

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Wednesday 7th September 2022 by the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee.

Item No

8. **DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO CULTURE IN SHEFFIELD**

8.1 Culture has moved organisationally within Sheffield City Council from Leisure to Economic Development, opening up new opportunities to use culture to make Sheffield a great and inclusive place to work, study, invest, and live.

The report proposed some strategic actions which would strengthen the cultural leadership role of Sheffield City Council and help the sector to develop.

8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee Policy Committee:-

1. Formally adopt the Sheffield Culture Collective Strategy on behalf of Sheffield City Council as an interim, while SCC works with partners to develop a full city Culture Strategy;
2. Note the submission of three Expressions of Interest to the Create Growth Fund; Cultural Development Fund 3; and Place Partnership Fund; and
3. Support in principle the creation of a Cultural Feasibility Fund through external funding sources such as SYMCA.

8.3 **Reasons for Decision**

8.3.1 Three strategic actions were proposed in the report:

Action 1: Adopt a clear strategy which can underpin funding applications in the sector.

Action 2: Engage with immediate external funding opportunities

Action 3: Support the creation of a Cultural Feasibility Fund and project pipeline

8.3.2 These actions will help to create a context where the cultural sector can develop further and SCC can show cultural leadership:

- The adoption of an interim Strategy will give clarity and confidence to funders
- SCC's clear support with external funding bids will improve the likelihood of success
- A Cultural Feasibility Fund will start to create a cultural project pipeline, and will begin to address inequalities in provision and access to resources.

8.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

8.4.1 **Do Nothing**

By undertaking none of the proposed actions, the cultural sector in Sheffield will continue to experience under-investment from external funders and SCC will suffer ongoing reputational damage in its cultural leadership.

8.4.2 **Develop an SCC Cultural Strategy without adopting the Culture Collective Strategy as an interim**

It will take a number of months to craft an effective city Cultural Strategy. If we waited for the creation of a new document without having an adopted strategy document, this would continue to undermine external funding bids and reduce clarity and profile for culture. The Sheffield Culture Collective Strategy was developed for a particular purpose with 19 local organisations and individuals, and does not include all the elements (e.g Net Zero) or methodology (co-creation) which would feature in a city Culture Strategy. However, the general approach and priorities of the Collective Strategy are in line with Council policy, and provide a valuable immediate strategic hook for strengthening the cultural landscape in the city.

9. **BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR YEAR 2023/2024**

9.1 The report set out the budget pressures and risks facing the services that are the responsibility of the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee (EDSC), and a budget action plan to mitigate these as far as possible in the 23/24 financial year.

It provided recommendations for approval which will allow the services to contribute to Sheffield City Council's ability to set a balanced budget.

9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee Policy Committee:-

1. Note the Council's challenging financial position;
2. Note the pressures and risks identified in relation to the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee budget for the 23/34 financial year and commit to work with officers to mitigate these risks where possible;
3. Note the work undertaken over the summer to develop the Budget Action Plan; and
4. Approve the budget action plan to deliver savings for 23/24 of £525K, against a pressure of £595K, for submission to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 9.3.1 A balance has been sought to strike a balance between meeting the budget challenges in Committee and still delivering as much impact as possible for Sheffield's economy and residents in line with the priorities set in the one-year plan and Business Recovery Plan. The contribution and commitment of the Service in supporting the city economy through covid has been noted, and losing the momentum built as we face a cost-of-living crisis would be damaging to the broader City economy.
- 9.3.2 Furthermore, removal of the services and budgets would also dramatically reduce the City's ability to bid for and win external funding, which maximises the Council's investment.
- 9.3.3 This is the preferred option as it allows the Committee to contribute substantially to the Council's budget position. Further options can be considered by Strategy and Resources Committee with the EDSC, as the range of options across all Committees are considered together.
- 9.3.4 In setting this Budget Action Plan the intended outcome is to continue to deliver services which are pivotal to economic development within the city and support the wider regional economy and maximise our limited financial resource by working in partnership and bringing in external funding.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1 **Do nothing**

By undertaking none of the proposed actions, we would be unable to contribute to delivering a balanced budget.

9.4.2 **Deliver Balanced Budget**

Make further savings by accepting the options, currently rejected, by the Committee.

9.4.3 **Offer greater budget savings by stopping services**

Make further savings by stopping non statutory services.