

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Strategy and Resources Policy Committee

Meeting held 15 March 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Terry Fox (Chair), Julie Grocutt (Deputy Chair), Angela Argenzio, Dawn Dale, Douglas Johnson (Group Spokesperson), Bryan Lodge, Shaffaq Mohammed (Group Spokesperson), Joe Otten, Martin Smith, Richard Williams and Paul Wood

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

2. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

2.1 It was noted that Appendix C to the report at item 14 in the above agenda is not available to the public and press because it contains exempt information described in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). If Members wish to discuss the information in these reports/appendices, the Committee will ask the members of the public and press to kindly leave for that part of the meeting and the webcast will be paused.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest made.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the previous meetings held on 24 January, 7 February and 21 February 2023 were approved as a correct record.

5. STREET TREE INQUIRY

5.1 Statement from the Leader of the Council

Before we begin the main business of today's meeting, I would like to make a statement regarding the report into the Sheffield street trees dispute written by Sir Mark Lowcock. I would like to thank Sir Mark Lowcock and everyone who took part in the Inquiry. We wholeheartedly accept the recommendations of the report.

"The street trees dispute was a dark period for Sheffield and ultimately, it was avoidable. Sir Mark's report makes clear that there was a sustained failure of strategic leadership within the council at that time, and there were a series of mistakes and significant errors of judgement. This goes right back to the time the Streets Ahead contract and the business case was being drawn-up in 2008, then as the dispute went on until we turned to mediation in 2018.

Sir Mark's report is clear that those failures, mistakes and errors of judgement

caused substantial and irreversible harm to those involved - residents, campaigners and our own staff from the Council and partner organisations are all included in that. We have said sorry in the past about specific failings, and as part of my evidence to the inquiry I have given an unreserved apology for what went wrong during that time. I would like now to reiterate that unreserved, unequivocal apology to the people of Sheffield about the council's actions during the course of the dispute.

I am truly sorry. We got things really badly wrong and that is a cause of absolute regret both for me personally and as leader of the council. I am determined that we will not go back to those days and those politics of that time. As Leader I recognise that we need to deal with this.

As we knew it would be, the report is detailed, it's a tough read and there's plenty of home truths in there. It comes to 25 separate conclusions and makes 11 recommendations about reconciliation, and what we as a council need to do to change how we operate so that this can never happen again. Over 221 pages it spells out what happened, why it happened and where different decisions could and should have been taken. It describes the harm – to individuals, to communities, to the environment, to the city's reputation, and to the trust and confidence that the people of Sheffield have in their council. For me, this is by far the worst bit.

We accept all of those conclusions and recommendations completely and have committed to doing everything Sir Mark thinks we should. Following the local elections in May, we will bring forward a paper to this committee that will set out in detail how the council will respond to each of those recommendations as well as other points made in the paper where we need to learn lessons.

To make this happen, I have asked the Chief Executive to work with our partners, including with the campaign groups and the Street Tree Partnership, to develop a collaborative framework for reconciliation, taking on board all of the recommendations made by Sir Mark in his report. And following the local elections, I would like Members from all parties to be involved in that process too. I want to be clear that I know it is not up to the city council about how we reconcile: we can't just say "right, that's it, it's over now, let's move on" – there's a lot of work to be done, a lot of personal apologies and a fair few uncomfortable conversations to be had. To be the best we can be as a council we need to listen, and agree with those affected by this what reconciliation looks like.

As I said, we have a good number of people to apologise to – and it's important to me that those individuals are identified and they get their apology personally from me – not through the media or from the council chamber – from me, I want to look people in the eye when I say sorry, because I mean it.

The report I've commissioned which is going to set out what we are going to do and how we are going to do it, will be brought forward to the Strategy and Resources Committee following the election, which is likely to be in June, for debate and endorsement by the council.

One of the first acts I made as the incoming Leader of the Council in 2021 was commissioning this report to ensure that the council never again makes the mistakes it made over this dispute, and to make it right for so many people who were wronged.

As Sir Mark has said, identifying a lesson is not the same as learning it, so that paper will also describe in detail the process that we will go through to enable those lessons to be truly learnt so that we do not make similar mistakes ever again.

Let me be clear, we will accept every recommendation made in the report. There is one recommendation where I have asked officers to take immediate action because the council is causing ongoing harm.

There are a number of campaigners who we still have outstanding financial claims against, as a result of legal action around the time of the dispute. This was not a matter I was aware of until reading the report.

Although the council have not been actively pursuing these claims for some time, we will drop those claims entirely from today, recognising the financial, mental health and wider burdens that they have and continue to impose on the individuals affected. I can further announce that we will also take steps to reimburse all campaigners against whom we pursued financial claims and who have already paid those claims.

As I said at the beginning, the street trees dispute was a dark time for this city and none of us want to ever return to those dark days. I do not want to return back to those politics again.

I do believe that we are all on the same page, we want what is best for this city and repeating our mistakes is not an option. I reckon we really can move forward as a city, we can build on the good work of the past five years and move towards a brighter and kinder future.

