

Strategy and Resources Policy Committee

Meeting held 24 January 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 (a) the report to item 13 on the agenda is not available to the public or press because the information contained therein is subject to a Government embargo and (b) the appendix to item 15 on the agenda is not available as it contains exempt information. 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 5, 12 and 19 December 2022 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Clara Cheung attended the meeting and presented a petition: "We request the council to terminate Sheffield's sister city relationships with Anshan and Chengdu in China. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) government has been violating human rights and universal values, and do not adhere to international rules of conduct. From the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, the ongoing Uyghur genocide, the demise of Hong Kong's autonomy, the persistent military threat against Taiwan, to its support of Putin's invasion in Ukraine, the CCP completely displays its totalitarianism nature.

The establishment of the sister city agreement was intended to be a diplomatic strategy to promote economic activities and cultural exchange, based on genuine exchanges for mutual benefits. However, the CCP has manipulated this form of diplomacy to spread its hegemonic propaganda. This has triggered a wave of closures of the Confucius Institutes across Europe, America, and recently a debate on education bill in the UK parliament. Besides, nearly half of the Swedish cities

have already terminated their sister city agreement with China over the past 5 years.

With all these evidences of China spreading totalitarianism, we shudder to continue the “sister city” relationship between Sheffield and Anshan & Chengdu in China. This is a matter of safeguarding human rights and aligning with the values of Sheffield as a City of Sanctuary”.

Response: Sheffield has a history of relationships with other cities in countries across the globe and has formal relationships with at least 13 cities spread around the world, some of which have been in existence for over 70 years. We are currently in the process of reviewing our international relationships. Your petition and any comments you make at today’s meeting will be considered as part of this review.

6. RETIREMENT OF STAFF

6.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report on Council staff retirements.

6.2 **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>		
Kevin Woods	Enforcement Officer - Food	46
<u>People</u>		
Michelle Bennett- Pitts	Senior Business Support Officer	43
Julie Bothamley	Monitoring Officer	20
Janice Hall	Planning and Co-ordination Officer	31
Lorraine Warrilow	Senior Teaching Assistant Level 3, Beighton Nursery and Infant School	23
Nick Williams	Information Systems Consultant	21
<u>Resources</u>		

Brendan Lloyd- Human Resources Manager
Hughes

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(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.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The Committee received a report containing consideration and discussion. The agenda items for this committee, other committees and their work with and for the Committee. Members input to it was invaluable

7.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

1. That the Committee's work programme including the additions and amendments

2. That Members give consideration to the potential addition to the work programme

3. That the referrals from Council (petition) be noted and the proposed resolution

8. CAPITAL APPROVALS - MONTH 8 2022/23

8.1 The Director of Finance and Commercial Services presented a report providing details of proposed changes to the existing Capital Programme as brought forward in Month 08 2022/23.

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

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

(ii) approves the acceptance of grants as detailed in appendix 2.

8.3 Reasons for Decision

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

8.3.2 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.

8.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 8.4.1 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.

9. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORTING 2022

- 9.1 The Director of Policy, Performance and Communications presented a report setting out an overview of the corporate performance framework and provides a corporate performance update concentrating on the six month period from summer 2022. Progress towards key priorities defined as Urgent Performance Challenges in the Our Sheffield - Delivery Plan are reported alongside actions underway for each priority to sustain and improve performance. Members emphasised the need for Policy Committees to consider performance information and data on a regular basis, as appropriate.

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

1. notes the performance update on Sheffield City Council key performance priorities, as set out in the report;
2. agree to continue to receive regular reports providing an overview of performance against the organisation's key priorities, which should describe performance challenges, interventions taken, and the results of changes made; and
3. requests all other policy committees to consider, if issues raised in this performance report should have further scrutiny through the scheduling of time on the appropriate committee work programme

9.3 Reasons for Decision

- 9.3.1 To ensure that Strategy and Resources Policy Committee contributes to the Performance Management process and drives improvement across the organisation

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 9.4.1 There were no appropriate alternatives to consider in the course of the work described and the recommendations that are made.

10. DIRECT SERVICES – CONTRACT PROCUREMENTS

10.1 The Director of Direct Services submitted a report seeking approval to commission service contracts for the following specialist goods and services for Direct Services through 2023-2027:

- Engineering inspection service
- Water supply service
- Vehicle hire service.

