new staff from September 2012.

### 3.6 **Accounts**

3.6.1 The Committee considered:

- Summary of the Statement of Accounts
- Statement of Accounts 2010/11
- Annual Governance Report 2010/11

#### Statement of Accounts

- 3.6.2 In August 2011, the Deputy Director of Finance submitted a report providing a summary of the Statement of Accounts for 2010/11 and a brief introduction of the new format following the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), in advance of a more detailed explanation to the Committee in September 2011. As a result of introducing IFRS, there had been a considerable amount of change to the format of the Statement of the Accounts. The report presented a summary of the core financial statements and a number of the key notes to the accounts. The report also explained the approval process for the Statement of Accounts and the Audit Committee's role in this process.
- 3.6.3 The Statement of Accounts for 2010/11 was approved by the Committee in September 2011.

#### Annual Governance Report 2010/11

- 3.6.4 The External Auditor submitted his Annual Governance Report that summarised the findings from the 2010/11 audit of the accounts. The key messages were:
- The quality of the accounts and supporting evidence was good and officers had managed the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards well.
  - The underlying systems and processes to produce the year-end fixed assets accounts remained cumbersome and did not therefore facilitate the most efficient accounts closedown process.
  - A number of errors had been identified, some of which were material, which officers had agreed to amend. None of these had any impact on the overall income and expenditure position.

### Yorkshire South Tourism

- 3.6.5 In August 2011, the Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Resources on the findings of a review into matters of mismanagement at the Yorkshire South Tourism Service.
- 3.6.6 The Committee acknowledged the work that had been undertaken by senior management to improve the control framework for the service going forward and requested the Deputy Chief Executive to ensure that the learning from the review is rolled out into other partnership arrangements.

## **4. CO-OPTED INDEPENDENT MEMBERS**

- 4.1 Rick Plews and Beryl Seaman were appointed as the first co-opted members of the Committee in May 2011.
- 4.2 During their first year they have been a valuable addition and have brought additional experience and external scrutiny and challenge to the work of the Committee. The process for members to receive High Opinion Audit reports outlined at paragraph 3.11 of the report arose from an issue raised by the independent members.
- 4.3 Both members were asked to comment on their experiences during the year and their comments included:
- The support received from the Chair and members of the Committee and officers has been welcomed.
  - Meetings have been effectively chaired and conducted in a timely manner.
  - The Committee has embraced the fresh thinking, experience and ideas they have brought.
  - They have learned a great deal about how the Council works.
  - Found it to be an enjoyable and interesting experience.
  - Highlighted areas that the Committee could examine, including more emphasis on risk management.
  - Suggested greater involvement for the Committee in setting its work programme.
- 4.4 The comments from the independent members will be taken on board and incorporated into the work of the Committee next year.
- 4.5 Over time they could be amongst the most experienced members of the Committee as the Council members can often change each year.

## **5. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR**

- 5.1 The Committee were informed in May 2012 that KPMG had been appointed as the External Auditor for the Council and the Yorkshire and the Humber area for five years from 1 September 2012. The Audit Commission continued as the Council's External Auditor until September 2012.

## **6. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

- 6.1 As in previous years, a briefing was held to assist Members in approving the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Report.

- 6.2 Access to the Council's intranet has been provided for both the independent members of the Committee to enable them to be able to access additional relevant material.
- 6.3 Councillor Ray Satur, supported by the Chief Internal Auditor, also attended the Core Cities Audit Committee Chairs' Meeting that shares best practice and discusses key issues.

## 7. **OUTCOMES**

- 7.1 The Audit Committee aims to add value through its activity and, in particular, it has:
- Approved the Statement of Accounts.
  - Accepted the Annual Governance Report.
  - Demonstrated that it has a significant overview of the Council's systems of internal control so it is assured that it is fulfilling the requirements of "those charged with governance" under the International Auditing Standards.
  - Noted that the Chief Internal Auditor was satisfied that the core systems included control arrangements which were adequate to allow the Council to conduct its business properly.
  - Monitored the actions arising from the Annual Governance Statement.
  - Strengthened the way it considers High Opinion Audit reports.
  - Commented on the revised Corporate Risk Register.
  - Made positive recommendations for dealing with external appointments and having clear, simple and transparent reporting arrangements and governance structures for the Council's relationship with Museums Sheffield and other Trust Boards.

