

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – 1ST JUNE 2022

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE MEETING

1. SUPPORTING RESIDENTS THROUGH THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) believes that that there can be no doubt that we are in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, with surges in fuel, energy and food prices and with inflation running at a 30-year high;
- (b) believes that the cost of living crisis is the single biggest issue, and most immediate concern, for most people across the UK;
- (c) notes that, whilst global shocks and the war in Ukraine have of course had an impact, a decade of low growth under Conservative-led governments has left the economy weakened and unable to deal with shocks;
- (d) believes the Government's response has been woeful and further highlights how out of touch they are, and that rather than getting to grips with the serious issues facing our country they instead are preoccupied with waging unnecessary culture wars;
- (e) believes there is much the Government needs to be doing, and one need only look to governments across Europe to see what can be done to help households against a sharp rise in energy bills, and yet here in the UK the Government's spring statement offered nothing to those who really need it;
- (f) believes, therefore, that the Government should take heed of the Labour Party's call for an emergency budget and supports the following activity:-
 - (i) a windfall tax on the profits of oil and gas companies, which would save household bills by up to £600 (helping mitigate the Government's National Insurance rise);
 - (ii) a discount on business rates for small and medium sized businesses;
 - (iii) a "rapid ramp-up" of installing insulation into homes across the country to save on energy bills;
 - (iv) an investigation by the National Crime Agency into taxpayer money lost through fraud; and
 - (v) reversing the £20 per week cut to Universal Credit;

- (g) believes that whilst the Government is spectacularly failing to help families, members of the previous Council administration have, over the course of the last year, been working to ensure the Council is doing everything it can to support residents through the cost of living crisis;
- (h) notes that at an organisational level, Sheffield City Council are treating the cost of living crisis with the same resolve as it did for the pandemic;
- (i) notes that, just like in the pandemic, the Leader of the Council established a Gold Command Executive Management Team, and is ensuring that every effort is being made to review what the Council is doing in response to the difficulties facing our communities;
- (j) notes that Sheffield City Council and partners have put together a Sheffield Money Support website to provide a single point of access for residents;
- (k) believes that our Council should act as a point of call for those in need, and reaffirms support for the forthcoming rollout of a Financial Support Access Plan – so Sheffielders can be best advised where to go for the right financial support, suited to their circumstances;
- (l) notes that due to the approval of the budget amendment proposed by the Labour Group in March 2022, which secured £3.5 million for sustainable local energy, the Council is increasing ways to get energy bills down, through installing renewable energy on our estate; such as schools, libraries, community centres and council homes;
- (m) notes that under the previous Administration's Housing Revenue Account, the Council is retrofitting 6,000 homes with new roofs, and 2,000 homes will benefit from boiler replacements, as well as ensuring that all council homes are to at least EPC C (Energy Performance Level C) – making homes warmer and reducing bills;
- (n) further notes that the approved amendment to the budget, proposed by the Labour Group, put extra resources into supporting neighbourhoods, and focused extra support on those who will be the most hardest hit, including further support for the Food Access Plan;
- (o) believes that this resolve to tackle this crisis must carry on throughout the new committee system, and calls on every Policy Committee to ensure that the cost of living crisis is a key priority in their work plans, and that all financial decisions must consider what impact they will be having on the crisis;
- (p) notes that the Leader of the Council has already begun convening a strategic conversation with partners and stakeholders (including the voluntary and community sector, public sector partners, utility companies and MPs) to maximise our collective effort around responding to the crisis;
- (q) welcomes the Government's belated agreement to a windfall tax on energy producers, previously called for by the Liberal Democrat Party last October and then by the Labour Party in January, as part of a package of measures to help with the cost of living crisis, but believes that this should include, additionally:-

- (i) taking £300 off struggling families' heating bills immediately by doubling and expanding the Warm Home Discount;
 - (ii) scrapping the National Insurance tax hike introduced by the Government in April;
 - (iii) ending the unfair freeze of the Income Tax personal allowance, which is a stealth tax falling disproportionately on low earners;
 - (iv) protecting pensioners from rising prices, including the 1.5 million low-income people on pension credit, by uprating pensions in line with the Bank of England's inflation forecast;
 - (v) reinstating the £1,000 boost to Universal Credit, to ensure that the most vulnerable households get proper support;
 - (vi) supporting low-income households on Universal Credit with rising mortgage costs by returning the Support for Mortgage Interest scheme to its pre-2018 format – turning it from an interest-bearing loan to a benefit payment; and
 - (vii) reversing the 63% cut of the Corporation Tax Banking Surcharge, so that big banks contribute fairly towards the UK's economic recovery from the pandemic after a year of record banking profits; and
- (r) welcomes the establishment by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee of a cost of living Gold Command and resolves to support the work of that Command, bringing in partners, and seeking innovative ways to help the people of Sheffield get through this crisis.

