

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – 2ND FEBRUARY 2022

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE MEETING

1. DEBATE ON A PETITION OPPOSING PLANS TO EXTEND BUS LANE OPERATION TIMES, REMOVE PARKING AND CREATE A RED ROUTE ON ECCLESALL ROAD AND ABBEYDALE ROAD

RESOLVED: That this Council refers the petition to the Co-operative Executive for consideration.

2. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2022/23

RESOLVED: That:-

- (a) the HRA Business Plan report for 2022/23 is approved;
- (b) the HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23, as set out in the financial appendix to the report, is approved;
- (c) rents for council dwellings are increased by 4.1% from April 2022 in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard;
- (d) rents for temporary accommodation are increased by 4.1% for 2022/23;
- (e) garage rents for garage plots and garage sites are increased by 4.1% from April 2022;
- (f) the community heating kWh unit charge is increased from 3.04 pence to 5.69 pence from April 2022, and the standing charge is also increased from £4.80 to £4.90 per week from April 2022;
- (g) the sheltered housing charge is increased by 3.1% for 2022/23;
- (h) the burglar alarm charge is increased by 3.1% for 2022/23;
- (i) the furnished accommodation charge is increased by 3.1% for 2022/23;
- (j) this Council welcomes the 5 year investment programme commitment to bringing all council homes up to EPC level C, but commits to develop, by Spring 2022, a 'road map' to show how we not only can get our homes to EPC C, as quickly as

possible, but for a deliverable vision and timetable by which we can get to net zero for the Council's housing stock;

- (k) this Council believes that this road map needs to encompass a forward thinking approach, open to new ideas and technologies, in how to deliver this – looking at everything from retrofitting, heat pumps, insulated rooftops with solar panels – to name just a few examples;
- (l) this Council believes that Energiesprong may have a part to play within this, but so too may other organisations, and that once a robust roadmap has been devised we can really engage with the market to ensure deliverability and to rise to the challenges successfully;
- (m) this Council believes that, ultimately, council tenants need to be consulted on any changes and that action can only be undertaken with their backing; and
- (n) this Council requests that the Director of Housing investigate the Energiesprong model as an approach to address the retrofit of our housing stock, ascertain if similar models exist and report back within the next 6 months to the Co-operative Executive (or an appropriate Committee under the committee system).

3. SHEFFIELD (LOCAL) PLAN SPATIAL OPTIONS

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) agrees with the advice provided by the Climate Change, Economy and Development Transitional Committee and recommends Option 3 as the preferred overall spatial option that should be taken forward in the Publication (Pre-Submission) Draft Sheffield Plan;
- (b) commends the cross-party work of the Climate Change, Economy and Development Transitional Committee for their work on the Local Plan Spatial Options, and notes the general consensus supporting the Administration's approach;
- (c) notes that under the national legislation imposed on councils by government, many areas across the country have been forced to build on green belt over recent years, but that due to the importance of protecting green spaces, in 2019/20 the Council undertook detailed work and widespread public consultation to look at how the development of new homes in central Sheffield could be maximised;
- (d) believes that the approach laid out by the previous Administration would have delivered the housing requirement of 40,000 new homes, as determined by government at the time;