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

1. approves the commission of a 4-year service contract with a provider for the delivery of the engineering inspections service, with an estimated value of £480,000, as set out in this report;

2. approves the commission of a 4-year service contract with a provider for the delivery of water supply service, with an estimated value of £6,343,720, as set out in this report; and

3. approves the commission of call-off contracts from a compliant public sector framework for a period of 4 years from the date of this decision, with a total estimated value of all call-off contracts being £1.4m for the delivery of the self-drive hire of vehicles service, as set out in this report

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 Preferred option – to commission the procurement of contracts in the manner described in section 1 of this report. This will enable the Council to continue to provide essential services to manage and maintain our properties and vehicle fleet services. The procurement of the contracts will ensure the Council is operating in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and achieving best value in its procurement of the services.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 Do nothing – this is not an option as the Council has the ongoing requirement and legal responsibility to safely manage equipment within our properties. The option to hire vehicles is required to ensure service delivery by Transport services and central government guidance requires the Council to enter a contract for its water supply.

10.4.2 Self-Deliver - this is not an option; the service has neither the capacity or expertise to deliver these goods and services.

10.4.3 Further extend existing contracts – this is not an option as all available contract extensions have been utilised. As ever, Council must adhere to the Public Contract Regulations (2015) thus further variations (value and duration) are not deemed easily reconcilable with the provisions set out within PCR.

11. **STEP UP TO SOCIAL WORK POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA COHORT 8**

- 11.1 The Interim Director of Children's Services presented a report on the Step Up to Social Work programme. The Programme is a Department for Education (DfE) wholly funded initiative to promote people to change or start their careers in Children and Families social work by funding a 14 month Post graduate degree in social work.

Sheffield City Council is the lead authority for the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Partnership (the Partnership) which consists of 9 local authorities. This programme originally started in 2010 and Sheffield City Council acts as a lead authority for the Partnership and administers the external funding on its behalf.

It is proposed that the Council accepts the £1.9m grant funding from the DfE, becomes the accountable body for such funding and enters into a funding agreement with DfE, for the Step Up to Social Work programme.

It is also proposed that the Council commission for a further two year period of the Step Up to Social Work programme as set out in this report, in particular that the Council will act as commissioner for the Partnership and that provision will be externally provided, and note that will be by Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU).

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

1. Approves the Council becoming the Accountable Body in respect of the grant on behalf of the Yorkshire and Humberside Step up to Social Work Regional Partnership, provided that the funding agreement is not materially different to the DfE's grant funding agreement: terms and conditions, set out on its website;

2. approves the commission for a further two-year period of the Step Up to Social Work programme as set out in this report, in particular that the Council will act as commissioner for the Partnership and that provision will be externally provided, and note that will be by Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU); and

3. delegates authority to the Director of Children's services in consultation with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the Director of Legal Services to take any steps where no existing authority exists to achieve the aims and objectives, as outlined and detailed within this report.

- 11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 11.3.1 The Step Up to Social Work programme is a national initiative which is wholly funded by the Department for Education by way of a grant. This funding includes a bursary payment for each successful student on the degree programme, funding of the University course, funding for training and supervision of each student whilst they are placed in their host authority across the region and administration of funding by the lead authority.

- 11.3.2 The programme has been running since 2010 and has flagship status both regionally and nationally. The Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Partnership is one of the largest of the 22 national partnerships participating in the Step up to

Social Work programme. This initiative has produced over 350 high calibre graduates since its initiation and 99% of these graduates have been successful in gaining employment as social workers in authorities across this region. This initiative has proven to be highly successful in resolving recruitment difficulties in social work in children and families and raising standards in social work education. Research undertaken is proven that the retention rates of Step up to Social work graduates is higher than mainstream graduates.

11.3.3 Sheffield City Council submitted a bid to the DfE on 31st October 2022 for 65 places on behalf of the Yorkshire and Humberside region and notification of success for 55 places has been made by the DfE with a grant agreement due in January 2023. The total amount of funding bid for is £1.9m which is for 55 places across the partnership. Sheffield is the lead authority and acts as the broker for the grant funding with the responsibility of distribution of funding to each authority as directed by the Department of Education and oversees the success of the programme

11.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.4.1 Sheffield City Council has been the lead authority for the Step up to Social Work programme since its inception at a pilot stage in 2010. The Regional Partnership is one of the largest in the country and is highly praised by the DfE for its success. The DfE asks Sheffield City Council for expert guidance and seek our advice for new Partnerships and for knowledge of the degree programme.