Once again I would like to say that I am unreservedly sorry”.

5.2 At this point in the proceedings it was agreed that public questions should be presented:

5.3 Public Questions:

5.4 Submitted by: Vicky Seddon

I understand that there has been some discussion about whether to move to an “all out once every four years” election system for our councillors, but with no such change proposed. Such a change would bring us into line with Nottingham, Derby, Rotherham and Doncaster, and the majority of unitary local authorities. Surely the low voter turnout for Sheffield’s local elections is an indication that voters are not very happy with our current system. Isn’t it about time that we the voters were consulted on this?

Response: Whilst we keep such matters under review, there is no current proposal to move from the existing pattern of electing by thirds to electing all councillors every four years. Were such a change to be proposed then we would, in line with the law on changing electoral schemes and our wider commitment to listening to the views of local people, conduct full consultation before such a change went ahead.

5.5 Submitted by James Martin:

Through the work done with SCC Electoral services in preparation for the Accessibility Provisions of the Elections Act, we have encountered near unanimous feedback that even with the improvements in polling stations the biggest barrier for many is accessible information from candidates and/or their parties. How will parties in the city look to do their part in making elections and accessibility available for all in this and future elections?

Clearly, this is a matter which cannot be addressed by SCC Officers. As the next election is a local only, I would be grateful if you would allow this question to publicly raise this important feedback.

Response: Welcome James, thanks for your support and contributions which have been incredibly helpful and for all the work you do with Disability Sheffield.

I will ensure that your question is sent to all of the relevant people not just for Labour, but for all of Sheffield's political parties, so that we can work with you to address this situation.

5.6 Submitted by Julie Pearn:

Councillor Terry Fox said he welcomed the invitation to twin from the Mayor of Nablus and also that he had written to the Mayor of Nablus. Can you explain the delay in responding and the half-truths in Councillor Fox's letter? Can you also provide reassurance that the review of twinning and international arrangements will not mean further delay.

In view of the long delay and the discourtesy of the delay in responding, what plans are being put in place to address the Nablus twinning proposal as a matter of urgency?

Response: The Leader indicated that he signed the letter to the Mayor of Nablus a while ago so would check on why this was delayed. I do have an appetite to speak to the Mayor but there is a review of twinning and international arrangements being undertaken. This report is progressing and is in our forward plan of work.

5.7 Submitted by Russell Johnson:

Q1. One of the Corporate Responsibilities of this Committee states:
'Considering reports which an Ombudsman requires to be published by the

Council where it is proposed that the Council take the recommended action'; Whilst the Lowcock Report is not by the Ombudsman, it does, I believe have greater or equal standing and importance.

How will this Committee fulfil its responsibilities in properly responding to the excoriating Lowcock Report given that serious and sustained strategic failures have been identified?

Will the work of this Committee in this respect be concluded in a timely manner such that SCC cannot again be perceived to be 'long-grassing' the matter in the hope that the angry public will become silent?

Response: As I have set out in the statement at the beginning of this meeting, I think it is important that the Council responds to the conclusions and recommendations of the Lowcock inquiry in full and in a timely manner. To this end I have asked the Chief Executive to work with everyone involved, including campaigners, to develop a collaborative approach and framework for reconciliation to be discussed at a meeting of this committee following the election. I am not shying away from anything in the report, and I am committed to responding comprehensively and in public to everything that Sir Mark has identified.

Q2. Another of your purposes is:

'Responsibility for any issue identified as being of significant strategic importance or financial risk to the Council (which is considered to be by its nature cross-cutting)' Given the obvious strategic importance of the swingeing Lowcock critique will this Committee agree that addressing the Lowcock recommendations with honesty and transparency should be a priority and that further reputational damage to the Council by obfuscation and delay must be avoided?

Response: As I have said in answer to the first question, the Council will work with all those affected over the coming weeks, collaboratively and openly, and will bring forward a report to this committee at the earliest opportunity in the new municipal year which will set out the council's proposed response to the findings and recommendations of the Lowcock report. As Sir Mark has said, identifying a lesson is not the same as learning it, and therefore that paper will also describe in detail the process that we will go through to enable those lessons to be truly learnt so that we do not make similar mistakes in the future.

5.7 Submitted by Ruth Hubbard, asked by Russell Johnson:

Q2. The following are questions on item 9 on the agenda 'Response to Peer Review'? Learning the lessons of the damning Inquiry Report is the most immediate context in which I ask it, but by no means the only context.

Congratulations to officers on completing this Corporate Peer Challenge when demands across the council are so high.

However, I would like to request the Committee considers 'pushing the pause button' on agreeing the Council's response and action plan?

This is to allow more time for wider consideration and understanding of the Feedback and response, definitely for wider consultation, and to try and mitigate

risks.

In the case of 'Team Sheffield' in particular, I want to sound some alarms about the risks involved and the need to think through very carefully - and not just 'at the top' or with the 'great and good'.