- (e) regrets that despite this substantial consultation with Sheffield citizens, the current Government took the decision in December 2020 to increase Sheffield's housing target by 35%;
- (f) believes that this decision was not even remotely evidence based, and that this number is far too high and that Sheffield, like many northern areas, saw such a high uplift in housing target as a means to protect the green belt in the South of England – the majority of which falls within Conservative-led local authority areas;
- (g) believes that this was a blatant disregard for the people of Sheffield, with the Government putting different rules to our city, than that of the south of England, and notes that this uplift has caused further delay to the process of determining Sheffield's Local Plan;
- (h) notes that the previous, and current, Administration has repeatedly challenged the Government on the high housing target and, whilst accepting that we must deliver a local plan for the city, believes that what is finally delivered must work in the interests of the Sheffield;
- (i) believes that, on balance, Option 3 is the right spatial approach for Sheffield, which would utilise brownfield sites throughout the city, as well as delivering homes in sustainable and connected places;
- (j) notes the support for Option 3 from Campaign To Protect Rural England (Peak District and South Yorkshire) in their media statement (12 January 2022) "The re-use of a very small number of derelict brownfield sites in the Green Belt, in sustainable locations at the edge of the urban area (as outlined in the Council's 'Option 3') may be a way forward that helps meet Sheffield's realistic housing needs rather than the Government's target";
- (k) believes that the Local Plan is about much more than housing alone – and that the strategy needs to be rooted in how new housing fits in with communities, infrastructure development, connectivity, green spaces and ecology, and lead to prosperous, well-connected, sustainable communities, as well as bringing economic growth (more jobs and higher wages) and that the Local Plan must be flexible enough to deliver on these aims and to link intrinsically with other council strategies; and
- (l) believes a Local Plan should:-
 - (i) recognise that some urban green sites are of higher ecological and social value than some Greenbelt sites;
 - (ii) aim to green the Greenbelt further;
 - (iii) by accepting very small amounts of development in the Greenbelt, provide a greater range of housing, such as family accommodation, and improve public transport and services that will benefit communities and tackle rural poverty; and that these sites should be decided using a robust and strict Site Selection Criteria model; and

- (iv) ensure areas designated as brownfield within, surrounded by or close to Green Belt land are carefully assessed as to their current status, and where rewilding has taken place, they should be re-designated as greenfield, so as to enhance the Greenbelt.

4. GETTING ON THE ROAD TO BUS FRANCHISING

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) notes that the previous Administration has consistently, and repeatedly, called for the South Yorkshire Mayor to start the process of bus franchising;
- (b) notes with disappointment that, despite the apparent cross-party support for it over many years, the Labour-controlled Combined Authority has not yet taken any real steps towards bus franchising;
- (c) welcomes the announcement in January 2022 from South Yorkshire Mayor, Dan Jarvis, that the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) would consider whether Franchising should be considered in further detail;
- (d) notes that a franchising model would give South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) the powers to set routes, timetables and fares - which are then managed through tenders to operators - but that all of the costs and risks associated with service delivery would rest with SYMCA under this option;
- (e) believes, therefore, that as part of this process the financial implications must be clarified as to what impact this will have on the Council's finances and on the city's taxpayers, and that SYMCA should conduct a Franchising Scheme Assessment (FSA) to consider the legal, financial, and operational case for moving away from a commercial bus network to a Franchised network;
- (f) notes that the MCA have estimated that developing a Franchising Scheme Assessment could cost around £4-5 million and take 3-4 years to complete;
- (g) believes, therefore, that this decision should not be taken lightly due to the cost impacts but that, ultimately, Sheffield's transport offer is simply not good enough and radical action is required to get the service to where it should be for Sheffield; and
- (h) notes that Franchising is no panacea to the problem of poor 'public' transport, with sustained government underfunding and privatisation the root problem, but that franchising may provide a crucial step in the right direction of reform.

5. 15-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS FOR SHEFFIELD

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) acknowledges and welcomes the diverse range of neighbourhoods and settlements across the Sheffield area, believes that the Covid pandemic has served to remind us all of the range of parks, local shops and leisure facilities available in Sheffield, but recognises that access to these services is often limited by poor mobility, distance, and limited transport options;
- (b) welcomes the latest update to the Highway Code that introduces a 'hierarchy of road users', giving more responsibility to operators of motor vehicles to reduce danger towards more vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists, and includes updates and clarifications such as giving pedestrians greater priority at crossings and junctions;
- (c) believes that traditional zoning of land uses has in many cases led to limited access to services and local amenities by active travel, mass transit or mobility aids;
- (d) therefore believes that as a Council we should work towards the concept of '15 minute neighbourhoods', reducing time and distance to access services; meaning residents should have within a 15-minute journey via foot, cycle or other mobility aid from their home: living, working, commerce, healthcare, education, entertainment, parks and green spaces;
- (e) notes that 15-minute neighbourhoods concept would also support regeneration of district centres and local and independent businesses, something this Council wishes to see across Sheffield;
- (f) believes that the Council's recently established Local Area Committees provide a great way to work to establish 15-minute neighbourhoods, designed by local communities from the bottom up and believes that Local Area Committees need to be empowered to identify where zoning rules can be changed to make work and leisure sites more accessible to local residents;
- (g) believes the creation of vibrant district centres and neighbourhoods would be supported by greater local retention of the neighbourhood portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- (h) notes the EU Objective One investment in 2007 to break up the Parson Cross estate and create hubs around community facilities and shopping centres, which could have led to the creation of 15-minute neighbourhoods, and believes regretfully that the previous Administration did not have the vision to use CIL to enhance the local centres, improve active travel and reduce car dependency;

