

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Co-operative Executive

Meeting held 9 June 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Terry Fox (Chair), Julie Grocutt, Jayne Dunn, Cate McDonald, George Lindars-Hammond, Paul Wood, Douglas Johnson, Paul Turpin and Alison Teal

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mazher Iqbal.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Councillor Jayne Dunn Declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 7 - Sheffield Covid Business Recovery Plan: Phase 1 Recovery Delivery Programme, as a business owner in Broomhill.

3.2 Councillor Paul Wood declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 7 - Sheffield Covid Business Recovery Plan: Phase 1 Recovery Delivery Programme, as the Vice Chair of a local charity.

3.3 Councillor Julie Grocutt declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 9 - Stocksbridge Towns Fund, as a member of the Stocksbridge Towns Board.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 17th March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Public Question received from Nigel Slack

The University of Sheffield seems not to share the commitment of the residents of this city to providing a firm basis for Higher Education. In May the University decided to close it's Archaeology Department. This at a time when there is already a crisis in the availability of these highly skilled jobs. The demand for archaeological expertise to service major infrastructure projects has grown and it

has a major role in ensuring our culture and heritage is not lost to uncontrolled development. From iron age sites to Victorian industrial heritage, new infrastructure and developments are threatening historical sites.

The number of graduates entering the profession has been in decline and Brexit will make it unlikely that external candidates can be recruited to fill the roles needed. Archaeologists are one of the 'Skilled Worker Shortage List' professions identified by the Government. Commercial archaeology units cannot recruit fast enough and the University's excuse that the demand for the subject is declining has been described by one commercial unit as "Absolutely False" & "Total Garbage". (<https://digventures.com/>)

The University is putting a world renowned department in jeopardy for the sake of it's big business agenda. The Archaeology department provides expertise across the country, from Stonehenge to our own Sheffield Castle and it's loss would diminish the standing of the University as a seat of learning and damage the reputation of the city of Sheffield as a centre of the knowledge economy.

What steps will the City Council take to challenge this decision, in line with his commitment to skilled jobs within the city and to supporting the Arts, Culture and Heritage economy?

What will the City Council do to tackle one of the underlying causes of this issue, the Governments slashing of Humanities Education funding by 50%, thereby encouraging the creation of generations of narrow focus work fodder rather than all round well educated citizens of a modern city?

5.2 The Executive Member for Education, Children and Families shared the disappointment over the decision of Sheffield University to close its Archaeology Department, but unfortunately, the Council had no influence over the courses offered by the University. Assurances had been given that the specialist niche areas had been absorbed into other courses. The erosion of the education system was a source of concern and the Executive Member for Education, Children and Families gave a commitment to fight for a broader curriculum at all levels of education.

5.3 The Executive Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport agreed that it was an important issue that would have a detrimental impact on the city and had asked for a meeting with the University management to discuss the issue.

6. DELIVERING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES - DEVELOPING A 1 YEAR PLAN FOR SHEFFIELD'S RECOVERY

6.1 The Chief Executive presented the report to deliver the Co-operative Executive's commitments and establish focus and purpose for the year ahead, it was proposed that a one-year recovery plan be developed by the Co-operative Executive for the 2021-22 municipal year, with a final draft to be presented to the Executive for consideration at its meeting on 21st July.

The one-year plan will also:

- recognise the critical importance of excellent core services, setting out actions to drive rapid improvements in SCC services where customers and residents have told us that we are not meeting their expectations
- support the city's recovery, complementing the proposals set out in the Sheffield Covid-19 Business Recovery Plan: Phase 1 Recovery Delivery Programme
- create the vital foundations for a longer-term corporate plan and priority-based budget for future years, with work proposed to start on a new 3-5 year plan this summer
- include clear actions that will ensure that Sheffield City Council is in the best possible position to deliver the administration's priorities and be effective in working alongside communities and partners to build a more sustainable, inventive, and socially just Sheffield. As an employer and leader in the city, we need to aspire to be an outstanding organisation; a council that all Elected Members, staff and citizens can be proud of.

6.2 **RESOLVED:** That the Co-operative Executive:-

1. Recognises the huge efforts that the whole city has made to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic;
2. Offers thanks to citizens, communities and everyone in the public, voluntary, community, faith and private sectors who have and will continue to support the city through the pandemic;
3. Urges everyone eligible to get vaccinated with their first and second jabs and continue to make good choices as the Covid-19 restrictions ease;
4. Agrees that Sheffield City Council needs to set out a plan for the year ahead to co-ordinate our recovery from Covid-19, deliver the administration's priorities and create robust foundations upon which to build a fair, sustainable future for the city;
5. Agrees to receive a draft 1 year recovery plan for approval at the Cabinet meeting on 21st July 2021;
6. Agrees that planning work should commence on the production of a longer-term (3-5 year) Corporate Plan and priority-based budget for municipal year 2022/23 onwards and that this should be subject to further reports to the Co-operative Executive and relevant Transition Committees; and
7. Notes the plan will include priority actions to build the capability of the organisation and deliver 'a council to be proud of'.

