

Central Local Area Committee

Meeting held 3 October 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Brian Holmshaw (Chair), Maleiki Haybe (Deputy Chair), Angela Argenzio, Tom Hunt, Douglas Johnson, Laura McClean, Henry Nottage and Martin Phipps

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Christine Gilligan Kubo, Bernard Little, Toby Mallinson and Ruth Mersereau.

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 There were no declarations of interest.

4. CENTRAL LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE SPEND REPORT

4.1 Adeel Zahman, Central Local Area Committee Manager, gave a report to the Committee.

4.2 Local Area Committees (LACs) were established by Full Council in May 2021. Their Terms of Reference are set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution and include:

- To agree a Community Plan setting priorities for the area of the committee, monitor delivery of that plan and keep it under review; and
- To make decisions relating to funding as delegated from time to time by the Council to fit with the priorities set out in the Community Plan and following engagement with the community.

4.3 The Central LAC Budget Report 2023-24 :

- Sets out details of the spend in respect of the initial budget of £100,000 for 2022/23 that has been authorised by the Community Services Manager, in consultation with the LAC Chair and Committee in accordance with the delegation granted in September 2021; and
- Describes funding allocated to the LAC for 2023/24 and sets out

proposals for its allocation and expenditure for 2023/24 in line with the Central LAC Community Plan.

4.4 Mr Zahman advised that further information relating the funding allocation for the Cost of Living crisis would be brought to the next meeting of the Central Local Area Committee, due to take place in November 2023.

4.5 **RESOLVED:** That the Central Local Area Committee:-

(a) Notes the committed spend from 2022/23 as detailed in the report; and

(b) Agrees the use of the 2023/24 LAC budget of £25,000 per ward as described in the report against the Central LAC Community Plan including the underspend from 2022/23.

4.6 **Reasons For Decision**

The Central LAC is asked to approve the broad allocation of funding under the priority headings identified to assist its ability to monitor its budget, and to authorise the Community Services Manager in consultation with the LAC Chair and Committee to approve expenditure above the current delegated authority in certain circumstances so that delivery of the Community Plan is not delayed.

4.7 **Alternative Considered And Rejected**

This report is in line with the previous decision of September 2021 regarding expenditure below £5000, the Central Community Plan agreed on March 2022.

5. OUR JOURNEY - KHALID AND AHMED

5.1 Ahmed Mohamed and Khalid Ismail, founders of Infinite Skills, were in attendance for this item.

5.1 Ahmed Mohamed gave a presentation on the journey he had taken with Khalid Ismail in establishing Infinite Skills. His role within Infinite Skills was in education management and teaching, and Mr Ismail was involved in curriculum design and teaching. He explained that he had fled the Somali Civil War in the 1990's, and whilst settling in Pitsmoor had faced language and cultural barriers. He had also experienced racism, and some of his peers had been drawn into crime, but he then discovered education which he felt had been the key to liberation from these disadvantages. He outlined Mr Ismail's background, and explained that he had faced similar barriers, which had led to them becoming long term friends. Together they had set up Infinite Skills as a non-profit organisation, as a way of celebrating their success and giving something back to the community. Their aim was to support people from disadvantaged backgrounds and communities, and to share a vision of empowerment by creating a platform for change. They hoped that by sharing their lived experiences, they could help individuals overcome barriers, strengthen communities, foster resilience and growth, and encourage an ecosystem of recruiting from within. He outlined the services offered by Infinite Skills, which included a focus on health and wellbeing, and he highlighted a few

successful case studies.

- 5.2 The Chair thanked Mr Mohamed and Mr Ismail for attending the meeting and sharing their interesting experiences.

6. SHEFFIELD RACE EQUALITY COMMISSION UPDATE

- 6.1 The Committee received a presentation from Homaira Ibrahim, Equalities and Engagement Officer.