- (i) believes that the building of up to 2,500 houses in Attercliffe, using the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order powers if necessary, should be used as an example of how to deliver 15-minute neighbourhoods;
- (j) believes that 15-minute neighbourhoods will also benefit our environment, reducing the reliance on cars for many residents, helping Sheffield reach its goal of being carbon neutral by 2030, alongside the switch to electric vehicles and the decarbonisation of the electricity supply;
- (k) believes that the principles behind 15-minute neighbourhoods could also be adapted to benefit our rural communities by improving access to basic services and amenities;
- (l) acknowledges some of our city's current policies are a good step towards this, such as the low traffic neighbourhoods where appropriate, but believes that the Council needs to do more to encourage short journeys being made by foot, bicycle, or mobility aids such as wheelchairs and mobility scooters;
- (m) believes we must also recognise that there are many physical and psychological barriers to travel that encourage car dependency, such as lack of pedestrian crossings and dropped kerbs and a lack of joined-up segregated cycle routes, and that we must tackle issues such as these so many more people can easily access essential services and amenities safely and conveniently;
- (n) recognises that active travel options are not always possible for many people with mobility impairments and that provision for public transport and private vehicles is essential;
- (o) notes Metro Mayor Dan Jarvis's calls to "transform our infrastructure for cycling and walking, and put in place the building blocks for compact and liveable 15-minute neighbourhoods" and therefore calls on him and his successor to act on this and work with the City Council to make 15-minute neighbourhoods a reality across our area;
- (p) notes that delivering 15-minute neighbourhoods is not something new for the Council, and that this is something the Co-operative Administration is committed to;
- (q) notes the premise of the Connecting Sheffield Programme is to provide a step change in the ability for people to feel comfortable using active travel, which directly ties into the 15-minute neighbourhood proposals whereby the barriers to use are removed, either through design or behavioural change;
- (r) notes, in addition, the use of Active Neighbourhoods and 20mph zones, policies developed under the previous Administration, are a way to further enhance localised areas by reduced through traffic and prioritising active trips within, helping to create walkable and accessible communities that connect everyday social amenities;
- (s) notes that the Co-operative Administration is continuing 'school streets' and other behavioural change programmes which help the public to understand how

