

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Strategy and Resources Policy Committee

Meeting held 19 April 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Terry Fox (Chair), Julie Grocutt (Deputy Chair),
Angela Argenzio, Dawn Dale, Douglas Johnson (Group Spokesperson),
Zahira Naz, Joe Otten, Martin Smith, Richard Williams and Paul Wood

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed.

2. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS RELATING TO THE ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED

4.1 There were no public questions or petitions.

5. CAPITAL APPROVALS - MONTH 11 2022/23

5.1 The Acting Director of Finance and Commercial Services presented a report providing details of proposed changes to the existing Capital Programme as brought forward in Month 11 2022/23.

Members discussed the proposed changes detailed in the report. It was suggested that the Transport Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee should consider a city wide approach to 20mph zones.

5.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) approves the proposed additions and variations to the Capital Programme listed in Appendix 1;

(b) requests that the Housing Policy Committee consider the Equality Impact Assessment for the Council Housing Heating Breakdowns scheme, in respect of the replacement of gas fires with electricity fires and report back to the Committee if necessary; and

(c) approves the acceptance of grants as detailed in appendix 2, conditional upon the final grant terms not differing materially from those outlined.

5.3 Reasons for Decision

- 5.3.1 The proposed changes to the Capital programme will improve the services to the people of Sheffield.
- 5.3.2 To formally record changes to the Capital Programme and gain Member approval for changes in line with Financial Regulations and to reset the capital programme in line with latest information.

5.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 5.4.1 A number of alternative courses of action are considered as part of the process undertaken by Officers before decisions are recommended to Members. The recommendations made to Members represent what Officers believe to be the best options available to the Council, in line with Council priorities, given the constraints on funding and the use to which funding is put within the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

6. CITY GOALS

- 6.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement setting out progress toward the development of City Goals, a joint project led between partners across the City of Sheffield. It describes the framework and activities planned as part of that process, and the role that the council is asked to play.

6.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) notes the progress of the City Goals project delivery;

(b) notes the plans for the engagement part of the process in the coming months; and

(c) endorses the approach to developing the City Goals during the next phase of the project with the support of the Council to ensure we play our part alongside partners in the city to enact them.

6.3 Reasons for Decision

- 6.3.1 Having a shared vision for the city is a vital part of Sheffield's future, creating a collective purpose and focus for everything the city's institutions do with and alongside our communities and businesses.
- 6.3.2 Public, private and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector partners have come together with a real sense of ambition to listen to Sheffield's communities and articulate a shared story and set of priorities which will become the focus for our collective action, leadership and investment over the coming years.

6.3.3 As Sheffield's civic leader, Sheffield City Council (SCC) is one partner but has a significant role to play, connecting our democratic and community leadership to the shared vision for the future. The recommendations for Strategy and Resources to endorse the development of the City Goals are therefore a vital statement to citizens and partners of our commitment to supporting the development of a new vision for the city.

6.3.4 Sheffield City Council's support for and involvement in the City Goals work also ensures that we are delivering against the commitments made in the recent LGA Peer Challenge Action Plan.

6.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

6.4.1 The alternatives to consider would be firstly to do nothing, continue without a shared city vision and fail to have a collective perspective on the city's future. Ultimately this would lead to a lack of strategic cohesion, a fragmented view of the future and missed opportunities for investment. This was rejected as it is not in the city's best interests.

6.4.2 The other alternative is to have the Goals develop without SCC endorsement - enabling partners to continue the work but without SCC support. This option was rejected as we are the civic leader of place, we are ambitious for our city and our determination to deliver a bright future for Sheffield can only be achieved with and alongside our communities and our partners.

7. ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT INCLUDING THE WORKFORCE REPORT

7.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement submitted a report on the Council's Annual Equality Report, giving an overview of how we are meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The report summarises our actions and progress on improving equality, in the way we serve the people of Sheffield and how we behave as an employer.

The report includes more detailed information about some of our areas of work and highlights areas of persistent inequality. The examples in the report are only a selection of the ways in which we work to improve equality and to meet the Equality Duties.

The report also includes the council's annual Workforce Data Report as Appendix C. This is part of meeting the Specific Duty under the PSED to publish equality information on our employees. Producing this report enables us to identify any disparities in our workforce profile, understand how fair our workforce policies are and identify any differences in the experiences of different groups in our workforce.

The work undertaken contained in the annual report is monitored and overseen by the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB).

It was stated that a key positive action to support our aim to improve equality would be to ensure that all reports submitted to Committees attach a completed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). Such EIAs should form part of the early

consideration in completing reports so as to appropriately inform decisions.

