

Appendix 2

The 'critical aims', 'governance principles', 'how we do business' (ways of working) and 'engagement principles' have been numbered for convenient reference.

The first set of principles presented incorporate a range of potential changes in response to the public and stakeholder feedback received (see Appendix 1).

The principles are then reprinted un an unchanged state, to aid with comparison.

Design Principles – as amended, for consideration

Critical governance ambitions

Our critical governance ambitions are enabled by a set of governance principles. These principles were created to inform the design of the Council's new committee-led governance arrangements. These principles should be reflected in the Council's structures, processes and procedures (as set out in the constitution), and in the decision-making culture of the Council.

- A. Sheffield City Council is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear.
- B. Sheffield City Council is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making and that citizens can see the contributions their local councillors make to decision-making processes.
- C. Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities, stakeholders and partners with the belief and expectation that this will be influential, and improve our decisions and decision-making and partners.
- D. Sheffield City Council has a forward-thinking modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment.
- E. Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance in light of feedback and best practice
- F. Sheffield City Council is committed to local democracy; good democratic principles and practices demonstrably underpin our city governance.

Design Principles

1. A commitment to openness and transparency of formal decision-making must run through our decision-making arrangements structure.
2. Our decision-making arrangements should minimise unnecessary bureaucracy, and implementation of the new committee-led governance model should as far as possible be kept cost-neutral

2.3. Comprehensive forward planning of decisions – being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them.

3.4. Clear, publicly available reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way and which are clear about the way a proposal has been developed and the reasons for a decision being made.

4.5. Mechanisms for holding decision-makers and other parts of the partnership landscape to account should be strengthened in any future decision-making arrangementsstructure – we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.

5.6. Our governance should be underpinned by a commitment to the highest ethical standards as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life.

6.7. Our decision-making arrangementsstructure should be designed in a way that creates channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making.

~~7. Our decision-making structure should be underpinned by effective ways of working with local communities, including through development of the role and use of Local Area Committees, informed by the Big City Conversation and other, ongoing engagement with Sheffielders.~~

~~8. Council officers play an important role in decision-making via delegated authority and, more generally in our local democracy, as public servants. Accountability, however, lies with elected councillors so, in a new governance system, our decision-making arrangements need to reflect this and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers. We are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected councillors. Our decision-making structure must reflect this, and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.~~

8.

9. Our decision-making structurearrangements need to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision-making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.

~~10. The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision-making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. Our decision-making arrangements should increase the connections and safeguard positive relationships with local people, communities and partners, underpinned by effective ways of working in localities (such as Local Area Committees) and by recognition of the role of the VCS, partners and stakeholders in representing key groups, networks and communities, all of whose voices are equally valued. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements should work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision-making processes.~~

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11. Our decision-making structurearrangements must avoid silo working both within and outside of the City Council, and enable a joined up approach to tackling issues which need the involvement of a number of organisations in the city
12. Our decision-making structurearrangements need to have a mechanism for making urgent decisions openly, transparently and effectively engaging elected councillors.
13. Our decision-makinggovernance structurearrangements need to strengthen our ability to work with our partners in a complex local, sub-regional and national policy environment, and enable us to take a lead on key issues facing the city and the citizens of Sheffield.
14. We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements, and build in-measure against these design principles to assess whether it is working
15. We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.
- 15-16. Appropriate democratic checks and balances are in place in the exercise of power, and working together is valued in our partnership working, decision-making and constitutional arrangements (and consensus sought where possible) - to support the best possible democratic decision-making in a diverse city.

How we do Business (Ways of Working)

- 16-17. We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision-making works.
- 17-18. Role of Full Council – should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum – consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.
- 18-19. Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structurearrangements.
- 19-20. We need to build a culture in which political disagreement is handled constructively and where members are supported to develop the listening, debating, chairing and committee-membership skills needed for this to happen.
- 20-21. We must ensure that a commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation. We should renew a commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work.

22. We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to. The influence/impact of engagement with stakeholders, or consultation, will be made clear and documented for all significant decisions.
- 21-23. Inequalities and discrimination can play a significant role in capacities and abilities to participate, to be heard, and to exercise influence. Our governance procedures and practices will actively seek to mitigate the impacts of inequality in support of inclusive governance and decision-making.
- 22-24. We need to make it as easy as possible for people to understand their rights with regard to the council and how engage with us – the starting point for this should be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.
- 23-25. We need to improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole and how partnerships and structures interconnect.
26. We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

Engagement principles (as agreed Governance Committee 27.10.2021)

- 24-27. **Transparency** - we want to provide relevant information that demonstrates our intentions and decision-making to citizens in a way that is accessible and understandable
- 25-28. **Diversity** – We recognise that the city of Sheffield is made up of a broad and diverse group of people encompassing different ethnicities, gender, age, socio-economic backgrounds, values and physical and mental ability. We have a wide range of languages, cultures, digital, literacy and numeracy skills represented across the city and all backgrounds, interests and needs should be considered
- 26-29. **Inclusive participation** – Provide all citizens with clear routes and opportunities to contribute to and influence outcomes that will directly affect their lives. Schedule meetings at times and in places that are convenient for as many people as possible and provide parallel ways for people to take part in a way that suits them.
- 27-30. **Equality** – Encourage open discussion so that no sections of the community are left out and all ideas are treated with respect. Decisions should not be controlled by one particular section of a community.
- 28-31. **Responsiveness** – Listen to views, opinions, concerns, complaints and opportunities and be clear how we will use this insight gathered to inform our decision-making.