## 8. **THE YEAR AHEAD**

- 8.1 The Committee will seek to build on what it has achieved this year and continue to work within its terms of reference and address issues that arise during the year.
- 8.2 Training and development opportunities will continue to be offered to members of the Committee to meet their needs and ensure that they can discharge their responsibilities.
- 8.3 There has been a close working relationship with the Audit Commission, the Council's previous External Auditor. The Committee will want to continue this relationship with KPMG that took over as the External Auditor for the Council and the Yorkshire and the Humber area from September 2012.

**Councillor Ray Satur, Chair of the Audit Committee 2011/12**

## **Appendix A - Audit Committee Terms Of Reference**

- (1) To approve the Council's Statement of Accounts (which includes the Annual Governance Statement) in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended.
- (2) To consider the Annual Letter from the Auditor or the Audit Commission in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended and to monitor the Council's response to any issues of concern identified.

### *Audit Activity*

- (3) To consider the Chief Internal Auditor's annual report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements.
- (4) To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
- (5) To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the internal audit service.
- (6) To consider any report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.
- (7) To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- (8) To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
- (9) To liaise with the Audit Commission over the appointment of the Council's external auditor.

### *Regulatory Framework and Risk Management*

- (10) To maintain an overview of the Council's Constitution in respect of contract procedure rules, financial regulations and codes of conduct and behaviour (except in relation to those matters which are within the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee e.g. code of conduct and behaviour of Members).
- (11) To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the Council.



- (12) To monitor Council policies on “Raising Concerns at Work” and the anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategy and the Council’s complaints process.
- (13) To oversee the production of the Council’s Annual Governance Statement and monitor progress on any issues.
- (14) To consider the Council’s arrangements for corporate governance and any necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice.
- (15) To consider the Council’s compliance with its own and other published standards and controls.

*Accounts*

- (16) To consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.

## **Appendix B - Items Considered During the Year**

### 23 August 2011

- Co-opted Members
- Annual Governance Statement
- Summary of the Statement of Accounts 2010/11
- Progress on High Opinion Audit Reports
- Yorkshire South Tourism
- Work Programme

### 28 September 2011

- External Audit Annual Governance Report 2010/11
- Statement of Accounts 2010/11
- Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Report
- Audit Committee Annual Report
- Work Programme

### 9 November 2011

- Corporate Risk Management
- Financial/Commercial Monitoring of External Relationships
- Work Programme

### 11 January 2012

- Annual Governance Statement Progress Report
- Summary of Internal Audit Reports/Progress on the High Opinion Audit Reports
- Debtors Position in 2010/11 and Level of Bad Debt Provision
- Work Programme
- Audit Plan 2011/12
- Annual Audit Letter
- Corporate Risk Register
- Financial/Commercial Monitoring of External Relationships

### 25 April 2012

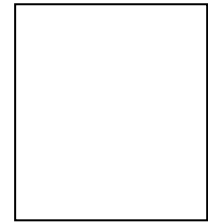
- Working Group on the Financial/Commercial Monitoring of External Relationships

### 15 May 2012

- Internal Audit Planning Report 2012/13
- Compliance with International Auditing Standards
- Audit Commission Report – Protecting the Public Purse
- Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report 2010/11
- External Auditor Appointment for 2012/13 and Future Years
- Code of Corporate Governance
- Section 106 Planning Income
- Work Programme
- Financial/Commercial Monitoring of External Relationships



## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Full Council



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**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

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**Date:** 23 January 2013

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**Subject:** Scrutiny – Mid Year Update Report

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**Author of Report:** David Campbell-Molloy and Emily Standbrook-Shaw  
Policy Officers (Scrutiny) 0114 27 35065

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**Summary:**

This report provides an overview of scrutiny activity undertaken so far this Municipal Year.