2. BUILDING THE LOCAL BUSINESS BASE

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) notes the impact this could have on the people of Sheffield during the cost of living crisis, in particular the poorest in society, who are the least equipped to deal with the rising costs of food and energy;
- (b) furthermore notes that successful businesses not only bring jobs and prosperity to the City, reducing poverty across our city, but also helps the Council by bringing more business rates income;
- (c) notes that many businesses, large and small, also support local community projects and play an important role in improving our environment;

- (d) believes that Sheffield as a city has much to offer businesses both big and small with its great location, wonderful and diverse people, proud manufacturing heritage, social history, landscape and built environment;
- (e) believes that business relies on good digital and transport infrastructure and that transport policy should focus on improving access for people to and from all parts of the city, improving transport links with neighbouring areas and enabling the efficient delivery of goods, with any road closures in the City Centre being subject to careful consideration;
- (f) recognises that a strong cultural offer in the city helps to attract high skill and high value inward investment;
- (g) therefore believes that this Council should be doing everything it can to build its business base, including but not limited to:-
 - (i) working collaboratively with businesses and other organisations that want to invest in our city;
 - (ii) exploring ways of using our heritage to support businesses, especially those in the hospitality sector which has been badly affected by the pandemic and recent rises in business costs, as we rebuild our economy;
 - (iii) working to revitalise both our city centre and the other district centres across the Council area to make them attractive places to do business;
 - (iv) ensuring that all Councillors act as ambassadors for Sheffield and build relationships with businesses big and small to help build and sustain our local economy; and
 - (v) ensuring that Council policies and initiatives do not actively deter organisations coming to Sheffield or harm the prospects of those that are already here;
- (h) believes that we must do everything we can to keep as much money as possible in the local economy, and notes that in the 12 months before the pandemic £80 million more was kept in the local economy, in comparison than with the previous financial year, due to council procurement policies which ensure priority for local contracts and suppliers;
- (i) believes that we need to go further in empowering our local economy and deliver radical and lasting policies around 'community wealth building' (a people-centred approach to local economic development, which redirects wealth back into the local economy, and places control and benefits into the hands of local people);
- (j) supports, therefore, the development of a 'Community Wealth Building Charter' encompassing a commitment to long-term collaboration between the city's anchor institutions; supporting shared 'community wealth building' goals to commit to fair employment, opportunities for development, growing the local economy, and supporting small businesses, the voluntary sector, and co-operatives;

- (k) believes we must work collaboratively to deliver climate action and provide clean growth for the entire region, and to encourage citywide job security, better employment opportunities and drive up wages; as such we want to see all employers paying at least the Real Living Wage and spending more with local and regional suppliers, and we believe in empowering employees to be informed and involved in decision making within their organisations;
- (l) recommends that the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee reports back to Council within 6 months to deliver a Community Wealth Building Charter with a clearly defined set of shared objectives to deliver locally for Sheffield, as well as providing an enhanced Ethical Procurement Strategy that delivers on our commitment to social, economic, and climate justice;
- (m) believes that successful, sustainable and ethical businesses, which pay their taxes in the UK, treat their workers fairly and minimise their environmental impact, bring jobs and prosperity, reducing poverty across our city;
- (n) believes that locally owned and managed businesses, using local supply chains, retain more money in the local economy and should be especially encouraged over businesses that take their profits out of the local economy, support distant shareholders and have no real stake in the City of Sheffield;
- (o) gives thanks to the Sheffield Sustainability Network and all those businesses in Sheffield which are actively trying to reduce their carbon footprint and other negative impacts on society; and
- (p) gives thanks to Business Sheffield for the excellent support it gives to Sheffield's local businesses with business support, administering of grants and delivering the new carbon assessment programme, all free of charge.

3. WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER A BETTER FUTURE FOR SHEFFIELD

RESOLVED:

That this Council believes:-

- (a) that thanks are due to the people of Sheffield who took part in democracy and voted in recent local elections to choose who will represent them;
- (b) that thanks are also due to those who voted in the May 2021 referendum which established a new, modern committee system that needs political groups to work together in a more collaborative and less adversarial way of working;

- (c) that the Council and the communities we represent face the multiple challenges of the cost of living crisis, overstretched and underfunded Council services and a growing demand for those services from the public;
- (d) that new initiatives, detailed below, are needed and we call on all groups on the Council to support them;
- (e) that people's experience of engaging with the Council is not always positive and poor access to services has a worse impact on people already disadvantaged for other reasons; people experience difficulties engaging with the Council and in getting responses to local concerns and issues;
- (f) that local Councillors are often the ones most aware when the Council's processes are not working because local people contact them when the system doesn't work;
- (g) that due to the cost of living crisis our services will be in even higher demand and need, and making them more accessible must be prioritised in light of this;
- (h) that the challenge for this Council, like other councils around the country, is to play a leading role locally in addressing the cost of living crisis that our communities face;
- (i) that the cost of living crisis is caused by a combination of corporate greed, rising prices, low incomes and policy choices made by national governments, condemning millions to increasing levels of poverty which disproportionately affects women, children, disabled people and members of marginalised and minority communities;
- (j) that we must seek to address both immediate need and also make our communities resilient to future crises through a combination of measures, such as retrofitting homes to high energy efficiency standards to reduce energy usage, and provision of skills and training;
- (k) that whilst all councils operate a Corporate Risk Register, where all the risks the Council faces are detailed and a risk management plan is produced to mitigate those risks, this approach can mean that councils focus on risks rather than opportunities;
- (l) that the Council's financial sustainability now depends on funding opportunities, not further cuts;
- (m) that to act as a balance to the Corporate Risk Register, there should be a Corporate Opportunities Register, detailing new funding opportunities, partnership opportunities and initiatives that will help deliver the Council's objectives, such as supporting those affected by the cost of living crisis;

This Council resolves:-

- (n) to recommend that the Council's Strategy and Resources Policy Committee notes this Motion and requests a Customer Service Improvement Plan to be in

place within 4 months, to show how it will aim to improve response times and accessibility to services, regardless of the community that customers come from or their background, language or disability; and recognising that the Council's services also need to be available to people without access to the phone or internet;

- (o) to recommend that the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee establishes a Cost of Living Crisis Working Group, together with other public and voluntary sector partners, to be tasked with producing a Cost of Living Crisis Action Plan within 4 months;
- (p) that progress on the delivery of this action plan be reported regularly to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee;
- (q) to recommend that the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee requests a Corporate Opportunities Register to be in place within 6 months, kept up-to-date by Executive Directors and reported regularly to the relevant committee, noting this motion;

This Council:-

- (r) believes that there can be no doubt that we are in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, with surges in fuel, energy and food prices and with inflation running at a 30-year high;
- (s) believes that the cost of living crisis is the single biggest issue, and most immediate concern, for most people across the UK;
- (t) notes that, whilst global shocks and the war in Ukraine have of course had an impact, a decade of low growth under Conservative-led governments has left the economy weakened and unable to deal with shocks;
- (u) believes the Government's response has been woeful and further highlights how out of touch they are, and that rather than getting to grips with the serious issues facing our country they instead are preoccupied with waging unnecessary culture wars;
- (v) believes there is much the Government needs to be doing, and one need only look to governments across Europe to see what can be done to help households against a sharp rise in energy bills, and yet here in the UK the Government's spring statement offered nothing to those who really need it;
- (w) believes, therefore, that the Government should take heed of the Labour Party's call for an emergency budget and supports the following activity:-
 - (i) a windfall tax on the profits of oil and gas companies, which would save household bills by up to £600 (helping mitigate the Government's National Insurance rise);
 - (ii) a discount on business rates for small and medium sized businesses;