- accessible locations are, and believes this is fundamental to achieving the objectives of a 15-minute neighbourhood;
- (t) believes that the 15-minute neighbourhood theory was effectively incorporated into the current Transport Strategy, developed by the previous Administration, though it was not specifically called 15-minute neighbourhoods, the idea behind the strategy was of creating communities that do not rely on the private car, and integrated with the right services, in the right location with the right connections;
 - (u) notes, therefore, that this is all part of planning policy, as well as more broader transport planning and, therefore, at the forefront of future policy development;
 - (v) notes that the key principles of 15-minute neighbourhoods are embedded in the Local Plan – to support connected neighbourhoods where people can meet their everyday needs within a short walk, cycle or trip by public transport, variously referred to as 20-minute neighbourhoods (meaning a 10 minute journey and return), and 15-minute cities, the core benefits include improving health and well-being, increasing connections, tackling the climate crisis and boosting local economies;
 - (w) notes that draft policies in the Local Plan will include a range of measures that underpin the principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods, and in particular believes that the Local Plan should include a policy that details the 20-minute neighbourhood approach in relation to access to key local services and community facilities for new residential developments;
 - (x) believes that the ambition in the draft Local Plan is for new residential developments within ‘easy walking distance’ of a shop and other types of community facilities, as well as a minimum service frequency public transport stop and, in addition to this, new homes will have to be within a specified maximum travelling time by cycle or public transport to a primary health care centre, as well as a primary school and a secondary school;
 - (y) notes that a critical component of the Local Plan is the focus on delivering homes in the Central Area, and the role of the emerging City Centre Strategic Plan is to maximise delivery of new homes; ensuring that new and growing communities evolve sustainably to make best use of this highly accessible location;
 - (z) believes that the Local Plan will maximise new housing delivery in sustainable urban locations, including Attercliffe which has significant potential to be an important location for growth over the Local Plan period and beyond, with opportunities to draw on existing public transport and active travel connectivity in that area and, with a greater focus on the role of Attercliffe as a centre, will support delivery of a more sustainable neighbourhood utilising the principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods;
 - (aa) notes the support given to the city’s district centres via the £2 million budget amendment proposed by the previous Administration, and notes that this helped projects in Hillsborough, Firth Park, Walkley, Broomhill, Mosborough, Totley and Chapelton, and that opposition parties at the time voted against this investment;

- (bb) believes that district centres play a crucial role within the concept of 15-minute neighbourhoods and that their continued development is essential to the future prosperity of Sheffield as we recover from the pandemic;
- (cc) believes that the Local Area Committees must play an important part in the development of 15-minute neighbourhoods, and delivering services locally, and helping to make sure our staff work more closely in the communities they serve; and
- (dd) requests the Administration to promote and celebrate the changes to the Highway Code hierarchy of road users.

6. NET ZERO ENERGY HOMES FOR SHEFFIELD

RESOLVED:

That this Council notes:-

- (a) the proposed 87% increase in community heating charges in the Housing Revenue Account from 3.04p to 5.69p per unit, with further increases mooted, and the consequent impact on those tenants on the lowest incomes;
- (b) that the sharp rise in utility prices worldwide has meant that the overall cost for gas and electricity has risen significantly, with wholesale energy prices being at the highest they have been in a long time, and there is still a lot of uncertainty about the ongoing costs in the months ahead;
- (c) that there are two parts to the district heating charges: a weekly standing charge, this essentially covers the fixed costs in providing heating and hot water, e.g. system heat losses, management and administration costs including billing, taking payments, IT, and data handling costs etc and, secondly, a kWh unit charge for metered units consumed in homes;
- (d) that the standing charge is increasing by 2% to cover the inflation cost, from £4.80 to £4.90, and that the kWh charge changing from 3.04p to 5.69p is a direct impact of the increase in the purchase price for both gas and electricity;
- (e) that moving from fixed rate charges in 2014 to meters has saved money for tenants, with the saving up until this year being on average 30% less than the original flat rate charges that were in place;
- (f) the significant difficulties delivering retrofit solutions to make homes energy efficient due to a severe lack of skills and capacity in the energy efficiency sector, and that, conversely, there is real potential for training to help create new skilled jobs;