Briefly, the CPC Feedback Report has major implications for council reorientation, and so the response signals significant strategic, cultural and operational shifts.

I looked across at other councils and I could not find any example where both a CPC Feedback Report AND a full, fixed action plan response was presented at the same time, together, for approval - let alone with such substantive content. The reports have only just been made available for public scrutiny. And the response report itself acknowledges there has been no consultation (on the Feedback or response).

Perhaps officers and Members have already had much internal reflection and discussion about the Feedback Report. But this appears not to be the case. For example, some officers in some of the Peer Challenge discussions told me that they had only just seen the report and it bore "no resemblance" to those discussions, they didn't recognise themselves in it. There has been no public consideration either.

I appreciate the Chief Executive wants to try and move forward at pace but wider consideration and some meaningful consultation is needed before 'sign off' - I think this could only enhance the proposals, deepen understanding and help to mitigate risks.

For 'Team Sheffield', the approach is standard and very recognisable. But Sheffield is not 'standard'. Some places have had real difficulty with this rather one-size-fits-all approach. In Bristol they have a similar 'One City' approach. It has been highly controversial, is hated by many, and has proved a flashpoint for dissent, resistance, and anger, as well as a range of serious allegations. I remind the Committee that Sheffield is rather good at dissent and that trust in the council could probably not be lower.

My Bristol contacts including a well-informed journalist say "lots of people are excluded, including opposition councillors, it's behind closed doors, it's just the capitalists who are allowed." And "communities are just 'subject' to it. All policy decisions must now go through 'one city' thinking which is essentially a public-private partnership. The public sector pays for it, the private sector enjoys it."

I am not getting into the politics in this but I suggest there should be much clearer thinking and development work about how this aligns with the city (and after Lowcock in particular).

The Lowcock Report is only just out, it identifies big problems working with stakeholders and experts and citizens/communities. Whatever the spin, I don't believe for a moment that that embedded culture has significantly shifted, some things remain broken. So when you shift gear and propose a wholesale collaborative and partnership 'Team Sheffield' strategy, it is likely to be very hard

won indeed, however important and well-intentioned..

The risk is that Sheffield City Council repeats its big mistakes given its history of defensive insularity, power-hoarding, authoritarianism and lack of transparency, openness and honesty. The legacy is that the council is not trusted so it is not easy just to get on and do things. This all needs further thinking through, consultation and great care. The history has to be taken into account and worked with.

Response: We have become more accountable, open and transparent. Since I became Leader I have commissioned the Lowcock report and agreed the Peer review, which demonstrates this. The commissioning of course is not the same as the learning and we must ensure that everything is done correctly, and reports are acted upon.

The Corporate Peer Challenge report is the first time that Sheffield has had a whole organisation peer review. The timing of the publication of the report alongside the Lowcock review was unknown and unintended that the CPC was commissioned but it reinforces the need for concerted change and action across a number of areas, whilst also documenting the many areas of strength that the council has.

Whilst it is important that the committee discusses and considers both the report and the action plan today, this should only be the start of the process of responding to the findings of the peer challenge. The action plan has been written so as to provide a high level summary of the direction of travel needed. There will need to be lots of discussion and consultation with partners and stakeholders about the detail and that is something I am happy to commit to and will ask officers to ensure is done at all levels. And much of what has been recommended by the peer challenge team will need to be taken forward as parts of other programmes of work (such as the 6-month review of governance or the work on city goals). So, a pause at this stage is likely only to hinder our ability to take forward some of these other important areas of work.

The recommendations in the peer review response include a commitment to bringing back a review of progress to this committee within 12 months.

5.8 Submitted by Ruth Hubbard

Q1. There is no prospect or possibility of any significant citizen and community confidence in this council if it refuses to uphold basic standards of probity. So can I ask, in the wake of the appalling indictment of the Street Tree Inquiry Report, for the Leader to please reconsider, and for immediate resignations, for the good of Sheffield?

Response: See responses to 5.10 and 5.11.

A further 3 questions were noted and it was agreed that written responses would be provided to such questions 3,4 and 5.

5.9 Submitted by Richard Ward:

How does the committee propose to address the shortcomings in strategic leadership, both political and in professional services leadership by senior officers, that have been laid bare in Sir Mark Lowcock's report? How will oversight of strategic change be monitored and managed? What performance measures will be put in place to provide reassurance to the public that progress is being made and effectively monitored. How will this Committee use those measures to monitor the clear strategic need for impactful organisation-wide cultural change in Sheffield City Council?

Response: The Lowcock report is clear that there was a sustained failure of strategic leadership within the council at that time, and there were a series of mistakes and significant errors of judgement, dating right back to the time the Streets Ahead contract was signed, through the course of the dispute, lasting until the point we turned to mediation in 2018.

