

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

The following decisions were taken on Tuesday 12 March 2024 by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee.

Item No

8. WORK PROGRAMME

- 8.1 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. It was highlighted that this is a live document and Members input to it was invaluable.

Details of the Council motion on 7 February 2024 in respect of "5 years since declaring a climate emergency" were outlined and it was noted that three aspects of that motion were for Strategy and Resources Policy Committee to respond to. A suggested response in respect of the advertising policy element of this was set out in the report and it was confirmed that further work is required on the other aspects. A suggested response from the Committee to these aspects of the motion will be submitted as soon as possible.

In addition, it was reported that the Chair of the South East Local Area Committee (LAC) had written to the Strategy and Resources Committee, on behalf of that LAC in respect of concerns about the future of Birley Spa Bath House that had been discussed at their last meeting.

This is a formal request of the LAC and needs to be dealt with as set out in the constitution. The Committee has three options as to how to deal with the referral.

The three options are:

- (i) refer the matter to a Strategic Director
- (ii) refer the matter to another relevant officer
- (iii) refer the matter to the Committee by way of a report.

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

(a) 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;

(b) 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;

(c) approval be given to the consideration of cross cutting issues as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report;

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

(e) the Executive Director Neighbourhood Services be requested to meet with the Chair of the South East Local Area Committee (LAC) to discuss the concerns with regard to Birley Spa Bath and then assess if a report needs to come back to Committee.

9. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2024- 28 AND ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT INCLUDING WORKFORCE REPORT FOR 2022-2023.

9.1 The Director Policy and Democratic Engagement presented a report setting out, for approval, a package of activity to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and meet our statutory duties. It brings together our new Equality Objectives 2024-2028, which were previously accepted in draft on 21 December 2023 by this Committee as part of our Equality Framework “equality is everybody’s business”, which have now been updated following the consultation. These are accompanied by our Council-level Equality Objectives Action Plan 2024-25, proposed Awareness Days to mark in 2024-25, and our Annual Equality Report 2022–23.

The 2022-23 Annual Equality Report summarises our actions and progress on improving equality in the way we serve the people of Sheffield and how we behave as an employer. It gives an overview of how we are meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) including summary progress against our previous Equality Objectives with examples of a selection of work to improve equality and to meet the Duties. It also includes the council’s Annual Workforce Data Report which is part of meeting the Specific Duty under the PSED to publish equality information on our employees. Producing this report enables us to identify any disparities in our workforce profile, understand how fair our workforce policies are and identify any differences in the experiences of different groups in our workforce. The report also details our pay gap information.

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

(a) agrees the new Equality Objectives 2024-2028, as detailed in the report;

(b) agrees the Council-level Equality Objectives Action Plan 2024-25 which will monitor progress against the Objectives;

(c) agrees the Annual Awareness days we will mark in 2024-25, as set out in the report;

(d) notes the 2022-23 Annual Equality Report, specifically:

- (i) progress made in meeting our Statutory Equality Duties and
- (ii) our Statutory Workforce Report, including improvements,

ongoing challenges and pay gap information

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1 Although there are many inequalities within the city as noted in the Council Plan and annual report, colleagues across the Council are working hard to tackle these. Many are because of national factors that impact on the city that are outside our control. We do however seek to address these such as work on health inequalities within the work in the Council and city such as via the City Goals and Council plans and strategies. We want to acknowledge the work whether new projects or work that is business as usual and thank our colleagues for working together to help make Sheffield a fairer, accessible and a more inclusive place to live and work in.

9.3.2 It is therefore recommended that Strategy and Resources Committee approve the Equality Objectives as they will support the fundamental repositioning of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion work in line with the ambitions of the Council Plan and our work to embed anti-racism within the organisation and the city. By agreeing the Objectives, the Committee will also ensure that we meet our statutory obligation to publish a set of four-year equality objectives.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1 The Council has previously agreed that it should pursue a specific approach to equality rather than one where equality is 'mainstreamed' within other activity. Because of the importance given to equality, diversity and inclusion within the draft City Goals and Council Plan this report does not recommend a change to that approach.

9.4.2 The do-nothing option was discounted when discussing this paper as it is a Specific Statutory Equality Duty to set Equality Objectives at least every 4 years and to report annually on how we are meeting our General and Specific Duties as set out in the annual report.

10. **PERIOD EQUITY AND MENOPAUSE AWARENESS CHARTER**

10.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement submitted a report seeking approval for the Council's Period Equity and Menopause Awareness Charter. It explains the background to and development of the charter and asks for the committee's support in taking forward the commitments set out in the charter.