- (iii) a "rapid ramp-up" of installing insulation into homes across the country to save on energy bills;
- (iv) an investigation by the National Crime Agency into taxpayer money lost through fraud; and
- (v) reversing the £20 per week cut to Universal Credit;
- (x) believes that whilst the Government is spectacularly failing to help families, members of the previous Council administration have, over the course of the last year, been working to ensure the Council is doing everything it can to support residents through the cost of living crisis;
- (y) notes that at an organisational level, Sheffield City Council are treating the cost of living crisis with the same resolve as it did for the pandemic;
- (z) notes that, just like in the pandemic, the Leader of the Council established a Gold Command Executive Management Team, and is ensuring that every effort is being made to review what the Council is doing in response to the difficulties facing our communities;
- (aa) notes that Sheffield City Council and partners have put together a Sheffield Money Support website to provide a single point of access for residents;
- (bb) believes that our Council should act as a point of call for those in need, and reaffirms support for the forthcoming rollout of a Financial Support Access Plan – so Sheffielders can be best advised where to go for the right financial support, suited to their circumstances;
- (cc) notes that due to the approval of the budget amendment proposed by the Labour Group in March 2022, which secured £3.5 million for sustainable local energy, the Council is increasing ways to get energy bills down, through installing renewable energy on our estate; such as schools, libraries, community centres and council homes;
- (dd) notes that under the previous Administration's Housing Revenue Account, the Council is retrofitting 6,000 homes with new roofs, and 2,000 homes will benefit from boiler replacements, as well as ensuring that all council homes are to at least EPC C (Energy Performance Level C) – making homes warmer and reducing bills;
- (ee) further notes that the approved amendment to the budget, proposed by the Labour Group, put extra resources into supporting neighbourhoods, and focused extra support on those who will be the most hardest hit, including further support for the Food Access Plan;
- (ff) believes that this resolve to tackle this crisis must carry on throughout the new committee system, and calls on every Policy Committee to ensure that the cost of living crisis is a key priority in their work plans, and that all financial decisions must consider what impact they will be having on the crisis;

- (gg) notes that the Leader of the Council has already begun convening a strategic conversation with partners and stakeholders (including the voluntary and community sector, public sector partners, utility companies and MPs) to maximise our collective effort around responding to the crisis;
- (hh) believes that the Council must be committed, both politically and organisationally, to delivering the savings needed for long term financial sustainability, and that the use of one-off reserves to balance the 2022/23 budget is only a short-term solution;
- (ii) furthermore, believes that the underlying imbalance between spending and income must be addressed;
- (jj) consequently, believes that the Council must continue to investigate and implement service re-designs and transformations to reduce the underlying gap in its budgets for 2023/24 onwards;
- (kk) welcomes the recognition in the “Our Sheffield: The Year Ahead” plan, considered by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee yesterday, of the weak performance of a number of council services and the ambition to put these services back on track;
- (ll) welcomes the establishment by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee of a cost of living Gold Command and resolves to support the work of that Command, bringing in partners, and seeking innovative ways to help the people of Sheffield get through this crisis; and
- (mm) believes the Housing Policy Committee should work quickly to advance the retrofitting of homes to high energy efficiency standards, to bring long term benefits around the cost of heating a home to a large number of Sheffield residents.

4. COMMITTING TO THE GMB ETHICAL HOME CARE CHARTER

RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) believes that over a decade of national government inaction has created a social care crisis, which is simply unacceptable for such a rich nation;
- (b) believes that we should aspire to make Sheffield the best city to grow old in, but that the Government’s failure to fund social care means that many do not get the care they should;

- (c) believes that our homecare workers do vital and amazing work helping our most vulnerable residents, in a job which continues to be incredibly difficult and we must do everything we can to support them;
- (d) reaffirms our commitment to ensuring that care workers are given the respect, pay and conditions they deserve and that, ultimately, this is the right thing to do for workers and will ensure a far better care service for clients;
- (e) calls for the GMB Ethical Commissioning Charter 2022 to be fully endorsed, including aiming for the following:-
 - (i) committing to a block delivery model of commissioning and ending the culture of 'Time & Task' in home care delivery;
 - (ii) committing that the job evaluated rate of pay at Sheffield City Council should be a benchmark and the ultimate goal for pay in commissioned care; this must drive the journey to increasing the value of care in our communities;
 - (iii) committing the Council to continue to recognise and value the training and professional development of staff within the sector; and
 - (iv) reaffirming this Council's commitment to recognising social value in assessing all potential providers and committing to supporting providers working in new and innovative ways to support staff and clients;
- (f) notes the plight of unpaid carers who have performed heroic efforts to look after our most vulnerable in society during the pandemic; and
- (g) requests the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee to seek to adopt and establish cooperative care models in order to empower caregivers and care receivers alike, so that the sector is more sustainable, resilient and that the profit motive is replaced by the motive to provide the best care for patients and achieve high levels of worker security, retention and development.