6.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 6.3.1 The recommendations recognise that the Covid-19 pandemic has seen an unprecedented collaborative response from communities and public, private, and VCF sector partners in the city. The coming year is a pivotal moment for the city

and the recommendations reflect the ambitions of the Co-operative Executive to deliver an immediate plan to support the city's recovery and ensure that SCC is well-placed to respond to the ambitions and expectations of all our communities.

6.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 6.4.1 1. Developing a longer term plan this year – this would have the advantage of bringing longer-term focus for the organisation but as we begin to recover from Covid-19, there is an immediate need to have a deliverable plan this year, working with the Co-operative Executive to deliver the priorities set out in the Co-operative Agreement. Further, the governance transition to a Modern Committee System from May 2022 ensures that having a shorter-term plan for this year will enable us to focus on the necessary in-year steps to support the organisation's transition.
- 6.4.2 2. Do nothing – doing nothing is not a viable option. To support the city's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, Sheffield City Council needs to be focused on using its capacity to deliver the Co-operative Executive's priorities for the city and enabling our committed employees achieving the best outcomes for all our communities.

7. **SHEFFIELD COVID BUSINESS RECOVERY PLAN: PHASE 1 RECOVERY DELIVERY PROGRAMME**

- 7.1 The Interim Executive Director, Place submitted a report which proposed that the Co-operative Executive endorse Phase 1 of the Recovery Delivery Programme, to deliver against the Business Recovery Plan agreed by Cabinet in Oct 2020.

There are multiple funding sources identified against the delivery programme, which have been subject to separate decisions, and have established appropriate delegations. As such, this report was seeking endorsement and approval from the Co-operative Executive for the suite of activities outlined.

7.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cooperative Executive:-

1. Support the proposal to create a 'Summer in The Outdoor City' city-wide visitor campaign; to deliver a large-scale programme of events during the summer across the city centre; and to showcase community and district centre events and partner activities that help to generate footfall and visitors through the summer months;
2. On the recommendation of the Economic Recovery Fund Steering Group, endorse the first wave of projects to be taken forward for development, through the £2m Economic Recovery Fund. This includes 6 projects to support the recovery of District Centres, bringing back footfall and investing in the regeneration of the local high street, and a further 6 projects focused on animating the city centre to support the delivery of the Summer in The Outdoor City proposal;

3. Approve that the Member led Economic Recovery Fund Steering Group will now be chaired by Cllr Paul Turpin, as Executive Member for Inclusive Economy, Jobs and Skills (responsible for District Centres) and that Cllr Julie Grocutt, as Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community Engagement and Governance (responsible for Covid response and recovery) will be invited to join the steering group;
4. Approve the proposed activity to be funded from the Welcome Back Fund, including the continuation of the district centre Business Information Officers who are supporting businesses to be Covid secure; helping high street businesses get online; and the delivery of the marketing and communications campaign to support reopening;
5. Harness Sheffield City Council's local Additional Restrictions Grant to support the delivery of the Summer in the Outdoor City Proposal, and to work with the Business Response Group to identify a further set of projects which would: kick start the green recovery, accelerate start-ups; and further support the growth aspirations of SMEs with appropriate grant programmes to deliver more investment and jobs in Sheffield;
6. To note the associated Co-operative Executive Report to accept the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) grant for the £2.3m Low Carbon Business Support project that will operate until 30th June 2023 and is part of this Recovery Delivery Programme;
7. Agree that the Director of Finance and Commercial Services will work with the Head of Service for Economic Strategy and Commissioning on this delivery programme to ensure the most effective use of funds. This will be done with respect to any legal requirements and the eligibility and delegations set out for each funding stream; and
8. Note, with thanks, the ongoing contribution from the Business Response Group in the development and delivery of the Business Recovery Plan.

7.3 Reasons for Decision

- 7.3.1 The COVID pandemic has presented a number of challenges for businesses and the economy which, if not addressed, could lead to long term issues in terms for employment, business and wages with knock-on impacts on health inequalities and people's wellbeing.

The Sheffield COVID Business Recovery Plan set out the priorities for the city in addressing these issues and creates a framework for the Council to work alongside the business community to support the city's recovery, protecting jobs and businesses.

The activities in the report demonstrates delivery against the BRP framework and enables critical projects to progress as Phase 1 of the city's Recovery Delivery

Programme.

