

**Appendix A**

**Public Petitions and Questions –Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee– 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

**N.B** - Please note that a period of up to 30 minutes shall be allocated at meetings of Policy Committees and other appropriate bodies for members of the public to present ordinary petitions or to ask questions of Members and officers present.

**Petitions** Received from Members of the Public x 0

	<b>Petitions - Name, petition text</b>	Response:
1		

**Questions** Received from Members of the Public x 3

	<b>Question from Name, question</b>	Response
1.	<p>Robin Hughes</p> <p>Item 8 of today's agenda is the report of the Interim Head of Regeneration, which includes an update on the Castlegate scheme.</p> <p>Given the revelation that the Council, having undertaken to pause the demolition of the Market Tavern did for reasons yet to be determined break that undertaking and proceed to demolish this valued and distinctive heritage asset, will members commit to pursue immediately the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note members' regret at the breaking of this undertaking and the lack of transparency surrounding it, and amend the report to include this incident and the need for its investigation;</li> <li>• Identify both the immediate causes of the incident and the consequences of long-term neglect, and also the policies and the practices that led to this building being placed at risk;</li> <li>• Look in detail at the decision to demolish in late November 2023, the failure to look sufficiently closely at events in the immediate aftermath of the premature restart of demolition on</li> </ul>	<p>Thank you for the question over the Market Tavern.</p> <p>I would like to start by reiterating my comments in the press release that was issued last Tuesday.</p> <p>The demolition of the market Tavern wasn't a decision we took lightly, however, given the condition of the building I'm advised we were left with no choice.</p> <p>As an organisation transparency is vital to us and we shared an update last week with our residents and stakeholders as soon as the new information came to light. Throughout the process I have been keen that partners were kept fully informed. I am disappointed that this does not now appear to have been the case and people have been provided with inaccurate information. As you know, we have written to partners to apologise and have launched an internal investigation to understand exactly what went wrong. The outcomes of that will be made public.</p> <p>An investigation has commenced this week to understand the events of the 10th of January and why inaccurate information was shared over this matter. I can confirm that this is being undertaken by someone independently of the project and outside of the</p>

	<p>10th January 2024, and whether any consideration as to the development prospects of the site played any part in these;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify all heritage assets in the Council’s estate at similar risk of deterioration and create a plan to prevent or reverse this;</li> <li>• Update the Land and Property Plan and the Essential Maintenance Plan to recognise explicitly the strategic value of the historic environment and to give greater priority to its care and conservation.</li> </ul> <p>Moreover, will members commit to the investigation being led externally to the Regeneration and Development portfolio, and proactively seeking the input of stakeholders, both in establishing the facts and in helping to identify the areas of Council endeavour that must change.</p> <p>The reference in the report to the work on Conservation Area status for Castlegate is welcomed. Will members direct that the views of local amenity societies and other experts are to be sought and included in both the appraisal document and in the management plan prior to wider public consultation.</p>	<p>Regeneration and Development team. It is the aim that this initial investigation will be concluded by the end of the month. Next steps will be informed by the outcome of the investigation, and it is important that we don’t prejudge that. An outcome of the investigation will be shared.</p> <p>I am committed to ensuring that we learn from this and the position we found ourselves in with the condition of the Market Tavern.</p> <p>Work has now started on collating details on all the status of all heritage assets from right across the Councils property estate.</p> <p>This will be wide ranging, and these buildings will cross various committees.</p> <p>I will liaise with my colleagues across the respective committee’s that have responsibility for the management of the Councils property assets, alongside Cllr Janet Ridler, the Councils Heritage champion.</p> <p>It is right that we are having this thorough assessment. This work is not being taken in isolation and will feed into the Council’s ongoing Community Building Review and the forthcoming Heritage Strategy - to ensure a joined-up approach.</p> <p>As we plot a way forward for the management of heritage buildings, we are committed to ensuring we consult and include the involvement of stakeholders in this process.</p> <p>And Cllr Janet Ridler, the Heritage Champion, will have a crucial role to play within this.</p> <p>I am pleased to note that you welcome re introducing the work on Conservation Area status for Castlegate and through the Castlegate Area Board I will ensure that the views of stakeholders are sought as part this process, prior to wider public consultation.</p>
2.	Roy Morris	

Would it be a positive development to publicise the use made of traffic infringement charges?

More detail:

- What use is made currently of funds collected?
- Is there a potential benefit in giving a higher profile to these funds and their use?
- Would such publicity facilitate the development and public acceptance of measures to move towards net zero?

**Thank you for your question, which I understand that you also submitted to the Waste and Street Scene Committee this morning. My answer is therefore the same as that offered by colleagues in that committee.**

In terms of traffic infringement charges, the council issues Penalty Charge Notices for civil contraventions of Parking, Bus Lane and Clean Air Zone restrictions. The police also issue fines for some parking, bus lane and other traffic related contraventions, but the council do not derive any income from those fines.