7.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) notes the progress made in meeting our Statutory Equality Duties including our Equality Objectives 2019 – 2023;

(b) notes our latest workforce diversity data and outstanding challenges;

(c) notes the areas of persistent inequality that will require continued attention;

(d) agrees the priorities for future action as set out in the report. These are under each equality objective and cover 6 key areas of focus:

- Better data collection, analysis and use of service equality monitoring information.
- Work with services to ensure service plans reflect equality goals and commitments.
- Utilise EIAs more effectively and robustly, ensuring they are undertaken at the right time with good evidence and in a proportionate way.
- Strengthen relationships with and understanding of the diverse communities within the city both online and in person across all characteristics.
- Carry out staff surveys to assess the morale of the workforce including assessing satisfaction levels of different groups of employees.
- Develop a more inclusive culture within the Council including via learning and development for staff and Members; and

(e) agrees to give consideration to suggestions for future areas of focus for equalities work in 2023.

7.3 Reasons for Decision

7.3.1 We recognise we have some big challenges ahead and we know from the findings of the Race Equality Commission report and work from this report that currently, communities in Sheffield don't feel the city is fair or inclusive and they don't feel empowered or included.

7.3.2 We therefore need to be committed to providing more inclusive and accessible services, that meet the needs of all our communities in Sheffield. We must continue to listen, learn and embed equality into everything that we do for our residents, visitors, and workforce

7.3.3 Although there are many inequalities, colleagues across SCC are working hard to tackle these. Many are because of national factors that impact on the city that are outside our control. We want to thank our colleagues for working together to help make Sheffield a fairer, accessible and a more inclusive place to live and work in.

7.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

7.4.1 The do-nothing option was discounted when discussing this paper as it is a

Specific Statutory Equality Duty to report annually on how we are meeting our General and Specific Duties.

8. EQUALITY AWARENESS DAYS REPORT

- 8.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement presented a report setting out Sheffield City Council's (SCC) proposed approach to celebrating, commemorating, and acknowledging Equality Awareness Days during 2023-2024.

The report proposes a planned and strategic approach to awareness days so that we can plan and deliver quality campaigns whilst measuring impact. This will help us meet our Equality Duties and Objectives. It will also have an impact on our values, workplace culture and improve our dialogue and interactions with our diverse communities. A planned calendar would also prevent duplication of work across the Council.

The report sets out the plan for agreed awareness days and will support SCC's commitment to protected characteristics and the communities it serves across the city. This paper proposes a number of awareness days which will be prioritised over the coming year, and these will be reviewed annually. It will also identify which others the Council will support this year and how this will be achieved.

The report also sets out how nominated awareness days/months will be acknowledged (social media, campaigns, media coverage, etc) and how identified teams across the council will plan, deliver and measure impact on the series of days. The approach will be monitored and kept under review by the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB).

- 8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) agrees Sheffield City Council's proposed approach to Awareness Days and the calendar for 2023- 2024, as set out in the report;

(b) agrees that Members, Leadership Teams and Officers work together and commit to promoting the identified days;

(c) agrees to reviewing the annual calendar yearly;

(d) agrees that the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement, in consultation with the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board will monitor and review the awareness day calendar on an annual basis, as not all awareness days can be acknowledged in the year, and different priorities may arise; and

(e) requests that further consideration be given to the issue of lighting up the Town Hall for appropriate campaigns/awareness days.

8.3 Reasons for Decision

- 8.3.1 The recommendations are suggested so that quality messages, events, campaigns can be planned for a variety of awareness days which encompass all

protected characteristics and help SCC meet its Equality Objectives.

8.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 8.4.1 The do-nothing option was discounted when discussing this paper as it was decided that a strategic decision was needed to enhance this area of work so duplication, confusion, last minute requests could be prevented, and a concise structured calendar of events could be delivered.

9. SHEFFIELD'S ALL-AGE MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING STRATEGY

- 9.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Adult Health and Social Care in respect of Sheffield's All-Age Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy, setting the scene for supporting Sheffield people – from young to old – with their mental and emotional health and wellbeing. Dr Steve Thomas, Chair of the Sheffield MHLDDA Delivery Group attended the meeting to present the item. The strategy is positive, ambitious, and focussed on delivering change in partnership and collaboration. It will be underpinned by an annually updated delivery plan which will have clear objectives and outcomes anticipated. This will be a partnership document, and a range of organisations will continue to work together on the delivery of the strategy's objectives.

- 9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) approves the All-Age Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as detailed in the report now submitted; and

(b) requests that an accompanying delivery plan is brought to the Adults and Education, Children & Families Policy Committees in six months' time, along with an update of progress made.