- (g) in May 2020 the charity, National Energy Action, estimated that 1 in 10 households in the Sheffield Area were in Fuel Poverty; with huge price hikes expected in energy bills, this is going to get significantly worse, and only through energy efficiency schemes that significantly reduce energy demand will householders be protected from the fluctuations of volatile energy markets;
- (h) achieving a zero carbon Sheffield by 2030 will require the Council to develop a viable way of reducing emissions at scale in the built environment while ensuring warm, healthy homes that are affordable to heat;
- (i) the work being carried out by a number of councils in the Retrofit Accelerator Homes Innovation Partnership using the Energiesprong method (first developed in The Netherlands) to retrofit homes in around a day;
- (j) the Retrofit Accelerator Homes Innovation Partnership provides a way for councils, and other social housing providers, to collaborate, share information, procure and jointly bid for government and other funding streams;
- (k) that Energiesprong, a not-for-profit company, works with local councils on developing a programme to deliver warmer homes through a retrofit programme delivering a home which is net zero energy, meaning it generates the total amount of energy required for its heating, hot water and electrical appliances; it also provides superior indoor comfort; this is achieved using bespoke prefabricated facades, insulated rooftops with solar panels, smart heating, and ventilation and cooling installations, and a refurbishment comes with a long-year performance warranty on both the indoor climate and the energy performance for up to 40 years;
- (l) Energiesprong are not contractors themselves but work with councils to help procure contractors to deliver to the Energiesprong specification;
- (m) the Energiesprong finance model for the Council is viable due to the reduction in future costs to the Council due to less boiler replacement and servicing costs, improvements to the property guaranteed for 40 years; there is also a “comfort charge” to tenants which, when added to their new energy bill, following refurbishment, will be less than their current energy bill, and this is guaranteed so tenants can not be required to pay more than they would without the scheme;
- (n) there is a significant opportunity for Sheffield to develop a manufacturing facility to deliver energiesprong components for the South Yorkshire Region, creating jobs and skills in the region, and providing for a pipeline to deliver retrofitted homes;
- (o) that, however, the Energiesprong method is a very expensive form of retrofitting and that it will not be suitable for all housing stock in Sheffield;
- (p) furthermore, that it would only be possible to retrofit a small percentage of homes each year and that, therefore, thousands are likely to remain in poorly insulated homes for years to come and will be in fuel poverty as a result of pursuing a single technological solution to retrofitting;

- (q) that relying on one form of retrofitting will not allow us to achieve zero carbon Sheffield by 2030;

That this Council:-

- (r) believes that whilst Energiesprong may have a part to play in getting housing stock to net zero, so too may other organisations, and that once a robust 'roadmap' has been devised (by Spring 2022) we can really engage with the market to ensure deliverability and to rise to the challenges successfully;
- (s) reaffirms the HRA's 5 year investment programme commitment to bringing all council homes up to EPC level C, and commits to developing a 'road map' to show how we not only can get our homes to EPC C as quickly as possible, but for a deliverable vision and timetable by which we can get to net zero for the Council's housing stock;
- (t) believes that, ultimately, council tenants need to be consulted on any changes and that action can only be undertaken with their backing;

That this Council resolves to ask the Administration to:-

- (u) explore a range of retrofitting solutions which can be rolled out in a shorter time frame and help more people, whilst exploring the potential use of Energiesprong;
- (v) identify which retrofitting solutions will provide best value for money for the different types of housing stock through a cost/benefit analysis;
- (w) improve the energy efficiency in its housing stock by scheduling retrofitting into its estate management strategy for Council-owned properties based on the findings, which may include developing an approach to a Partnership with Energiesprong and the Retrofit Accelerator Homes Innovation Partnership; and
- (x) explore the job creation potential in the range of retrofitting solutions identified and any upskilling necessary to help reach the potential.

7. COST OF LIVING CRISIS

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) believes that we are facing a cost-of-living crisis, with rising bills and ballooning prices;