The comments made in the public questions item earlier in the meeting in respect of the Charter were noted and it was recognised that the Charter presented was a draft and that the consultation on the matter was still open. There is therefore still an opportunity for changes to be made to the Charter, which can be made by the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

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

(a) adopts the draft Sheffield City Council Period Equity and Menopause Awareness Charter (draft charter at appendix 1);

(b) agrees that further work should be undertaken to identify a sustainable approach to funding the provision of free menstrual products in Sheffield City Council buildings that are accessible to customers;

(c) recognises and thanks the partners, organisations and individuals who have contributed to the development of the charter over the last 18 months (list of partners at appendix 2); and

(d) notes that Sheffield has a strong tradition of partnership activism to address matters of period equity and that the city council recognises and wishes to contribute to this work.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 In adopting the Period Equity and Menopause Charter, the Council will take a significant step forward in its commitment to improving the lives of women and girls in the city, as well as clearly setting out our commitments to women in the workplace. The Charter actively supports the achievement of the Council's new Equality Objectives which are aligned to the Council Plan commitments.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 This is a project that came from a resolution passed by Council on 2nd November 2022, and the Charter has been created in partnership with other organisations in the city, supported by Sheffield City Council. Due to the fact that this ask for a Charter was from a resolution that was passed we have not considered a 'do nothing' option.

(NOTE: The result of the vote on the resolution was FOR - 10 Members; AGAINST - 0 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 2 Members.

11. **COMMUNITY BUILDINGS POLICY ADOPTION AND ASSOCIATED PILOT PROJECT**

11.1 The Executive Director Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out a proposed approach to build a sustainable and asset-based approach to Community Buildings, working closely with stakeholders to do so. It seeks to enable priority work to begin with a number of organisations and community buildings, whilst committing to the longer-term development of the policies, skills and resources we need to deliver into the future.

Members recognised the need to reassure communities and organisations that use community buildings that the Council is fully committed to explore the full range of options and opportunities in respect of the proposed approach to community buildings and emphasised the need for Members and officers to

make this point absolutely clear in discussions with such local communities and organisations. The Council is fully committed to work with all of the stakeholders in our communities and to take an inclusive approach to the development of policies and supportive structures to deliver the Community Buildings Review and officers are to redouble their efforts to clearly explain to all relevant organisations what this proposed review entails.

- 11.2 Councillor Joe Otten proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Penny Baker, to delete officer recommendation 3 set out in the report ((c) below).

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost. (NOTE: The result of the vote was FOR – 5 Members; AGAINST – 7 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members).

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

(a) agrees to adopt the Community Building Policy as detailed in Appendix A to the report;

(b) agrees the proposal for a Community Building Pilot in the South Local Area Committee area, to inform the development of the revised future Community Buildings Policy;

(c) agrees the proposal to prioritise the review of 22 Housing Revenue Account funded Community buildings (see Appendix B) across the city as part of the Pilot; and

(d) agrees that the findings of the pilot project will inform a revised Community Buildings Policy which will be developed working closely with voluntary, community and faith sector representatives and submitted to Strategy and Resources Policy Committee within 12 months.

11.4 **Reasons for Decision**

- 11.4.1 The interim Community Buildings Policy will allow the Council to work in a consistent and proactive manner, setting out a clear, transparent the management of Community Buildings. It will enable the Council to make decisions on a number of historic Community Asset transfers that have not been able to progress given the current lack of a policy. As part of these policies the Council will continue to work with local organisations to ensure that a range of initiatives are in place to support the development of strong and sustainable communities.
- 11.4.2 The policy sets out a framework for elected members, council officers and voluntary and community organisations to provide clarity on the process the management of Sheffield City Council's Community Buildings.
- 11.4.3 The proposed Community Buildings Pilot will fully inform a revised Policy which will ensure that full consultation takes place with the community supported by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector. The development of a revised

policy, working with stakeholders, will deliver a better quality, and more sustainable approach to our Community Buildings in the future.

11.5 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

11.5.1 Do nothing.

Continue to manage and deliver Community Buildings as per the current provision.

11.5.2 As part of the Council's Accommodation Review, its Community Buildings / Assets have been considered. As well as these being managed in an inconsistent way across the Council, it is also important that they provide good quality facilities in the locations that the local community need them and that they are in a good serviceable condition and Health and Safety compliant (building safety), all within an affordable financial model.

11.5.3 To ensure that these requirements can be met, and the community effectively supported through Community Building provision new Community Building and Community Asset Transfer Policies need to be implemented.

(NOTE: The result of the vote on the resolution was FOR - 7 Members; AGAINST - 5 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members)

12. 2023/24 QUARTER 3 BUDGET MONITORING

12.1 The Director of Finance & Commercial Services submitted a report bringing the Committee up to date with the Council's revenue outturn position for 2023/24.

12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee notes the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2023/24 Revenue Budget Outturn position.

12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

12.4.1 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.