The activities outlined in this report have been developed following advice and discussion with Public Health colleagues and ensure an appropriate balance between reopening the economy and encouraging people to support local businesses and doing this safely in a way that minimises the risk to people's health.

7.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

7.4.1 A number of options were tested for each of the funding streams identified in this report, as part of the original delegations outlined in table 3. Furthermore, in the development of this programme several options were considered.

Option1: Do minimal option: SCC business support, investment and marketing functions return to 'business as usual' activity and stop providing Covid support as the economy reopens. Additional funding is not sought, and recovery projects are not developed for delivery.

This option would not deliver against the BRP agreed by Cabinet and critically would lead to further economic distress, as businesses are not supported to reopen.

7.4.2 Option 2: Do not stimulate demand to bring back footfall and visitors: SCC business support and Covid critical interventions continue but no additional funding is sought to stimulate demand, consumer confidence and tourism. Specifically, The Summer in The Outdoor City Proposal and elements of the Welcome Back Fund are not progressed.

This option would not deliver against the specific gap in this area identify by the BRG in the BRP. It would lead to slower recovery and a protracted period where businesses maybe operating at a loss, due to reduced demand, putting businesses and jobs at risk.

7.4.3 Option 3: Approve Phase 1 of the Recovery Deliver Programme, to support businesses to adapt and thrive to the new economic climate and to support the high street and hardest hit sectors by working to bring back demand, through effective marketing and communications, the 'Summer in The Outdoor City' campaign, outdoor events and animation activity to encourage people to visit their District and City Centres and support local businesses.

This option would progress delivery of the BRP and help footfall and demand to return to highstreets and the hospitality sector quicker, delivering against the outcomes identified in this report.

8. SHEFFIELD CITY REGION - LOW CARBON BUSINESS SUPPORT PROJECT

8.1 The Interim Executive Director, Place submitted a report which informed Members that Sheffield City Council had received approval from the Ministry for Housing,

Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to European Structural and Investment Funds, and to act as Accountable Body for the SCR Low Carbon Business Support project.

The report sought the approval for the Programmes and Accountable Body Team within City Growth to act as Accountable Body and to enter into the Funding Agreement with MHCLG for the above project and for the project to be delivered as outlined in the report.

8.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cooperative Executive:-

1. Agrees that Sheffield City Council through the Programmes and Accountable Body Team will act as Accountable Body for the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Low Carbon Business Support project;
2. Authorises the Council to enter into a funding agreement with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and to accept a grant of £1.383 million. Note that this will require delivery partners and the private sector to provide match funding of up to £0.922 million, giving a total project spend of up to £2.305 million from May 2021 to September 2023;
3. Authorises Sheffield City Council to pay the relevant levels of grant to SME's;
4. To the extent not already delegated to them by the Leader's Scheme of Delegation, delegates Authority to the Director of City Growth in consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance to:
 - o agree the terms of and provide approval to enter into the Service Level Agreements with the Delivery Partners of the project.
 - o to agree the terms of the offer letter that will be entered into with all successful business applicants of the grant scheme; and
5. To the extent not already delegated to them by the Leader's Scheme of Delegation, delegates Authority to the Director of City Growth in consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Legal and Governance to:
 - o agree the terms of and approve any variations to the ERDF funding agreement.
 - o agree the terms of and approve any additional match funding that is secured to deliver the project.
 - o take any further decisions necessary in order to meet the aims, objectives and outcomes of this report.

8.3 **Reasons for Decision**

8.3.1 Approval of the recommendations will allow:-

Entering into the Funding Agreement:

- Allow the provision of additional and specialist business support services in

respect to low carbon across the region building upon the wider business support service already offered to SME's across region. This additional support will address the climate change agenda and contribute to business productivity.

- Project delivery to commence immediately meaning that businesses can access support from this programme from as early as June 2021.
- Assist 260 SME businesses across the City Region to deliver low carbon interventions and improve their productivity between June 2021 and the end of June 2023.
- Provide 140 grants to SMEs that will secure nearly £1m of Private Sector Match funding.
- Generate an estimated 843 Tonnes reduction in Green House Gas emissions.

SCC acting as Accountable Body:

- Efficiencies to be gained from utilisation of the existing Programme and Accountable Body Team using existing systems, processes and people are already in place.
- The potential for SCC to act as Accountable Body / Managing Agent for other SCR-wide schemes.
Ensures that the project is delivered in South Yorkshire securing over £1.3m ERDF and delivering the low carbon and economic benefits.