6.2 Ms Ibrahim gave a brief overview of the Race Equality Commission recommendations and an update on the whole-city commitment. She noted that Sheffield was currently one of the most culturally diverse cities in the UK, with roughly 120 languages spoken, and added that it was important for Sheffield organisations to work with communities in order to better understand and serve their changing needs. She explained that central Sheffield had a diverse population in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and employment, with many different languages, cultures, religions and beliefs, and that there was a need to share good practice, value everyone as individuals and work together to adopt a model of cultural humility. Following the murder of George Floyd in the USA in 2020, there had been a global spotlight on racism across the world. The Race Equality Commission was subsequently commissioned in 2021, and was a city-wide commission affecting all organisations across Sheffield. It had an independent Chair and 24 Commissioners, and had heard written and oral evidence of lived experiences of racial disparities across Sheffield. Following this, the Commission had made recommendations and prioritised six areas of focus: Education, Business and Employment, Health, Civic Life and Communities, Crime and Justice, and Sport and Culture. The evidence had found Sheffield to be a racist city; change was needed, and partners across the city would be held accountable through the Legacy Group, which had the responsibility of embedding practice systemically across Sheffield, involving leaders, staff and communities. Ms Ibrahim outlined the seven recommendations of the Race Equality Commission, and how these were aimed at all organisations across Sheffield in order to get a holistic viewpoint and encourage joint working. As part of the Legacy Group, the Sheffield City Partnership Board, community, and anchor institutions were working together in the form of a Task and Finish Group, in order to achieve a working and sustainable model which was planned go out to consultation in November 2023, and be operational by December 2023.

- 6.3 Councillor Brian Holmes, Chair of the Committee, advised that the seven themes referred to by Ms Ibrahim would be discussed in more detail during the breakout sessions at item 9.

7. ROOTS AND FUTURES / WELCOMING CULTURES PRESENTATION

- 7.1 Lizzy Craig-Atkins, Lecturer in Human Osteology at the University of Sheffield and Terezia Rostas, Founder of Care for Young People's Future were in attendance for this item.

- 7.2 Lizzy Craig-Atkins explained that two Sheffield projects had collaborated to explore culture and heritage stories; these were 'Roots and Futures' and 'Welcoming Cultures'. Roots and Futures was a collaborative research project that explored stories and histories with communities across the city, seeking to understand people's needs and priorities for input into Sheffield's heritage strategy and to better reflect what people's needs. A key element was to understand people's passions and enthusiasms. They had talked to groups, collected data and reflected on people's views. Some funding had been received from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and this had funded work with community partners, including SADACCA, Zest Centre, Care for Young Peoples Future, to try and find ways of connecting communities needs and desires into a heritage policy. It was hoped to implement change and see a difference in communities, with a focus on delivering policy and strategy that was already in place. The focus was also on recommendation five of the Race Equality Commission. Their work fed back into communities to share voices, feed into policy and produce toolkits on how to work together more effectively. She outlined the key actions that aimed to grow the project in the future; create space for more diverse voices, enhance belonging and visibility, build on strong partnerships, share a successful consultation approach and use academic funding for the benefit of Sheffield's underserved communities.
- 7.3 Terezia Rostas explained that Care for Young People's Futures (CYPF) was an organisation that looked at non-formal education and aimed to empower underserved communities to speak out. She referred to her culture and background and how she believed freedom of choice for her community to be important. She added that minoritised communities often felt that their heritage was misunderstood in official cultural heritage institutions, such as museums, festivals and social media, and that it was often delivered by academic leaders rather than communities that had actual lived experiences. She noted that there was a lack of resources available to support the recognition of lived experiences and cultural knowledge held within communities, and that some communities felt under-represented, mis-represented and under-valued in institutions and education across Sheffield. Lottery Funding had provided investment into training, and along with support from the Roots and Futures team, had led to the Welcoming Cultures project. She explained that the main areas of focus were creating a strong partnership with institutions and communities, developing a multi-cultural museum, and increasing staff workforce in the community. On a personal level, she believed that Sheffield would feel like an anti-racist city once she felt comfortable to wear traditional Roma clothing and still be treated equally. She referred to those that had made her feel welcome within Sheffield, and noted that she had been given opportunities, unlike previous generations of her family. However she still felt that that the knowledge and experience from her heritage was under-valued. She added that CYPF aimed to have a positive impact on communities and partners, by increasing the visibility of voices from Roma backgrounds, collaborating with partners, and helping to adapt existing policies to better accommodate the needs of the Roma community.
- 7.4 The Chair thanked Lizzy Craig-Atkins and Terezia Rostas for attending the meeting.

8. INTERACTIVE BREAKOUT DISCUSSIONS

- 8.1 The Committee went into a breakout session, during which the members of the public in attendance were given the opportunity to join an engagement session around the recommendations of the Race Equality Commission findings.