It summarises the work done through formal meetings (scrutiny and policy development committees) of the:

- Children Young People and Family Support
  - Economic and Environmental Wellbeing
  - Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care
  - Safer and Stronger Communities
- 

**Recommendations:**

**Full Council is asked to note the work undertaken through the scrutiny committees so far this year.**

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**Background Papers:**

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**Category of Report:** OPEN

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## Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

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

## **Scrutiny – Mid year update report**

### **1.0 SUMMARY**

1.1 This report provides an overview of scrutiny activity undertaken so far this Municipal Year.

It summarises the work done through formal meetings and task and finish groups of the:

- Children Young People and Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
- Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
- Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
- Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee.

### **2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE**

2.1 A challenging and effective scrutiny function is a key contributor to Sheffield achieving its long term goals. The key priorities set out by the Council are reflected in the breadth of issues that Scrutiny Committees look at.

2.2 By investigating issues of local concern, reviewing performance against local targets, and making recommendations for improvements in services, scrutiny can ensure that better outcomes are achieved for Sheffield people.

### **3.0 CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SUPPORT SCRUTINY & POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CHAIR: CLLR GILL FURNISS)**

4.1 In June, we heard from Dr Sonia Sharp, the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Families, on the priorities for the Directorate for the forthcoming year. Sonia set out the key aims as being:

- Improving the quality of learning and skills
- Enabling safe, healthy and strong families, and
- Ensuring they are active and engaged

4.2 We were also told of the key challenges for the forthcoming year. These included:

- Urgently accelerating and improving the overall standards of attainment in the city, particularly at secondary level
- Addressing the under-achievement of children from some BME groups, children with additional needs, looked after children and children from deprived families

- Redoubling of efforts to improve health outcomes for children and young people to ensure progress is made on key areas like teenage pregnancy and mental health issues does not stall
- Young people and parents not thinking there are enough affordable and accessible high quality things to do and places to go
- Managing the increased pressure on services for families in challenging circumstances and children at risk of harm
- Securing improved progression for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities

We have used these priorities and challenges to guide our work programme for the municipal year.

4.3 In September, we looked at the issue of adoption and fostering following some concerns about performance in these areas. We were informed that changes in government policy, such as the introduction of an 'adoption scorecard and the speeding up of adoption processes, were having an impact on our performance. However, we as a scrutiny committee took the view that the overall success of adoption placements is not compromised by trying to rush adoptions through, and we were very satisfied by the fact that Sheffield has a very low number of adoptive placement breakdowns. We wish this success story to continue, despite some concerns about the diminishing future role of the Adoption Panel. We made some helpful recommendations around the future promotion and marketing of the Adoptions Service and requested that Elected Members have a strong input into the next adoptions recruitment campaign.

4.4 We have continued to focus our attention on the city's educational attainment results. In November we learnt of the latest educational attainment statistics for the city for the 2011/12 academic year. We were encouraged by the latest picture which we feel shows how the consistent approach of the Council working in partnership with our schools in relation to school improvement is beginning to lead to successful outcomes for our children and young people. The Committee wanted to place on record its thanks and appreciation for all the hard work of Council Officers, school leaders, governors and teachers across the city for this improvement in performance. We, along with the rest of the City Council, however, feel it is imperative that this improvement is sustained and built upon over the next few years, particularly in the context of an increasing school autonomy which is being driven at a national level. We are especially keen that our school governors continue to receive a high quality of data and are able to easily access school information, in order to hold our schools increasingly to account for their performance in helping to further drive up standards.

4.5 In response to concerns by some of our Members on the issue of youth unemployment in the city and, in particular, about the quality of information, advice and guidance that our young people are receiving in

schools, we requested some further information on this in the context of the 'Raising of the Age of Participation'. This session, combined with work that the Economic & Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee has been doing into the issue of youth unemployment, has prompted a joint scrutiny session to be organised in the new year between our two scrutiny committees to consider these issues in greater detail.

We are looking to combine this with the endorsed October Full Council Motion on the construction of the University Technical College and the request for our 2 scrutiny committees to investigate what further support the Council can provide to the development of the College.

- 4.6 Other areas of focus in our work programme thus far have included examining in greater detail the educational outcomes for looked after children. Members were keen to see what has been working for this cohort of young people in relation to the expenditure of Pupil Premium funding. Other issues raised by Members, specifically in relation to Pupil Premium included:

- Whether the correct target groups are being focused upon, and
- If these groups were not making progress, what further could be done to use Pupil Premium funding more effectively

Members were also keen to ensure that Pupil Premium funding is not used by schools to prop up their core budgets.

