

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Monday 13 June 2022 by the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee.

Item No

8. FEE INCREASES FOR BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

8.1 This report seeks approval for the proposed fee increase for Bereavement Services in 2022-23. Bereavement services proposes to increase fees by 4% for burials, cremations, and memorials (rounded up to the nearest £5), with some exceptions as outlined in the report. Fees are rounded to keep prices straight forward and a cap of 5% has been applied to ensure no item is disproportionately affected.

8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee agrees a general 4% increase (rounded up to the nearest £5 and capped at 5%) to Bereavement Services fees and charges, alongside the specific changes listed in the report.

8.3 Reasons for Decision

8.3.1 Raising fees as outlined is recommended to offset additional costs caused by significant rises in inflation and the cost of living, notably on items such as gas, fuel, machinery and supplies.

8.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

8.4.1 Increasing fees by 2% would not generate the additional income required to respond to budget challenges and would require a reduction in the quality of services provided.

10. APPLICATION FOR TRAILBLAZER STATUS FOR NEW PROGRAMME FUNDING

10.1 To gain the approval for Sheffield to apply for TRAILBLAZER status in the upcoming new government funded programme. See details below regarding Family Hub & Start for Life programme. At the autumn budget, the government committed £300 million for 75 upper-tier local authorities to deliver Family Hubs / Start for Life services over the next 3 financial years

10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee gain approval for Sheffield to progress to the application stage for Trailblazer status. Key contacts from the Local Authority have been part of the focus group for information about trailblazers and Sheffield is seen as having positive outcomes with regards to family centres development, infant feeding support and parenting programmes across the city.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 10.3.1 Some additional funding in year one to enable rapid delivery on the menu of options for the funded services.
- 10.3.2 Join a network of England wide trailblazers where they can share learning and troubleshoot.
- 10.3.3 Be identified by central government as a national leader in the implementation of the programme.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 10.4.1 If the decision is not approved then Sheffield will receive allocated funding for the programme with no enhanced opportunities for the communities and the city

11. **MONTH 1 MONITORING, FINANCIAL POSITION AND BUDGET TIMETABLE**

- 11.1 This report brings the Committee up to date with the Council's financial position as at Month 1 2022/23. The report also reports the proposed budget timetable for the development of the 2023/24 budget.

- 11.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-

1. Note the Council's challenging financial position and the Month 1 position.
2. Note the budget timetable set out in this report including the requirement for the Committee to plan to develop budget proposals over the course of the summer.
3. Note that the Strategy and Resources Committee was recommended at its 31 May 2022 meeting to "require any Policy Committee that is forecasting an overspend on their budget to develop an action plan to address the overspend in-year and ask the Finance Sub-Committee to monitor both the development of any required action plans and delivery against them".
4. Continue closely to manage and monitor expenditure in line with budget expectations and ensure forecasts represent current financial conditions.
5. Ensure that the spend in the community response team that is unfunded for 23/24 is managed with this in mind.
6. Reaffirms the approach approved by the FC on 1st June 2022, that to act as a balance to the Corporate Risk Register, there should be a Corporate Opportunities Register, detailing new funding opportunities, partnership opportunities and initiatives that will help deliver the Council's objectives, such as supporting those affected by the cost of living crisis.

11.3 Reasons for Decision

11.3.1 By the law the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions which shows how income will equal spend over the short- and medium-term. This can take into account deliverable cost savings and/or local income growth strategies Page 54 Page 11 of 11 as well as useable reserves.

11.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

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