The organisation has begun the process of change and we have put in place some key building blocks already. We cannot take away what has been achieved since the mediation in 2018. These include a new set of organisational values, regular performance reporting to committees linked to our Delivery Plan and opening ourselves up to external challenge and review including through the Corporate Peer Challenge process, which this committee will discuss today. As the peer challenge report makes clear, although we have made some good first steps, we have much further to go – that will require a continuing focus on changing our culture, working with the citizens and communities of the city collaboratively, and transforming the way we do business as an organisation. We have put in place a programme of change, known as Future Sheffield, to provide focus and capacity for this work. As part of the response to the Lowcock report which will be discussed at the first meeting of Strategy and Resources after the election, we will set out how work towards the individual recommendations of the report will be monitored and reviewed. And we will describe how those actions contribute to the wider work of the Future Sheffield programme. Part of the approach to regular review and monitoring our programme of organisational and cultural change will be for this committee to receive regular reports and to scrutinise and hold to account the progress being made.

5.10 Submitted by Isobel O'Leary:

In the light of Lowcock's finding of "a serious and sustained failure of strategic leadership" how can we have confidence in the important decisions to be taken by this committee?

The Lowcock report says the previous Council Leader and cabinet member overseeing Streets Ahead were primarily responsible for this failure. The Council have stated that these "serious errors of judgement" were made by the "previous administration" and that the organisation is "very different now". How can the Council move on, and trust be restored when two of those responsible for causing the harm to the trees, to the citizens of Sheffield and to the reputation of the city are still in very high positions of responsibility at Sheffield City

Council? Their positions are untenable.

Response: As I said earlier we accept that Sir Mark's report identified serious failings of leadership during the time of the street trees dispute. I also explained that, as an organisation, we are changing. The peer review report sets out the distance that we have come and the distance still to travel. But, what is also clear is the work that is ongoing to rebuild the trust and confidence of the people of Sheffield – this includes the move to the committee system, with more councillors taking decisions openly and transparently, the introduction of Local Area Committees to enable people to have more say about the things happening in their communities, and the changes that are already underway as part of the Future Sheffield programme.

The work of the Street Tree Partnership itself is an example of how we're working differently – utilising the experience and expertise of people with different backgrounds and different perspectives but working together consensually for the good of the city's street trees and the wider benefits they bring for the city.

We know it will take time to rebuild trust and confidence – we know that once lost, trust takes hard work and determination. I am determined to put that hard work in alongside the public, partners and stakeholders.

5.11 Submitted by Annette Taberner:

The Council has two important reports on its desk. The peer review document and Sir Mark Lowcocks investigation report. Mark Lowcock catalogues shocking systemic Council failings and disturbing behaviour of senior councillors. Why are those councillors still in post and when will the Lowcock Report be put before an open full council meeting.

Response: As I set out in my earlier statement, the council's response to the Lowcock report will be brought forward for discussion and debate to the first meeting of this committee following the local elections. This will follow a process of open, collaborative discussion with those involved in the street tree dispute, led by the Chief Executive, with a real focus on what we need to do to support reconciliation.

5.12 Members of the Committee then proceeded to debate the issue, including a statement from Councillor Lodge, offering his apologies for what happened during the two-year period when he was Cabinet Member with responsibility for the street tree replacement programme.

(NOTE: 1. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 26 this urgent Item of business was considered on the recommendation of the Chair, on the basis that the Council wished to allow an early public debate on the recently published Street Tree Inquiry report. It was not possible in the time available to give appropriate notice, and it was considered that the Council would not be able to hold an initial public debate on the Inquiry report if not considered at this meeting; and 2. At this point in the proceedings there was a short adjournment).

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

6.1 See item above.

7. CONVERSION PRACTICE POSITION STATEMENT

7.1 The Director of Adult Health and Social Care submitted a report stating that the Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board is seeking endorsement on its proposal to produce a position statement on Conversion Therapy or Practice and to note its direction of travel.

Conversion Practice is any intervention that seeks to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. It works towards one goal and that goal is to cure someone from being LGBTQIA+.

The proposal for a position statement supports the rights and autonomy of all people, regardless of sexual identity, and takes a gender affirming perspective. We are asking our Council members and wider organisations to endorse the position statement which condemns this harmful and unethical practice.

At this point in the proceedings Dr Nicky Cowan asked a public question as follows:

"I am concerned that the SCC's report on conversion therapy makes no reference to the painstaking research of Dr Hilary Cass (to be found in the Interim Cass report). This research casts serious doubts on the Tavistock Gender Identity Clinic's practice of affirmation only for gender confused children. As such I fear that supporting this proposed ban on conversion therapy , instead of protecting children, could be harmful to them.

I am therefore asking the following: would this committee please pause any consideration of the SCC's report advocating a ban on conversion therapy until the final Cass Report has been published (due out the end of this year) and committee members have read it?

As a psychiatrist, I would be happy to assist councillors with any of the medical evidence relating to the report".

It was agreed that the points now raised be noted and that ensuing debate on the issue would provide further information and background to the proposal. In particular it was noted that the work carried out by the Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board had been adults focused and that there was a need to ensure that there were no unintended consequences to the position statement. Further work to enhance the statement would be undertaken as necessary.