- 4.7 Remaining issues that we are looking to scrutinise during the rest of the municipal year include:

- The Annual Safeguarding Report, and
- Progress on improving the quality of school governance

## **5.0 ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING SCRUTINY & POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CHAIR: CLLR HELEN MIRFIN-BOUKOURIS)**

- 5.1 The Committee started the year in July, with a discussion with the Executive Director, Place, on the current issues and challenges facing the portfolio. Key developments highlighted included:

- City Centre Developments
- High Speed Rail 2
- Highways Maintenance Private Finance Initiative
- Sheffield Bus Agreement
- Alternate Weekly Refuse Collections
- Green infrastructure.

This discussion helped to inform the Committee's work programme for the year.

- 5.2 In September, Cabinet approved a decision to enter into a Bus Agreement with partners in the city, aimed at improving the bus offer in Sheffield through network design changes, new ticketing products, and reducing the price of more expensive fares.

This decision was 'called in' for further consideration by the Scrutiny Committee to look in detail at how the agreement might impact the city's transport offer. There was public concern over some of the proposed changes to bus routes and frequencies – which led to a large number of members of the public attending the meeting to address the Committee.

After hearing from these members of the public, as well as officers from the City Council and the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, the Committee endorsed Cabinet's original decision, and the Bus Agreement was launched in October.

- 5.3 The Committee held its annual meeting with local businesses in September. As well as representatives from Sheffield business and industry, officers from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Sheffield City Council attended for a discussion on how well the Council supports business – with a particular focus on small and medium sized enterprises and start ups. As part of this session, Committee Members were invited to attend Sheffield's Entrepreneur Festival – MADE.

Key themes to emerge from the discussion were:

- The need to foster an entrepreneurial culture in the city
- Promoting Sheffield as a place to do business
- Focussing on young people, skills and apprenticeships.

The Committee intends to follow up these themes at a session with business representatives in the Spring, and Members requested that meeting with business becomes a bi-annual event. The Committee is also planning a joint session with the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider supporting the University Technical College and work going on to help young people set up businesses.

- 5.4 In November, the Committee heard from the main cultural trusts in the City - Sheffield Theatres, Sheffield International Venues, Museums Sheffield and Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust – on their priorities and challenges for the year. Finance was a key area of interest – against a background of decreasing public funding, the Committee was pleased to note the Trusts' successes in attracting external funding, and recognised the importance of finding innovative ways to generate additional income.
- 5.5 As the 'Streets Ahead' Highways Maintenance PFI project is such a significant development for the City, the Committee felt that it was important to take an early look at performance on the contract, and how work is progressing. Representatives from the contractor, Amey attended the meeting, as well as Sheffield City Council Officers. The



Committee heard that overall the contract got off to a good start – communication with the public, partners and Councillors has been effective; Members commented that the Community Assembly Steward system is working well; and in areas where work has commenced feedback has been good.

The Committee will keep a close eye progress throughout the rest of the year.

- 5.6 Other issues considered by the Committee this year include:  
Sheffield's Economic Strategy  
Household Waste Recycling Centres  
Environment, Recycling and Streetscene Cabinet Update  
Impact and Legacy of the Olympics and Paralympics for Sheffield

During the rest of the year the Committee will also consider city centre vibrancy, parking on dropped kerbs and pavements and climate change adaptation.

## **6.0 HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY & POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CHAIR: CLLR MICK ROONEY)**

- 6.1 The Committee began the year by inviting the Health Stakeholders in the City to a meeting to discuss their priorities and challenges facing the city. The Committee heard from:

- NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group
- Sheffield City Council's Communities Portfolio,
- Director of Public Health
- Sheffield Health and Social Care Foundation Trust,
- Sheffield Children's Hospital
- Sheffield Local Involvement Network.

This discussion helped to inform the Committee's work programme for the year.

- 6.2 There are lots of changes happening to health and social care services across the city, and the Committee has commented on several proposals:

On transforming support for people with dementia, the Committee highlighted the importance of: support and training for carers; early diagnosis and early intervention; working with people in the early stages of dementia to plan for care in the later stages; understanding the needs of BME Communities; and simplifying assessment processes for people with dementia.