- (b) notes that we have seen a decade of low growth under Conservative-led governments, and believes that this is holding back Britain and has left the national economy weakened and unable to deal with shocks;
- (c) notes that this is particularly felt in northern cities like Sheffield, leaving many of the city's residents acutely vulnerable to a worrying combination of factors – such as inflation, rocketing energy bills, increased costs for food and fuel, and the forthcoming rise to national insurance;
- (d) notes that eligibility for Free School Meal Vouchers in Sheffield is increasing, indicating that poverty in the city is increasing, and Council Hardship funds are coming under increased pressure;
- (e) notes that a Labour government would immediately cut VAT on domestic energy bills to ease the burden on households during winter – giving a potential saving of up to £400 for many Sheffield residents – which would be paid for by a one-off windfall tax on booming oil and gas profits;
- (f) believes that we need radical long-term change to keep energy bills low in the future, and yet this Government have consistently failed to keep in check rising energy bills and have a very poor record on insulating homes and improving energy efficiency;
- (g) believes the Government should get a grip and tackle this crisis – but instead they continue to sit back complacently; trapping us in a high-tax, low-growth economy, and rather than putting the interests of the country first they are consumed with infighting and, as such, are failing to take the decisive action needed;
- (h) notes there has been no development of a long-term energy strategy to secure network resilience by successive governments since privatisation; the dash for gas in the 1990's led to significant investment in gas-fired power stations to replace coal, fossil fuel for fossil fuel, and no strategy for replacing ageing nuclear reactors;
- (i) believes this Government needs to abandon the current competitive market on energy provision, which is based on relatively stable wholesale prices, and replace it with a regulated provision which ensures providers are sufficiently resilient to withstand wholesale price shocks, whilst maintaining customer prices index linked over an agreed period;
- (j) notes the significant rise in food prices and shortages on the supermarket shelves, leading to greater reliance by the poorest on food banks, and believes that the main contributory factors are:-
 - (i) the second increase in January of customs declaration paperwork and increasing transport costs for foreign sourced foods, both of which lead to rising food prices;
 - (ii) the shortage of foreign workers in both the farming sector and food processing sector, leading to shortages and the inevitable price rises;

- (iii) new trade deals where they are not back to back with previous EU trade deals, such as with Australia and New Zealand, where tariff free beef and lamb are now impacting on the British market and putting farmers' livelihoods at risk;
 - (iv) the new trade deal with Norway on fish, which has resulted in a quota reduction of 50% for the Kirkella in Hull, the last deep sea fishing trawler in the UK; and
 - (v) weakness of the pound since the Brexit referendum, and the negative impact on imported food prices;
- (k) notes the failure to resolve the Northern Ireland protocol, as shown by the resignation of Lord Frost, who failed to renegotiate the Brexit deal, and believes that any trade deal without a customs union will always lead to these problems, when the Good Friday Agreement needs to be protected;
- (l) notes the victories by the Liberal Democrats in by-elections in Chesham and Amersham, where the voters rejected building in the Green Belt, and North Shropshire where livestock farming is under threat, and believes this is showing more and more that the British public have had enough of this Government's failure to get a hold of the issues people have to face every day;
- (m) believes the Government's "oven ready" deal is now unfolding and has led to rising food prices, and that it should revisit its failing Brexit strategy in order to protect our farmers, fishermen and the general public;
- (n) therefore requests that the Food Poverty Working Group be reinstated and its remit expanded to cover all elements of rising living costs and to formulate an action plan to tackle this crisis; and
- (o) requests that the Education, Health and Care Transitional Committee, and its successor under the committee system, should look into how Sheffield Council and Sheffield can support our ambition for an Inclusive Economy in the One Year Plan with the wellbeing economy model, and in order to put Sheffield's health and well-being front and centre of our aims, decision making and expenditure.

8. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS & POLLING PLACES

RESOLVED: That this Council approves (a) the boundary changes to polling districts and proposed polling places outlined in the report of the Chief Executive, now submitted and (b) that a further review of the polling districts and polling places in the Ecclesall and Manor Castle Wards takes place following the May 2022 elections to respond to the feedback received in respect of those Wards.

9. EXTERNAL AUDIT RE-PROCUREMENT

RESOLVED: That this Council endorses the recommendation of its Audit and Standards Committee and accepts Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1 April 2023.

10. TEMPORARY CHANGE TO THE CONSTITUTION - BUDGET AMENDMENTS AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON 2ND MARCH 2022

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) approves the addition to Section 12 (Amendments to Motions) of the Council Procedure Rules in Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) of the Constitution, as set out in the appendix to this report; and
- (b) asks officers to give consideration, in consultation with the leaderships of the political groups on the Council, to the possibility of introducing, for the setting of the budget for 2023/24 onwards, an alternative process for determining the Council's budget, whereby the political groups could submit multiple amendments for consideration by the Council.

This page is intentionally left blank