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

(1) approves sign up to the Adult Safeguarding Board Conversion Practice Position statement and delivery plan; and

(2) requests the Director of Adult Health and Social Care to bring an update to Committee on an annual basis regards implementation of the statement.

7.3 **Reasons for Decision**

7.3.1 Endorsing and noting the direction of travel will:

- Raise awareness of the practice of Conversion therapy in Sheffield.
- Encourage the LGBTQ+ community to speak out with confidence where they are subjected to this practice.
- Provide strategies within a framework to support the LGBTQ+ community.

7.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

7.4.1 A position statement is proposed to define the issues and implement strategies that will produce a measurable and positive result for the LGBTQ+ community. It will also provide a framework for guidance rather than a mandatory policy which cannot be enforced across the numerous organisations which we hope to sign up.

8. **RETIREMENT OF STAFF**

8.1 The Acting Director, of Legal and Governance submitted a report on Council staff retirements.

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

(a) places on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the City Council by the following staff in the Portfolios below:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Years' Service</u>
<u>Operational Services</u>		
Janet Billard	Ward Team Leader	40
<u>People</u>		
Jacqueline Ball	Primary Admissions Officer	40
Linda Bareham	Out of Hours Co-ordinator	35
Linda Holme	Social Worker, Adult Health and Social Care	44
Surinder Kaur	Senior Practitioner (Approved Mental Health Practitioner)	24
<u>Resources</u>		

Gerard Higgins Procurement and Supply Chain 32
Manager

(b) extend to them its best wishes for the future and a long and happy retirement; and

(c) direct that an appropriate extract of the resolution now made, under the Common Seal of the Council, be forwarded to those staff with over 20 years' service.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

9.1 The Committee received a report containing the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and discussion. The aim of the Work Programme is to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

9.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including the additions and amendments identified in Part 1 of the report;

2. That Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme; and

3. That the referrals from Council (petition and resolutions) detailed in Section 2 of the report be noted and the proposed responses set out be agreed.

10. RESPONSE TO THE PEER REVIEW

10.1 The the Director of Policy, Performance and Communications presented a report on the recent LGA Corporate Peer Challenge of Sheffield City Council that was undertaken by a team of officer and Member peers from other authorities and was based on discussions with over 170 people (Elected Members, staff, representatives of partner organisations and other stakeholders), and involved over 50 meetings over the four days the team were on-site. The peer team's report focuses on the corporate governance and leadership of the organisation and highlights a number of areas of strength, as well as some areas for improvement.

The report asks Strategy and Resources Committee to consider the findings of the peer challenge and to note and accept the recommendations made. The report also sets out a suggested SCC response to the recommendations and an action plan, which the committee is asked to consider and agree to

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

(a) notes and welcomes the Corporate Peer Challenge report and its recommendations;

(b) thanks the Corporate Peer Challenge team for their work in undertaking the review and producing the report;

(c) agrees the council's response and accompanying action plan and to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee, to take the steps required for its implementation;

(d) notes that the peer team will undertake a follow-up visit to Sheffield approximately 6 months after the initial review to provide a stocktake on initial work towards the recommendations;

(e) requests an update to the Strategy and Resources Committee on progress towards the action plan within 12 months.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 The recommendations will strongly support the Council's ongoing improvement journey as set out in the strategic goals paper and Delivery Plan agreed by Strategy and Resources Committee in June 2022 and August 2022 respectively.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 As a condition of undertaking the peer review, the council agreed that the final report should be considered in a public meeting, alongside a proposed response to the recommendations made.

10.4.2 Therefore, the other options open to Members are not to accept some or all of the recommendations made by the peer team. The recommendations made were based on evidence gathered from over 50 meetings, and discussions with more than 170 people from within and outside the council. There is strong alignment between the recommendations and other pieces of work, such as the 6 month review of governance, work on the Delivery Plan, City Goals development, and the Future Sheffield transformation programme. As such, the option of rejecting some or all of the recommendations is not advised.

11. **TRANSPORT REVIEW**

11.1 The Executive Director, City Futures provided an update on the transport policy environment, Sheffield's role in achieving regional objective, meeting carbon zero targets and the related investment programmes designed to deliver transformational connectivity.

11.2 An amendment to the recommendations contained in the report was proposed by Councillor Joe Otten and seconded by Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed:

Requests that officers bring an updated version of this report to a future Strategy and Resources meeting, incorporating:-

(i) realistic options for mode share targets to reach Net Zero by 2030, including increasing public transport above 30% through pursuing further expansion of the

Supertram network, and a more realistic car journey target through increasing focus on ULEV infrastructure; and

(ii) a fully developed consultation toolkit as outlined in paragraph 1.25, with consideration of the need to engage with local business stakeholders at an early design stage to ensure transport schemes are viable, support businesses and meet the needs of local people and the local economy.

The amendment was put to the vote and was lost.