Design Principles – as previously agreed (no changes – for comparison)

Critical ambitions

- A. Sheffield City Council is a trusted organisation where decisions are taken in an open and transparent way, and accountability is clear.
 - (principles 1-5, 16)
- B. Sheffield City Council is a council where all councillors are involved in and able to influence decision making.
 - (principles 6-9, 17-19)
- C. Sheffield City Council engages, involves and listens to citizens, communities and partners.
 - (principles 10, 20-22)
- D. Sheffield City Council has a modern and responsive approach to governance which reflects the increasingly complex policy making environment.
 - (principles 11-13, 23)
- E. Sheffield City Council is a reflective council that is committed to continuously improving governance
 - (principles 14, 15, 24).

Governance Principles

- 1. A commitment to openness and transparency must run through our decision-making structure.
- 2. Comprehensive forward planning of decisions – being clear about what decisions we are planning to take, when they will be taken, who will be taking them.
- 3. Clear reports from officers that set out the relevant information in an accessible way, and are clear about the reasons for a decision being made.
- 4. Mechanisms for holding decision-makers and other parts of the partnership landscape to account should be strengthened in any future decision-making structure – we must be held accountable for the decisions that we take, and embrace challenge to ensure we're getting the best outcomes for Sheffield.
- 5. Our governance should be underpinned by a commitment to the highest ethical standards as set out in the Nolan Standards on Public Life.
- 6. Our decision-making structure should be designed in a way that creates channels for all 84 Councillors to be involved in, and influence decision making.
- 7. Our decision-making structure should be underpinned by effective ways of working with local communities, including through development of the role and use of Local Area Committees, informed by the Big City Conversation and other, ongoing engagement with Sheffielders.
- 8. We are a member-led authority, where accountability lies with elected councillors. Our decision-making structure must reflect this, and not inappropriately increase delegations to officers.

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9. Our decision-making structure needs to reflect the practical demands on councillors' time. Need to find a balance between time spent in formal decision-making meetings in the Town Hall against working with and in communities. Time demands shouldn't prohibit people with working/caring commitments from being a Councillor.
10. The issues people care about are often local in nature. Our decision-making structure needs to include channels through which people, communities and partners can work with local councillors about what is important to them. We need to strengthen locality arrangements based on the findings of the Big City Conversation and ensure that these arrangements work effectively alongside, and feed into, citywide decision-making processes.
11. Our decision-making structure must avoid silo working both within and outside of the City Council, and enable a joined up approach to tackling issues which need the involvement of a number of organisations in the city
12. Our decision-making structure needs to have a mechanism for making urgent decisions openly, transparently and effectively engaging elected councillors.
13. Our decision-making structure needs to strengthen our ability to work with our partners in a complex local, sub-regional and national policy environment, and enable us to take a lead on key issues facing the city and the citizens of Sheffield.
14. We need to be clear about what we are trying to achieve through our governance arrangements, and build in measures to assess whether it is working
15. We need to identify a forum that enables us to reflect, on an ongoing basis, on whether our governance systems are working as anticipated, and if changes need to be made.

How we do Business (Ways of Working)

16. We need to take a more creative approach to communication between residents and the Council, including about what decisions are being made and why, what they mean to residents and what they mean for the city. This needs to be supported by effective communication and information about how decision-making works.
17. Role of Full Council – should be reviewed in the light of changes following the referendum – consider how we could make it a more meaningful forum.
18. Ensure that the appropriate support, training and skills development is continuously available for councillors so they can take full advantage of the opportunities under the new structure.
19. We need to build a culture in which political disagreement is handled constructively and where members are supported to develop the listening, debating, chairing and committee-membership skills needed for this to happen.

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20. We must ensure that a commitment to meaningful engagement, involvement and consultation runs through the organisation. We should renew a commitment to our Consultation Principles, and reflect on how the council's Engagement Standards which are currently in development can improve practice throughout our work.
21. We need to constantly demonstrate how engagement activity is shaping decision making, and be honest about the impact it is having, so communities and partners can understand how their views have been responded to.
22. We need to make it as easy as possible for people to engage with us – the starting point for this should be clear, consistent, accessible communication about what the Council is doing, what decisions we are planning to take and how to get involved.
23. We need to improve the information we provide about how decision making happens across the City as a whole and how partnerships and structures interconnect.
24. We need to establish a process of continuous engagement so that Members, partners and citizens can give a view on how the system is working.

Engagement principles (as agreed Governance Committee 27.10.2021)

25. **Transparency** - we want to provide relevant information that demonstrates our intentions and decision-making to citizens in a way that is accessible and understandable
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