The Parking and Bus Lane Penalty Charge Notices issued by the council contribute towards the overall annual parking account. The Council publishes the account annually on its website. The use of the parking account is regulated by Section 55 (4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Civil Enforcement of Road Traffic Contraventions (Approved Devices, Charging Guidelines and General Provisions) (England) Regulations 2022. These regulations set out the purposes for which income beyond the costs of running the parking service can be used: *(Note: haven't included making good general fund in bullet point below, because the statement about "cost of running the parking service" capture that element in the sentence prior to this.)*

- Provision and maintenance of off-street parking (parking account only)
- Funding public transport
- Highway and road improvements
- purposes of environmental improvement

In previous years surpluses have been spent on highway maintenance.

The Penalty Charge Notices for the Clean Air Zone are regulated by Part III and Schedule 12 of the Transport Act 2000, Parts 2 and 6 of The Road User Charging Schemes (Penalty Charges, Adjudication and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013. In the event that net proceeds are generated from the Scheme over the opening ten year period, these proceeds would be applied to facilitate the achievement of relevant local transport policies in Sheffield's Transport Strategy and the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy in accordance with the following high level spending objectives:

- supporting the delivery of the ambitions of the Scheme and promoting cleaner air;

		<p>- supporting active travel and public transport use;          - supporting zero emission and sustainable infrastructure and actions in and around the city to improve air quality</p> <p>A report to the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy committee on the 14 February 2024 will recommend endorsing the proposal to for a <b>Clean Air Investment Fund</b> which will commit an initial £1m of CAZ surplus income, when this is generated, to accelerate air quality improvement initiatives around schools and improve air quality for children traveling to school.</p> <p>I cannot speak on behalf of Waste and Street Scene Committee, but for our Committee I do believe that visible, positive examples of Clean Air and Climate Action is in incredibly important.</p> <p>Actions such as more school streets and green walls, for example, give visible examples to residents as to the benefits of the CAZ and what any additional income from this is being spent on. The Clean Air Zone has always been about improving the air we breathe, and I think we as a council do need to be clear on the benefits the CAZ will bring, and how this money will be spent to the benefit of Sheffield residents.</p> <p>This is the social contract we must make with Sheffield residents, and it is only right that people be well aware as to what money is being spent on to bring about a positive environment and clear air</p> <p>In terms of publicising the use of any surplus income, council officers brought a public report on the annual parking account to the Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee in December, with detail on the work undertaken by Parking Services to manage traffic and support bus priority measures. The report to Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee on CAZ income will be accompanied by a press release and ongoing communications plan relating to the clean air implementation plan.</p> <p>The council is keen to promote net zero and measures to increase public transport patronage are an essential strand to improving overall carbon emissions in the city.</p>
3.	Nigel Slack	Thank you for the question over the Market Tavern.

The Council's continuing failures in protecting Heritage Assets has claimed another victim with the **suspicious and precipitous demolition of the Market Tavern in Castlegate**. Council claim this was 'in error' but it is difficult to believe that statement when the Director of Regeneration and Development was supposed to be in contact with the heritage organisation SAVE Britain's Heritage but appears to have been unaware of the instruction given to contractors to continue the demolition.

The demolition, allegedly paused on January 9<sup>th</sup> recommenced on the morning of 10<sup>th</sup> January, and allegedly the Director either didn't know or simply failed to pass that on the Save Britain's Heritage on the evening of January 10<sup>th</sup>

**Now Then Magazine reports;**

*"New information has since come to light which shows the demolition company were instructed in error at 11:53am to continue with demolition. As a result of this order, our understanding is the turrets fell because of the recommenced demolition works."*

The background to this egregious act must be clarified and disciplinary action must be considered against those responsible, if only to prevent this type of 'error' happening again and to begin to regain the public and heritage sector's, trust in addressing one of the key remarks of the Lowcock Report, that;

**Sheffield Council had "repeatedly said things that were economical with the truth, misleading and, in some cases, were ultimately exposed as dishonest."**

To make good on their claim to be **open, honest & transparent** I would ask the Council to answer the following;

As I stated in my response to the earlier question on this matter.

The demolition of the market Tavern wasn't a decision we took lightly, however, given the condition of the building I'm advised we were left with no choice.

As an organisation transparency is vital to us and we shared an update last week with our residents and stakeholders as soon as the new information came to light. Throughout the process I have been keen that partners were kept fully informed. I am disappointed that this does not now appear to have been the case and people have been provided with some inaccurate information. We have written to partners to apologise and have launched an internal investigation to understand exactly what went wrong.

The items you raise under points 1, 2 and 3 of your question will be subject to the investigation that has commenced this week to understand the events of the 10th of January and why inaccurate information was shared over this matter.

The investigation that has commenced is an internal investigation and is being conducted by someone independently of the project. It is the aim that this initial investigation will be concluded by the end of the month. Next steps will be informed by the outcome of the investigation, and it is important that we don't prejudge that. An outcome of the investigation will be shared.

1. Which department issued the instruction to the contractors to recommence demolition before the noon deadline on the 10<sup>th</sup> January?
2. What was the position of the officer that took this decision and did they have the 'delegated authority' to do so? If so from which Policy Committee was this derived?
3. Which Councillors, if any, were aware of the decision to recommence the demolition before the noon deadline? If none were aware, why not?
4. Will the Council's internal investigation be outside the normal committee structure to prevent bias (Ad Hoc committees can be set up for these purposes, I believe) and will meetings of the investigation be in public with full minutes available?
5. Will any investigation admit questions and evidence from external sources? for instance members of the public and relevant heritage organisations?