(NOTE: (i) The result of the vote on the amendment was FOR - 4 Members; AGAINST - 7 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members; and (ii) Councillors Otten, Mohammed, Smith and Williams requested that their votes in support of the amendment be recorded in the minutes).

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

(a) notes the initial update on the Sheffield Transport Strategy and Programme, and the success achieved in securing significant investment into Sheffield and the progress being made to deliver the City's transport objectives; and

(b) notes that the Transport, Regeneration, and Climate Policy Committee will:

- (1) provide oversight to the scope of the refresh of the Sheffield Transport Strategy, and development of the associated delivery plans, ensuring that the city's commitment to Net Zero is fully reflected;
- (2) support officers to review the professional capacity required to support the successful development, delivery and influence of policy, programmes and initiatives to support Sheffield's ambitions; and,
- (3) review the approach to communications, consultation and engagement at a programme and project level and determine the level of appropriate resources required.

11.4 Reasons for Decision

11.4.1 As outlined in the report, given the changes in central government policy with regard to transport investment and a focus on carbon reduction, it is becoming apparent that updating the local transport policy will be a key part of the strategic narrative around the changes being developed as part of the Transforming Cities Fund and Active Travel Fund. It is also relevant to the future capital allocations, such as, the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement.

11.4.2 An update on a local level is therefore considered beneficial and will be brought forward, subject to agreement by this Committee and the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee.

11.5 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

11.5.1 Alternative options are not considered applicable. The information contained in this report is for reporting purposes with no direct decision being requested. Any

further related decision will be brought forward through the relevant Policy Committee, on a specific decision basis.

(NOTE: During the discussion of the above item the Committee agreed, in accordance with Council Procedure rules, that as the meeting was approaching the two hours and 30 minutes time limit, the meeting should be extended by a period of 30 minutes).

12. KING'S CORONATION AND EUROVISION CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

- 12.1 The Executive Director City Futures submitted a report setting out key events taking place in May 2023 which will mark moments in history in the lives of all our communities. The Coronation of King Charles III will be a once in a lifetime experience and a chance to celebrate a day history is made; whilst the hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest in the UK provides an opportunity to celebrate Sheffield and South Yorkshire's Ukrainian and diverse communities.

The earlier report to Strategy & Resource Urgency Sub-Committee on 8th August 2022 identified that should our hosting bid not be successful, there would be a commitment to host a smaller cultural 'fringe' style festival. Since then, and through collaboration with the BBC, the proposed Eurovision Song Contest Fringe event, as outlined in this report, presents significantly more benefits than originally anticipated.

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

(a) approves the plans and notes the resources required to deliver an event for the King's Coronation in the Peace Gardens, under the banner of 'The Lord Mayor's Coronation Party' and to deliver the Eurovision Song Contest fringe event(s) in the Devonshire Green, as set out in the report;

(b) notes that in line with communications from the Secretary of State, Sheffield City Council supports communities to engage in Street Parties, Coronation Big Lunch and The Big Help Out opportunities;

(c) approves for the revenue costs of up to £296,000 to be funded from the Council's reserves (Flexible Development Fund reserve) to ensure the events are delivered, this includes financial support of £5,000 for each of the seven Local Area Committees to deliver local community events as is appropriate for the specific community;

(d) notes that an application for grant funding of £30,000 has been submitted to Arts Council England which will reduce the funding required from the reserves if successful. The acceptance of this grant is subject to a formal approval by External Funding team and Director of Economy, Skills and Culture; and

(e) notes that additional funding may be provided by both the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) (via SYMCA) and BBC (but not confirmed at this stage) which will reduce the funding requirement from the reserves further. The acceptance of this funding is subject to a formal approval by External Funding

team and Director of Economy, Skills and Culture.

12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 The recommendations are made on the basis that celebrations to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III and the hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest in the UK will:

- provide opportunities to create inclusive events for Sheffield's communities to celebrate
- will drive footfall and increase dwell time in the city centre in support of local businesses
- will enable neighbourhood communities to come together
- will show support for Ukraine and other diverse community groups

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

12.4.1 An option not to create a public celebration of the King's Coronation and/or Eurovision has been considered. This would lead to there being no public record of King Charles III Coronation being celebrated as a civic event.

12.4.2 At the time of bidding to host the Eurovision Song Contest, SCC's commitment was to engage with and support Ukrainian communities across South Yorkshire; and to create a cultural event in support of Ukraine should the Eurovision Song Contest bid not be successful. If no celebration is delivered, this commitment would remain unfulfilled leading to Sheffield City Council's reputation being damaged.

13. **PURCHASING ELECTRICITY FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES**

13.1 The Director of Direct Services presented a report detailing the energy tariff options available to the Council from its new electricity supplier (EDF).

The report sets out the Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin (REGO) arrangement the Council has under the contract with its current supplier (which will expire in March 2023) and recommends that the Council purchases the standard product under the contract with its new supplier (which commences in April 2023).

