

# SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

## POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Monday 19 June 2023 by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee.

### Item No

#### **5. LEARNING FROM THE PAST AND MOVING AHEAD: RESPONSE TO THE SHEFFIELD STREET TREE INQUIRY**

- 5.1 The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Strategy and Resources Committee to agree a suite of actions and a budget to respond the findings and recommendations of the Sheffield street trees Inquiry, published by Sir Mark Lowcock KCB on 6 March 2023.

The Inquiry report contains detailed findings, observations and 11 recommendations for the Council and their Streets Ahead contractor, Amey.

The Council published a statement on 6 March, welcoming the report, and a further statement on 7 March setting out an initial apology and the intention to implement all recommendations and learn lessons. On 15 March at the Strategy and Resources Committee, the Council made fuller apologies, accepted all the Inquiry's conclusions and recommendations and asked the Chief Executive to bring a report to this Committee to respond to each of the recommendations. Apologies were repeated at the Extraordinary General Meeting on 10 May and a motion passed which included a request that a timescale for implementation be published no later than the end of June 2023

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

(a) agrees to set aside £200,000 from reserves to cover the remaining costs of the Inquiry and to facilitate the actions to meet its recommendations set out within this report;

(b) agrees the 36 actions (and their accountability and monitoring arrangements) recommended to implement the recommendations of the Sheffield street trees Inquiry, set out within this report and summarised in Annex A;

(c) notes the apologies from Amey and Sheffield Tree Action Groups (STAG);

(d) endorses the bespoke approach to supporting those who were found in breach of the injunctions and ordered by the Court to pay costs;

(e) agrees that there should not be a dispute related compensation scheme;

(f) agrees that improving the standard of roads outstanding from 2018 is a priority for the Council;

(g) notes that the Council has shared the Inquiry response and this report with its auditors and will comply willingly should the auditors choose to recommend further

action; and

(h) notes that this report does not recommend commissioning additional reports or investigations into the street trees dispute beyond the work with the Information Commissioner's Office and the liaison with the Local Government Ombudsman and the Council's auditors.

### **5.3 Reasons for Decision**

5.3.1 The recommendations will support the ongoing recovery and reconciliation following the dispute, help ensure strong management of the Streets Ahead contract for the next 14 years and support the aims of the Council's Strategic Framework 2023/24. They will also enable the Council to meet its commitment to accept and have a plan to implement all the Inquiry's recommendations no later than the end of June 2023.

### **5.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

5.4.1 The Council has already committed to accepting all the Inquiry's recommendations and learning lessons. Full Council reiterated and endorsed this through the motion which was passed at the EGM on 10 May.

5.4.2 The actions within the report are the Chief Executive and her team's advice for how best to implement the Inquiry's recommendations. There is strong alignment between the actions and the 6-month review of governance, City Goals and the Strategic Framework for 2023/24. As such, the option of rejecting some, or all, of the actions, or recommissioning this work, is not advised and would delay implementation.