13. A FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH: PRINCIPLES AND THEMES

13.1 The Executive Director City Futures submitted a report Tsetting out the Council's ambition to develop a Sheffield Growth Plan for 2024-2035 and the principles and themes for growth which we are calling the "Growth Framework". The report seeks approval of these principles and themes, to enable Sheffield City Council officers to move onto Phase 2 of the work and develop a full Sheffield Growth Plan 2024-35 using them as its basis.

This report also seeks approval for the process of developing the Sheffield Growth Plan 2024-35, which will be developed for Strategy and Resources Policy Committee's future consideration by late Summer 2024.

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

(a) endorses the principles and themes for growth ('the Growth Framework') set out within this report so that Council officers can use them as the basis for the development of a draft Sheffield Growth Plan 2024- 2035 to be produced over Spring/Summer 2024;

(b) approves the process, set out within this report, for developing the Growth Plan which will build on the principles and themes of the Growth Framework; and

(c) agrees to receive and consider the draft Growth Plan in late Summer 2024.

13.3 **Reasons for Decision**

13.3.1 Sheffield has ambitious plans for the future of its economy across a range of different policy areas. Bringing this together into a coherent narrative to communicate the city's priorities benefits the city's partners, investors and Sheffield citizens. It helps to identify areas of joint working and investment opportunities and sets out the Council's commitment to the city's prosperity.

13.3.2 The Growth Framework, as the first vital step towards a Growth Plan, establishes the draft principles and themes for the plan, beginning a conversation with stakeholders about the kind of economy they want to see in the city.

13.3.3 The Growth Plan will build on this initial engagement, connecting the city's economic and regeneration activity to the wider social and environmental objectives of the Council Plan and the City Goals.

13.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

13.4.1 Do nothing. This was rejected due to the needs of the city, and the need identified in the LGA Peer Review, for a strong and visible statement of ambition that brings together the city's regeneration plans for partners, investors, elected members and citizens.

13.4.2 Continue with a suite of strategies and action plan with no narrative. This was rejected due to the opportunity to create a coherent narrative across various areas of economic and regeneration activity. In doing so, the narrative can connect the city's growth ambitions, partnerships, investment and community engagement to better support and improve the quality of life of the people of Sheffield.

14. FLAG PROTOCOL

14.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement presented a report noting that Full Council passed a resolution at its meeting on 1 November which called for a review of the council's flag flying protocol. The report provided details of the outcome of that review and proposes a revised flag protocol which the committee is recommended to adopt.

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

(a) adopts the Protocol for flying of flags at Sheffield City Council sites and other commemorative activity as set out in the appendix to the report;

(b) delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, to make decisions on ad hoc requests to fly particular flags, in line with the provisions of the protocol.

14.3 Reasons for Decision

14.3.1 By adopting the new flag protocol, the Strategy and Resources Committee will ensure that the Council has a modern and fit-for-purpose approach to the flying of flags on Council buildings, and a mechanism for making decisions on ad hoc requests to fly a particular flag.

14.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

14.4.1 The only alternative option considered was to retain the existing flag protocol. For the reasons set out at paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 of the report, the current protocol is not considered to be fit for purpose, and therefore this option was rejected.

15. LGA PEER CHALLENGE PROGRESS REVIEW

15.1 The Chief Executive submitted a report noting that the LGA Peer Team that undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) of Sheffield City Council in November 2022 returned to review our progress in December 2023.

The report provides a summary of the LGA's feedback and recommendations from the Progress Review.

The LGA Team have recognised that there has been strong and positive progress at the council in the last year, with significant progress made against the recommendations made in the original CPC. This has included collaborating with partners to develop Sheffield's City Goals, producing a focused Council Plan for the organisation, continuing to provide robust and stable financial management and developing mature political culture.

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

- (a) welcomes the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report (Appendix 1) which recognises the significant progress that the council has achieved in the last year;
- (b) thanks the members of the LGA Peer team for their time and insight in supporting the council's continuous improvement;
- (c) recognises the collective effort from Members and officers to deliver vital strategic foundations in the last year – including the development of a Council Plan, proposals for a balanced budget, and collaborating with partners to set out our shared City Goals;
- (d) agrees that the council should continue on its improvement journey by embedding the Council Plan across the whole organisation, using the feedback and insight in the LGA's Progress Review report to focus our transformation activity; and
- (e) commits to asking the LGA to undertake another Corporate Peer Challenge within the usual timescale (circa 2028).

15.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 15.3.1 The recommendations recognise the significant progress made by the council in the last 12 months and encourage the whole organisation to continue that journey and deliver the Council Plan.

15.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 15.4.1 As a condition of undertaking the Corporate Peer Challenge and the Progress Review, the council agreed that the Progress Review report should be considered in a public meeting.
- 15.4.2 The only alternative option would be to reject some or all of the feedback and recommendations in the Progress Review. However, given the positive nature of the feedback and the recognised progress made by the council against the original CPC recommendations, this option is not advised.