The standard product does not involve the purchase of REGOs. The report sets out the Council's intention that monies previously allocated for the purchase of REGOs is deployed on building a comprehensive communications and engagement package that will allow communities and organisations to learn about and access specific renewable energy funding and investment opportunities, subject to separate Council approval.

This decision will allow the Council to realise a significant cost avoidance for the financial year 2023/24 and years moving forward and by allocating the monies to local renewable energy projects it will have a positive effect on the Council's route to net zero by 2030.

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

(a) approves the Council purchasing the standard option for electricity generation with EDF, as set out in this report; and

(b) notes that the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee will consider the internal reallocation of monies previously allocated for the purchase of REGOs to support the Council's local renewable energy and climate change projects.

13.3 **Reasons for Decision**

13.3.1 There will be a cost avoidance for the year 2023/24 of £287,091 against the Clean Renewable option, £198,354 cost avoidance against the Renewable for Business option or £417,587 against the Select Renewable option.

13.3.2 The purchasing of REGOs has no effect on the Council's route to net zero.

13.3.3 The Council intend on allocating the £40k a year previously spent on REGOs internally to support the Council's local renewable energy and climate change projects. The £40k will be deployed on building a comprehensive communications and engagement package that will allow communities and organisations to learn about and access specific renewable energy funding and investment opportunities. Officers will work with Local Area Committees, businesses and community organisations to allocate SCC climate resources.

13.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

13.4.1 Option 1 – Purchase Renewable for Business option from EDF

Advantages:

- This would be a continuation of the Council procuring REGO's for its electricity supply.
- This would enable the Council to declare that its electricity is generated from renewable sources for its market-based emissions.

Disadvantages:

- The cost to the Council would increase.
- This option would be a further draw on the Council's budget alongside already known increasing energy costs.
- This option has no impact on the route to net zero.
- The purchasing of REGOs does nothing to reduce demand for electricity.
- This option does not contribute to the Council's journey to net zero.
- This option includes electricity from biomass generation

13.4.2 Option 2 – Purchase Clean Renewable for Business option from EDF

Advantages:

- This would be a continuation of the Council procuring REGO's for its electricity supply.

- This would enable the Council to declare that its electricity is generated from renewable sources for its market-based emissions.
- This option does not include biomass generation

Disadvantages:

- The cost to the Council would increase.
- This option would be a further draw on the Council's budget alongside already known increasing energy costs.
- This option has no impact on the route to net zero.
- The purchasing of REGOs does nothing to reduce demand for electricity.
- This option does not contribute to the Council's journey to net zero.

13.4.3 Option 3 – Purchase the Zero Carbon for Business option from EDF.

Advantages:

- The cost of this option is lower than that for renewable energy - £52,198.43
- The Council will be able to declare that its electricity is generated by zero carbon generation for its market-based emissions.

Disadvantages:

- The Council will be unable to declare that its electricity is generated by renewable technologies for its market-based emissions.
- This option is based on nuclear energy generation which is subject to some controversy regarding the storage of nuclear waste produced by this method of electricity generation.
- This option has no local impact on the route to net zero.
- This option does not contribute to the Council's journey to net zero.

13.4.4 Option 4 – Purchase the Blended Zero Carbon for Business option from EDF.

Advantages:

- This would enable the Council to declare that its 50% of its electricity is generated from renewable sources for its market-based emissions and that the remaining 50% was from zero carbon generation.

Disadvantages:

- The cost to the Council would increase.
- This option would be a further draw on the Council's budget alongside already known increasing energy costs.
- This option has no impact on the route to net zero.
- This would involve the purchasing of REGOs which does nothing to reduce demand for electricity.

13.4.5 Option 5 – Purchase of Select Renewables option from EDF.

Advantages:

- This would be a continuation of the Council procuring REGO's for its electricity supply.
- This would enable the Council to declare that its electricity is generated from specified renewable sources for its market-based emissions.

Disadvantages:

- The cost to the Council would increase, this is the most expensive option available.
- This option would be a further draw on the Council's budget alongside already known increasing energy costs.
- This option has no impact on the route to net zero.
- This would involve the purchasing of REGOs which does nothing to reduce demand for electricity.

14. CAPITAL APPROVALS - MONTH 10 2022/23

14.1 The Acting Director of Finance and Commercial Services submitted a report providing details of proposed changes to the existing Capital Programme as brought forward in Month 10 2022/23.

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

(a) approves the proposed additions and variations to the Capital Programme listed in Appendix 1;

(b) approve the acceptance of grants as detailed in appendix 2 of the report:

(c) approves the variation to the Future High Streets Fund schemes detailed in Appendix 3, subject to confirmation being received from Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities of their acceptance of change in scope of project.

14.3 Reasons for Decision

14.3.1 The proposed changes to the Capital programme will improve the services to the people of Sheffield.

14.3.2 To formally record changes to the Capital Programme and gain Member approval for changes in line with Financial Regulations and to reset the capital programme in line with latest information.