8.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 8.4.1 An initial proposal to develop and deliver the project was led by the Sheffield City Region Executive. However, this was not progressed given the SCR did not feel they had sufficient experience of European funding to deliver it on behalf of the South Yorkshire Local Authorities. In order to progress the bid Sheffield City Council offered to step in and act as Accountable Body to ensure the ERDF funding was not lost.
- 8.4.2 Consideration was given to running the proposal with business support only and without additional grant funding. Whilst of some benefit it would not assist SME's implementing low carbon technology where the initial capital cost can often act as a deterrent to invest.
- 8.4.3 A 'do-nothing option' was considered but this would mean that no activity would be taking place with local businesses to deliver a number of Priorities within the Green City Strategy. It would also risk the ability to access more than £1m ERDF to support the local climate change policy.

9. STOCKSBRIDGE TOWNS FUND

- 9.1 The Interim Executive Director, Place submitted a report which updated the Co-operative Executive on the Stocksbridge Town Deal following the announcement that Stocksbridge was successful in securing, in principle, £24.1m funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG); to provide further information around the projects; to seek approval around next steps

including allocation of funding to develop projects to full business case and to progress negotiations regarding the acquisition of targeted properties.

9.2 RESOLVED: That Cooperative Executive:-

1. Note that the Council has been successful in being awarded, in principle, £24.1m from MHCLG;
2. Approve the allocation and commitment of £1.5m of Council funding for 2021/22, in anticipation of receipt of that funding, to undertake feasibility, site investigations and project development work up to full business case for the 10 projects identified in this Report and add the Stocksbridge Town Deal project to the capital programme;
3. Note the intention to submit an application to the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority for £1.8m funds for the Manchester Road Project and delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources to accept the grant and commit the Council to act as Accountable Body should that bid be successful; and
4. To the extent not covered by existing delegations, delegate authority to the Chief Property Officer in consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance and the Executive Director of Resources to enter negotiations and acquire property interests as required to fulfil the objectives in the Town Deal Plan.

9.3 Reasons for Decision

- 9.3.1 The Stocksbridge Town Deal provides a significant opportunity to fund significant interventions to address current and future issues and challenges within the Town. The requirement on the Council to cashflow the cost of the process of developing the Full Business cases which will the funding is essential to deliver the Stocksbridge Town Deal.

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 9.4.1 Do nothing – the Council could choose not to progress the work to secure the Towns Deal. This would be a missed opportunity to regenerate one of City's neighbourhoods. Fundamentally this is a once in a generation opportunity to address some key infrastructure problems faced by Stocksbridge with its unique geography and challenges, compounded by the pandemic.

10. EXTENSION OF THE ALTERNATIVE PROVIDER FRAMEWORK

- 10.1 The Executive Director, People Services submitted a report which informed Members that Lifelong Learning was seeking permission put in place a new provider framework for the delivery of alternative provision for the coming academic year, September 2021 – July 2022. The framework will allow Sheffield City Council to procure delivery of alternative provision programmes appropriate for school-aged pupils from organisations with an assessed capability and capacity

to provide.

- Having an AP framework will mitigate any risk to secondary school pupils associated with attending non-regulated provision and help with behaviour intervention. AP providers on the framework will have undertaken due diligence and necessary checks comply with procurement rules and be subject to on-going quality assurance and contract management.
- Providers on the framework will be able to bid to provide provision designed for secondary school aged pupils who would benefit from off-site education to re-engage students with the mainstream, school-based curriculum.
- The creation of a new, 1 year, AP framework agreement will allow the council to undertake review of the delivery of the programme which has been postponed due to the impact the impact of COVID-19.

10.2 RESOLVED: That Cooperative Executive:-

1. Agree the proposal to establish a new AP framework from September 21 to July 22 in accordance with Regulations 74 – 76 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015; and
2. Approve the Council entering into the AP framework agreement with alternative provision providers to enable it to fulfil its legal duties under s19 Education Act 1996.

10.3 Reasons for Decision

- 10.3.1
- A framework will ensure the consistency of quality of Alternative Programme provision for schools, regulates costs and provide a uniform, coherent approach for the city
 - It provides an opportunity to develop and provide appropriate AP programmes to all secondary school pupils who would benefit from it.
 - It provides an opportunity to develop intervention programmes where Alternative Programme providers can support vulnerable pupils' reintegration into a mainstream school-based curriculum and result in better learning outcomes.

10.3.2 An Alternative Provision framework can provide vital data for the city as a whole and individual schools relating to cohort characteristics and needs; the take up of provision; progress tracking of individuals and groups; and achievement of learning outcomes thereby contributing to planning and continuous improvement.

10.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

10.4.1 There is a risk associated with not regulating the use of Alternative Provision in the secondary sector, specifically secondary schools will continue to use providers which have not been subject to prior due diligence and on-going contract management. Pupils will not receive a planned programme with clear learning outcomes.