On the Council's Partnership Review with the Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust the Committee welcomed the review and stressed the need to ensure seamless care for patients, regardless of which organisation is providing services; achieve consistency around

NHS and Council protocols, procedures and policies; and develop closer working between housing providers and Community Mental Health Teams.

Other proposals that the Committee commented on include the decommissioning of rehabilitation services at Grenoside Grange West Wing; reviewing NHS Sheffield's Commitment to an Intermediate Care Facility; and contributing to the national Department for Health Consultation on the regulations for health scrutiny.

6.3 The Committee has set up 2 working groups to consider issues in depth.

Last year, lengthy waiting times to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services were brought to the Committee's attention by concerned parents of children waiting for the service. The Committee has kept waiting times under review, and whilst improvements have been made and waiting times have reduced, the Committee decided to take a closer look to ensure that the best possible outcomes are being achieved within the resources that we have.

Nutrition and hydration in hospitals is another area for in depth investigation. The Committee is interested in looking at the quality of food in hospitals, and the levels of support that patients receive to eat and drink during their stay in hospital.

6.4 At a regional level, the Committee has been involved with the Yorkshire and Humber Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC), looking at the provision of Children's Cardiac Surgery. In July, the Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts took a decision to close the surgical centre in Leeds, and direct children from Yorkshire and the Humber to surgical centres in Newcastle, Liverpool and Birmingham. After much detailed consideration across a range of issues, the JHOSC concluded that the decision is not in the best interests of people in Yorkshire and the Humber, and used its health scrutiny powers to refer the decision to the Secretary of State for Health for further consideration. The Secretary of State accepted this referral, and the Independent Reconfiguration Panel is carrying out a full review, due to report in March 2013.

6.5 Other issues considered by the Committee so far this year include:

- The Local Account
- End of Life Care
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Care and Support Performance

**7.0 SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY & POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CHAIR: CLLR CHRIS WELDON)**

7.1 Our principal area of work for this year and the previous municipal year has been reviewing the Council's Lettings Policy. This has been an extensive piece of policy development work which the Committee has

been actively engaged in. In January, the revised Lettings Policy will go to Cabinet to be formally agreed and implemented. As Chair, I would personally like to thank all of the Members of the Scrutiny Committee for their active participation, hard work and dedication to thoroughly reviewing the current policy and recommending some important changes so we can ensure that the policy is fit-for-purpose and fair to all the residents of this city.

- 7.2 In addition to the Lettings Policy Review, the Committee has scrutinised other important housing issues. One of these has been the recent rise in homelessness applications in the city. We were requested by the Scrutiny Management Committee to dig deeper into the issue of homelessness after concerns were raised about a recent rise in the number of presentations to the homelessness service. Members were also concerned about projected increases in the number of homeless over the next few years in the city.

As a Scrutiny Committee, we have agreed to keep a watching brief over this issue over the next few months. In particular, we have requested that a further report on homelessness performance is brought to us in 6 months time. We also requested that the Scrutiny Management Committee look into the possibility of implementing cross-cutting measures to deal with the problems of homelessness in Sheffield.

- 7.3 As well as housing, we have closely scrutinised community safety issues. In September, we considered the Anti-Social Behaviour Review and the establishment of Partner Resource Allocations Meetings (PRAM) as a new way of coordinating strong responses to antisocial behaviour. We were informed that there are a number of gaps, both actual and perception, with the current response model, including:

- How intelligence is handled
- Leadership and accountability
- Strategy and delivery

The Scrutiny Committee were generally supportive of the PRAM proposal and requested an update report on progress in the near future.

- 7.4 We have also maintained a keen interest on the preparations for the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for South Yorkshire, along with plans for implementing the accountability mechanisms to hold the PCC to account, such as the establishment of the Police and Crime Panel.

- 7.5 Other issues that we are keen to scrutinise for the remainder of the municipal year include:

- The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- The Housing Strategy, and
- The Kier Housing Repairs and Maintenance Contract

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 Full Council is asked to note the work undertaken through the Scrutiny Committees to date this year.