

## CITY OF SHEFFIELD

### MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS POLICY COMMITTEE – 20<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023

#### COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

#### *Questions of Councillor Laura Moynahan to the Chair of the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee (Councillor Martin Smith)*

**Q.1** I'm aware that SYMCA has set up a Business Advisory Board. How are officers ensuring join-up between that, our Inclusive Business Advisory Board and our wider work.

**A.1** Business Sheffield supported SYMCA with the recruitment of the six members of their Board from diverse businesses. The full Board membership was announced recently.

There are informal links between the SYMCA Business Advisory Board and the SCC Diverse Business Board through Louisa Harrison Walker, Chief Executive of Sheffield Chamber. Louisa is a member of both boards and works closely with officers in connection with our own Board meetings.

There are also informal links between SYMCA officers and SCC officers from both boards.

#### *Questions of Councillor Minesh Parekh to the Chair of the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee (Councillor Martin Smith)*

**Q.1** Unite the Union have recently launched a campaign to Save Sheffield's Steel, including launching its Workers' Plan for Steel, which has been supported by over 150 local businesses, charities and community organisations in the city. The campaign is looking for UK infrastructure projects to use 100% UK steel and for national investment to green steel with no loss of jobs.

- a) For Council-initiated infrastructure projects: what proportion of steel comes from i) the UK and ii) Sheffield;
- b) What scope—under current laws—is there to review the Council's procurement policies to give priority to Sheffield- and UK-derived steel (in that order), considering the climate and community wealth building benefits this would bring?

A.1 Sheffield City Council is a long-standing signatory to the British Steel Charter and has given priority to British Steel to the fullest extent permitted by procurement law for many years. We will continue to do so and will review whether there is any scope to do anything further, this would sit within our wider Social Value approach to maximise local supply chain opportunities.

We do not currently hold statistics on what proportion of steel comes from either the UK or Sheffield.

**Q.2 Regarding the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Low Carbon Project:**

- a) **How many Sheffield businesses have so far (i) enquired about the SPF Low Carbon grants; (ii) received support from specialist advisors; (iii) received carbon surveys of their businesses; and (iv) received a financial contribution towards energy-saving interventions;**
- b) **For the above, how many Sheffield businesses are in the process of (i) receiving support from specialist advisors; (ii) receiving carbon surveys of their businesses; and (iii) receiving a financial contribution towards energy-saving interventions;**
- c) **How much has been spent, to date, of the Sheffield allocation for this fund; how much is earmarked for businesses that have currently enquired about the fund; how much is remaining; and what is the deadline for spending it.**

A.2 For completeness - Figures in A and B are exclusive; B is not a subset of A.  
For question c) the response assumes grants budget only.

<b>a. How many Sheffield businesses have so far:</b>		<b>Notes</b>
enquired about the SPF Low Carbon grants	163	total number of enquiries
received support from specialist advisors	45	From Diagnostic complete to Grant stages; excludes enquiries closed
received carbon surveys of their businesses	18	Carbon surveys delivered
received a financial contribution towards energy-saving interventions	0	Grants Paid

<b>b. For the above, how many Sheffield businesses are in the process of</b>		<b>Notes</b>
receiving support from specialist advisors	40	Diagnostic pipeline
receiving carbon surveys of their businesses	17	From Diagnostic complete to Energy Audit underway stages
receiving a financial contribution towards energy-saving interventions	25	From Grant application pipeline to Grants awarded stages

<b>How much has been spent, to date, of the Sheffield allocation for this fund;</b>	£34,760	Grants awarded not yet paid
how much is earmarked for businesses that have currently enquired about the fund;	£965,186	Remainder of grants budget
how much is remaining	£965,186	Remainder of grants budget

Deadline to complete expenditure: 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 for SMEs, so that SCC can gather evidence required to disburse the grant by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

With regards to questions about pipeline, if you look at the combined pipeline figures for energy surveys and grant applications then we can estimate that the target for this financial year should be met. Progress against grants is slower on this project compared to other direct grant application projects as there is a two-stage process that SMEs need to go through beforehand (diagnostic and energy survey).

<b>Combined</b>	<b>Current Pipeline</b>	<b>23/24 Target</b>	<b>24/25 Target</b>	<b>Total</b>
Carbon surveys	39	48	56	104
Grants	25	26	61	87

**Q.3 With Australia pulling out of hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games, and Sheffield's recent track record in hosting major events and sporting tournaments, and [media speculation](#) about a cross-Northern city rescue games - with Sheffield hosting the swimming - will the committee investigate the possibility of Sheffield supporting a rescue bid to rescue the games?**

A.3 The British Government has told Commonwealth Games organisers that the UK will not step in to rescue the event after the Gold Coast withdrew its bid for the 2026 event. Substantial UK Government support allowed Birmingham to step in to deliver the 2022 Games and this funding is not being made available again for 2026. It is therefore not financially viable for local authorities, including Sheffield to deliver the games without government support (the costs of which were estimated at c£1B).

**Questions of Councillor Abdul Khayum to the Chair of the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee (Councillor Martin Smith)**

**Q.1** It's really pleasing and very welcome news that the Peaks Campus building is being retained for educational purposes and will reopen in September 2024.

**Could we have details about the educational activities expected to be provided from the Campus, and specifically those relevant to this Committee from an employment / skills policy prospective?**

**A.1** There will be 100 new high needs places from September 2024 at The Sheffield College's Peaks Campus, across a range of study programmes designed to meet the needs of young people. The number of high needs places available at Peaks Campus will grow to 200 from September 2025 and 300 from September 2026.

In terms of employment and skills, the offer will include:

- An experienced and dedicated curriculum team including teaching staff, Student Mentors, Student Advocates and Learner Support Assistants.
- A specialist Travel Trainer based at Peaks Campus to support students develop independent travel skills.
- Work placement opportunities supported by local employers and dedicated job coaches.
- Progression as a high need student into any of The Sheffield College's mainstream full-time study programmes at any of their campuses or to other providers in the city.
- Progression into support work in the city.

As these are high needs places the work at Peaks Campus will sit within the portfolio of the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee.

The changes also mean there will be no mainstream post-16 provision in the South East of the city. In my opinion this puts young people in the South East at a disadvantage.