14.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

14.4.1 A number of alternative courses of action are considered as part of the process undertaken by Officers before decisions are recommended to Members. The recommendations made to Members represent what Officers believe to be the best options available to the Council, in line with Council priorities, given the constraints on funding and the use to which funding is put within the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

(NOTE: During the discussion of the above item the Committee agreed, in accordance with Council Procedure rules, the meeting should be extended by a further period of 30 minutes).

15. LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUNDING (LAHF)

- 15.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Operational Services outlining the allocation of funding from the Local Authority Housing Fund and the proposed use to purchase homes.

The report also seeks approval to receive and spend the funding and progress to acquiring new housing and approval to the use of capital to supplement the grant with repayments of the loan being met from rental income.

- 15.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-
- (a) approves the acceptance and spend of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) grant offer of £2,803,007 from the Local Authority Housing Fund;
 - (b) approves capital funding of £2,959,672, as set out in the report; and
 - (c) approves the acquisition of up to 39 properties, as set out in the report.

15.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 15.3.1 The authority completed a validation form with the proposed minimum number of properties on 25th January 2023. Completion of the validation form doesn't commit the local authority, only when a grant award is confirmed, and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is signed by would the authority be committed to the scheme.
- 15.3.2 To secure the full funding the LAHF Team confirmed that ideally all purchases should be complete by 30th November 2023. If purchases are within the legal process at that point but not complete the funding for those properties will still be provided. Acquisitions currently being purchased can be included in this programme. To secure all funding, it is recommended to allocate this funding to current purchases within the Stock Increase Programme. This fund will then allow surplus funding of up to £2.8m to be generated for use within the Stock Increase Programme to deliver further additional properties.

15.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 15.4.1 No alternative options were considered.

16. UPDATES ON THE REVIEW OF HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT

- 16.1 The Executive Director, Operational Services submitted a report that:
- (1) provides an update on the findings of the Housing Related Support Review project;
 - (2) describes proposals for the redesign of the provision to better align with strategic priorities delivering better outcomes for customers;
 - (3) outlines the principle and components for the future operating and delivery

model that will focus on the positive outcomes, providing Housing support and services that allow individuals to have the support, skills and tools to live independently within their own tenancies.

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

(a) notes the recommendations arising from the review of housing-related support, outlined in this report; and

(b) supports the development of a Business Case and Implementation Plan, based on the information outlined in this report

16.3 Reasons for Decision

16.3.1 The proposal for the new delivery model of Housing Related Support seeks to offer an improved customer experience by promoting independence through a stronger emphasis on prevention. This will enable customers to avoid supported accommodation where possible and receive the support, skills and tools required to successfully move on to live in their own home, where supported accommodation is needed.

16.3.2 The service will be better aligned with strategic priorities that focus on achieving better outcomes through a more effective and efficient commissioning and delivery model. Through avoiding crisis there will have a wider benefit to the range of public sector resources that are deployed in the city, including Housing, Care, the NHS, Community Safety and Criminal Justice.

16.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

16.4.1 To remain as is, with a range of services that provide limited prevention, intervention, outreach, accommodation and support, presents a picture that is not viable going forward as current costs cannot be sustained and customers' needs are not met.

16.4.2 Other areas we spoke to told us how they are closing large hostels and moving towards a mix of dispersed properties and small shared schemes for specific customer groups. They also told us that they are experiencing increasing levels of need and complexity amongst their customers.

16.4.3 The new delivery model of Housing Related Support will enable a tailored and personalised approach for those customers considered 'vulnerable'. The current activity focussed on prevention will continue and develop, while the new delivery model enables customers to achieve positive and consistent experiences and outcomes to either retain or attain independent living. Without this new approach there is a risk that more resources will be needed to tackle ongoing demands and existing issues will persist.

17. UPDATE ON MARKETING OF THE FORMER COLE BROTHERS BUILDING

17.1 The Chief Executive submitted a report providing an update the current position

with the marketing of the former Cole Brothers store in Barkers Pool.

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

(a) notes the current position in respect of the former Cole Brothers store in Barkers Pool and approval given to the next steps, as set out in the report; and

(b) agrees that the process to secure a developer continues as planned and that a further report be brought back to this Committee following the elections in May for selection of the preferred developer.

17.3 Reasons for Decision

17.3.1 Officers are pleased with the range, number and quality of submissions received at the current stage of marketing, particularly given concerns raised when the building was listed. The next steps set out in this report will give sufficient time for the bids to be fully explored and further clarifications obtained in advance of final bids.

17.3.2 The timescales proposed are considered to be sensible given the need to give officers and the developers the opportunity to secure the best outcome for the future of the building and positive benefits of the Heart of the City project and wider city centre.

17.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

17.4.1 This report simply updates Members on the current position and next steps with the marketing of the building and decision making timescale. Members could decide to pause the process but to do so would lead to further delays and uncertainty around what is an important building for the regeneration of the city centre and of a lot of interest from many people both within and outside of Sheffield. There is also a risk that developers currently interested in the scheme, could withdraw.