11.4.2 Sheffield City Council wishes to continue to act as the lead authority for Step up to Social Work within the Yorkshire and Humberside region as it raises the profile of the authority not only for the workforce across the region but nationally.

11.4.3 Sheffield City Council continues to be the lead authority for the Trailblazer Teaching Partnership for the South Yorkshire region providing expert advice for new and existing Teaching Partnerships. The South Yorkshire Teaching Partnership allows Sheffield City Council to contribute nationally to the future and raising of standards of social work education which includes Step up to Social Work and the Social Work Apprenticeship degree programme.

12. **CONTAINER PARK COMPLETION AND COSTS**

12.1 The Executive Director Operational Services presented a report providing options for decision on the future use of the Fargate Container Park once it has been relocated from its temporary location, in line with the decision made at Strategy and Resources Committee on 12 December 2022, detailed in section 1.15 of that report.

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

1. that the Executive Director for Operational Services be authorised to implement removal of the containers (option 1) from Fargate to a storage location, and utilise the containers for a different purpose, such as, but not limited to, usage by community groups, or to improve facilities in Sheffield's parks or other outdoor

activity centres;

2 that the future use of the containers be reported back to this Committee for approval, following the consideration of community submissions and having assessed opportunities for outdoor facility improvements;

3. that the large screen is retained for future use by the Council; and

4. that the Director of Legal Services in consultation with the Executive Director for Operational Services be authorised, if necessary, to negotiate and agree all legal documentation to implement recommendation 1 and 3.

RESOLVED: that a review of the container park on Fargate project be carried out by Internal Audit, involving the auditing of the end-to-end process from decision through to delivery and highlight lessons for future learning and the governance implications be considered by the Governance Committee. The need for any further review be considered after internal audit and Governance Committee consideration.

(NOTE: (a) The result of the vote on the above resolution in respect of the review of the container park was FOR - 7 Members; AGAINST - 4 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members; (b) an amendment was proposed, seconded and discussed by the Committee “That the final review report be subject to independent external oversight”. This proposed amendment was not passed. The result of the vote on the proposed amendment was FOR - 4 Members; AGAINST - 7 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members).

12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 Storing the containers for a short period while a process is finalised to offer to a community group, or improve outdoor facilities, ensures we can remove the containers in line with the required Future High Street Fund redevelopment timeline.

12.3.2 Interest from several community groups has been indicated. Interest from several council services to reutilise the containers in a different way has also been received. By moving the containers into storage while these expressions of interest are firmed up, it ensures the assets have a long-term use that is beneficial to Sheffield’s communities.

12.3.3 Option one is the least costly of the four options, yet still provides opportunities for improved community facilities from reutilising the containers, rather than the loss of assets through re-sale.

12.3.4 The decision on 12 December 2022 committed to learning from the project to ensure improved delivery in the future. The proposal sets out an option that is appropriate in terms of openness and governance arrangements, while ensuring the containers can be an asset to Sheffield and its residents.

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

12.4.1 Option 2: Move to Homes England development site on Sheaf Street next to Sheffield Station but configure as a single storey building.

In order to mitigate some of the outstanding building costs to complete access to the first floor, namely the fire engineering works and access to the first floor for people who would need to use a lift, the land at the station would allow for a single ground floor design.

Discussions have taken place with Homes England who have indicated they would consider leasing the land to the council for a period of approximately 24 months. Any final commitments have been paused until the outcome of this decision report.

An indicative timeline to ensure adequate feasibility work is completed on the site, prior to any build commencing, and the relevant approvals process that would be required, means that it could be May 2024 before the site was fully operational, impacting on the commercial trading period available. Although this option has been in discussion for several months it has not yet been possible to complete the terms of agreement that would enable the relevant approvals to have taken place to give a longer period of trading.

Although significant costs can be mitigated by providing a single storey building, costs to dismount and reinstall, plus resolve other outstanding remedial issues from the current build, put indicative costs in the region of £315-£375,000. These costs don't include any operating costs for utilities, waste, security etc.

As the indicative timeline is 12 months to develop the new site and with a maximum of 24 months being available, the short period of confirmed operating time would make it highly unlikely that these additional costs could be recouped from a commercial model in the remaining 12 month period following the build.