9.3 Reasons for Decision

- 9.3.1 The strategy is a positive development for the city and will enable partner organisations to work together to improve mental and emotional health and wellbeing of citizens of Sheffield.
- 9.3.2 Approving the strategy demonstrates the Committee's commitment to partnership working across the City to improve citizens outcomes and experiences.

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 9.4.1 Do nothing: It would be possible not to produce a strategy for this area – but it would mean any plans would lack focus, coherence, and public accountability.

10. PROGRESS WITH TRANSITIONS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 10.1 The Acting Executive Director Children's Services presented a report providing the Committee with an update on progress made to improve transitions to adulthood

for children and young people through the Multi Agency Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Accelerated Progress Plan and Project Group.

10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) notes the update on progress made to improve transitions to adulthood for children and young people through the Multi Agency SEND Accelerated Progress Plan and Project Group, as set out in the report;

(b) notes the action and progress made to date to improve the Council's approach to supporting young people to adulthood and, more importantly, their experience and outcomes; and

(c) notes the next steps for this work, as detailed in the report.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 The report sets out the commitment of the Council and the Sheffield NHS Integrated Care Board to continuing to work with children, young people and families as well as our health and independent sector partners, to improve the systems and processes that support them through this key journey into adulthood and ensure that there is a wide range of opportunities that they are about to access and which support the fulfilment of young people's needs and aspirations for their future.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 There are no alternative options identified as this work is a requirement to ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks of CQC and Ofsted and the DfE SEND Accelerator Progress Plan.

11. **HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND**

11.1 The Executive Director, Operational Services presented a report seeking to update Strategy and Resources Committee on the latest allocation of funding received from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) known as the Household Support Fund (HSF) and seeks approval to accept and spend the Household Support Fund from DWP in line with a spending plan.

It was reported that the recommendations in the report were an initial attempt to meet DWP guidance/advice but that following feedback and on reflection a different approach is needed, in particular to ensure working age families receive the support needed. A revised set of recommendations was therefore presented to the meeting setting out an intermediate approach and proposing a report back on the analysis of need, specifically in Sheffield.

11.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) approves a continuation of the £15 rate per eligible household for free school meals for the May half-term holidays and notes the financial implications;

(b) requests a follow-up report be provided to a future meeting of the committee to set out in more detail the current and predicted future level of need across different cohorts of vulnerable people in the city (including families with children, disabled people, unpaid carers, and older people);

(c) notes a revised and updated Equality Impact Assessment to be brought as part of the follow-up report to help inform decision making;

(d) notes the future proposal will be based on the aforementioned information and will set out how any further targeted awards will meet the needs of the City in line with the grant terms;

(e) approves a review of the eligibility criteria for the 'application-element' of the programme of support made available through the Household Support Fund; and

(f) notes there will be a further report to this Committee that seeks approval for a spending plan for the 'application-element' of the Household Support Fund allocated for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 once details of eligibility criteria and cohorts that will be targeted for this part of the award have been prepared.

11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 The recommendations presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee will enable Sheffield City Council to provide the funds to support vulnerable households in the city to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford food, energy and water bills, and other related essentials through the cost-of-living crisis.

11.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.4.1 The proposal will be the best way of delivering the Household Support Fund.

12. **LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND (LAHF)**

12.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Operational Services outlining the additional allocation of funding from the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) and the proposed use of such funding to purchase homes.

The report also seeks approval to receive and spend the additional funding and progress to acquiring new housing; and for the use of capital to supplement the grant with repayments of the loan being met from rental income.

12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) approves the Council acting as Accountable Body for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) additional grant offer of £1,230,433;

(b) approves the strategy of spending the grant as set out in the report, including

the acquisition of up to 16 additional properties; and

(c) approves the additional capital funding of £1,036,768, as set out in the report.

12.3 Reasons for Decision

12.3.1 The authority completed a validation form with the proposed minimum number of properties on 25th January 2023 and submitted a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to DLUHC on 15th March 2023. The authority is required to submit the signed addendum to the MoU to DLUHC by 28th April 2023 in order to secure the additional funding of £1,230,433.

12.3.2 To secure the full funding the LAHF Team confirmed that ideally all purchases should be complete by 30th November 2023. If purchases are within the legal process at that point but not complete the funding for those properties will still be provided. Acquisitions currently being purchased can be included in this programme. To secure all funding, it is recommended to allocate this funding to current purchases within the Stock Increase Programme. This fund will then allow the Stock Increase Programme to deliver further additional properties.

12.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

12.4.1 No alternative options were considered.