9. FEEDBACK FROM BREAKOUT SESSION

- 9.1 Following the breakout session, one person from each group was asked to feedback their groups thoughts. A summary of the feedback presented was as follows:

Healthy Communities

- Long term plans rather than short term
- What is going to happen with the feedback?
- More green spaces were needed, or needed to be better used
- The design of green spaces was important, especially within the central area, to encourage people to be active and take ownership of the spaces around them
- Access to green spaces for all communities

Education

- Role models that were relatable and represented young peoples' aspirations were important
- Links to universities and businesses, and an understanding of barriers in the community when applying to universities or apprenticeships
- Provide the necessary support for preparing CV's and university/job applications
- More accessibility and support into employment and education for those with criminal records
- Need to connect children and young people to the services provided by the Council

Safer Communities

- It was important to have a sense of belonging within communities
- A lack of communication between South Yorkshire Police and Sheffield City Council and not working effectively together
- A sense of familiarity within an area helps to make people feel safer. Less of a sense of belonging when people move to a new area
- Different housing providers operated differently within communities, and people didn't always know who to contact
- People using communities as 'cut-throughs'
- How we can positively engage communities to make a difference,

- particularly around engaging young people in schools
- Education around 'stop and search' and other police powers
- Two-way communication between police and local people

Business, Employment and Skills

- More support was needed for people arriving into the city
- Support was needed to help young people from different backgrounds and communities when applying for apprenticeships, and to help them understand different businesses

Our Communities

- When asked what they love about where they live, participants noted community, ISRAAC Centre, neighbours, gardens, friendly people and festivals
- Suggested improvements for the local area included dealing with Council backlogs and not just short-term fixes, poorer areas being neglected, ignoring litter
- Concerns could be addressed by public ownership of priorities, investing in what works in the area, better communication between the Council and residents to help resolve issues, an understanding of investment opportunities and bringing Council services together

Culture

- Sharing stories of culture, heritage and history was important
- Culture gave people a sense of belonging and structure
- Culture is an umbrella term that covers a wide range of activities, such as sport, heritage and arts, that people can choose to take part in, and can improve the quality of their lives. Access to activities is not equal and the reasons for this needs to be understood and addressed systematically across the city
- This is my culture and I don't want someone else dictating my life story
- Culture is about birth right and your community and it is important to preserve. Culture should not be 'watered down'. The system is set up to deny us our culture, often from a young age. We need to let people hold onto their culture while we learn to integrate

City Goals

- Important to ensure we reach out to as many groups across the city as possible
- Importance of green assets and recognising the inequalities around access to our green assets.
- Thinking about how we reduce disparities between communities within the City Goals process
- Transport and mobility for all, so that everyone can get around city, and reducing disparities in terms of active travel

- 9.2 Councillor Brian Holmes, Chair of the Committee, thanked participants for sharing their views and stories, and advised that all feedback would be noted, shared and followed up with the appropriate services and partner organisations.

10. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

- 10.1 The Committee received the following questions, from members of the public who were present at the meeting to ask their questions: -

(a) Vicky Seddon

I am a local resident and part of a campaign group called Sheffield for Democracy. We tried to raise issues around voting systems and how our local and national government worked, and peoples dissatisfactions around how their voices were not heard and taken into account. We would like to talk to different community groups about the work we do and how we can work with you. In particular, if there are specific issues that a community feels around democracy, we would like to talk to you about it and find some way of working with you on it. Please get in touch with us if you are interested. It has been lovely to come here and hear from different communities and we would like to have better contact with you.

The Chair agreed that the meeting had been positive, vibrant and informative.

(b) Public questioner 2

We have spoken about how we need to change education and decolonise the education system to ensure people have a sense of belonging and identity within the city. To do that schools need a lot of funding, time and support with these changes. Does the Council currently have plans to support schools in making these decolonising changes, not just to the history but the entire school framework, and also find funding to support the fantastic learning opportunities that we have in Sheffield such as the Migration Matters Festival

Adeel Zahman, Central Local Area Committee Manager, advised that the Strategic Director of Children's Service would be contacted for a full response that would then be published, and that a wider conversation with other education providers might be appropriate.

11. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 11.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 July, 2023 were approved as a correct record.

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