As any shortfall from the financial model would need to be underwritten by the council, this carries the most significant cost and risk of the options investigated and therefore isn't recommended.

12.4.2 Option 3: Move to a second development site owned by a third party near Sheffield Station.

In early discussions with the third party, they have expressed an interest in developing a container park on a development site.

The site is currently being utilised as storage depot for building works. The site is unavailable while this work is taking place and isn't envisaged to be available until autumn 2023. This means there would be a need to store the containers until the site was available. The site would provide a longer term location of 5 years or more to develop and operate the container park.

However, the containers would need to be stacked in a two story configuration, as they currently are on Fargate. This increases costs to complete outstanding works that haven't been resolved in terms of fire engineering reports, and access to the

first floor for customers who need to use a lift.

A commercial arrangement between the Council and the third party would need to be agreed to understand the true cost and benefit to the council of progressing this site, but initial assumptions indicate that the cost to the council would be less than operating the Homes England site. The expectation is there would be at least £180,000 of new costs to the council. The longer usage period of 5 years or more would improve the opportunities to recover some or all of that cost.

This option provides an opportunity to increase vibrancy, as well as provide a facility to be used by visitors and residents in a high profile and high footfall area of the city, increasing the chances of success. However, the discussions are still at an early stage, and the true cost and benefits can't be known at this point. For that reason this isn't the recommended option.

- 12.4.3 Option 4: Sell the assets. The option to sell the containers would be subject to agreement with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and if this was to be considered further, consultation would take place with SYMCA and relevant approvals sought.

The resale market for the containers is unknown, and highly unlikely to recoup the costs of developing the whole project, particularly as the project hasn't reached completion on the first floor.

Indicative costs to store the containers while negotiations for sale take place are in the region of £55,993. The income for sale is unknown and it is difficult to compare this in the current market as incomplete/single units.

Public grants have been utilised to purchase the containers and utilising the assets for the good of Sheffield's community is a more appropriate way of re-use, rather than sale. For that reason, this option isn't recommended.

13. HOMES UPGRADE GRANT (HUG) 2

- 13.1 The Executive Director Operational Services submitted a report setting out detail of grant funding offer secured by the Council, through the Gov't's Homes Upgrade Grant (HUG) 2 scheme. This funding would be used to deliver energy improvement measures to private sector homes across the city that are off-the-gas-grid, targeting low-income households and thermally poor/ inefficient dwellings (EPC D-G).

This project directly supports Sheffield's strategies and ambitions centred on net zero carbon by 2030, tackling fuel poverty and providing affordable warmth. The associated government funding is time limited. To not access this would be a missed opportunity delivering improvements across the city.

The purpose of this report is therefore to seek approval for the Council becoming the accountable body for HUG 2 grant funding from BEIS and the commissioning of a service provider to deliver the scheme.

During consideration of this item of business, and in order for Members of the Committee to ask questions on Part B of the report, it was:

RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting and the webcast be paused before further discussion takes place on the grounds that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, if those persons were present, there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information as described in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

The meeting was re-opened to the public and press, and the webcast was recommenced, prior to the decision being taken by the Committee.

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

1. approves the Council becoming the accountable body in respect of the HUG 2 scheme; and

2. approves the commissioning of a service provider to deliver the HUG 2 scheme

13.3 **Reasons for Decision**

The recommendations as set out in the report will enable the Council to deliver improved energy efficiency, more affordable warmth, and carbon reduction measures to off-gas homes in the private housing sector across the next two years. The HUG 2 project provides an excellent opportunity to retrofit some of the least efficient stock across the city and will contribute towards measurable changes and improvements towards the city's net zero carbon 2030 ambitions.

13.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

The alternative is not to accept the funding. The city would not benefit from the funding and homes will miss out on important energy improvement measures, contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions and more affordable warmth

14. **FAMILY HUB & START FOR LIFE PROGRAMME**

14.1 **RESOLVED:** That the public and press be excluded from the meeting and the webcast be paused before further discussion takes place on the grounds that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, if those persons were present, there would be a disclosure of embargoed information containing confidential information under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

It was agreed that consideration of this item be deferred to the Extraordinary Strategy and Resources Policy Committee to be held in the week beginning 6 February 2023.

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