

**SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL**

**Strategy and Resources Policy Committee**

**Meeting held 20 November 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Tom Hunt (Chair), Fran Belbin (Deputy Chair), Angela Argenzio, Dawn Dale, Dianne Hurst, Douglas Johnson (Group Spokesperson), Ben Miskell, Shaffaq Mohammed (Group Spokesperson), Zahira Naz, Joe Otten, Martin Smith and Richard Williams

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Penny Baker.

**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. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1 The minutes of the previous meetings held on 18 October 2023 were approved as a correct record.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

6.1 Marion Gerson attended to present the following questions that she had submitted: Jewish people living in our city, including those who are secular or non-Zionist and who may be deeply troubled by the actions of the Israeli government, nevertheless have a deep emotional tie to the state of Israel at least as great as that of the Sheffield citizens supporting Palestine. At this time of suffering on all sides, there is surely a need for respect and understanding, not the proliferation of hurt. Is it right, then, for our Council to consider joining a Sheffield Coalition Against Israel? Or, even worse, a Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid? Would doing so make one iota of difference in trying to stop the conflict or find a solution?

Answer: Thank you for your question. At the Council meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023, the Council agreed a resolution which resolved that the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee would be requested to consider whether the Council should join the Sheffield Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid.

This issue will now be scheduled on the workplan for the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, this committee, for the New Year, so that this can be given due consideration by the Committee. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on whether or not the Council should join the Coalition, while this issue is going

through the process outlined.

However, I do want to say that I am acutely aware of the deep hurt and anger being felt in our communities as a result of the ongoing conflict in Israel and Gaza and I strongly agree with you that at this time of suffering on all sides, there is a need for respect and understanding, not the proliferation of hurt. I am also acutely aware that the name of this group is troubling for some people and to my mind does not make a clear distinction between the Israeli government and the state of Israel.

I believe that my role, as Leader of the Council, is to promote understanding, compassion and cohesion in our city and I want to assure you that I will do everything that I can in pursuit of this objective. I will be mindful of all of this when I'm involved in conversations with colleagues about this request and I hope that they will be too.

- 6.2 Himal Raut attended to present the following questions that he had submitted: I am a Hongkonger and also student at Sheffield Hallam University. As some of you may know, Sheffield Hallam University has the "Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice." Named after our University Chancellor, Helena Kennedy, it is a leading centre for human rights and supports scholarly research to fight social injustice, which includes reports about Uyghur forced labor. Indeed, earlier this year in July, the Centre published a report detailing companies identified as using forced labours in the Uyghur region or engaging in labour transfer. (1)

As a human rights champion, Lord Helena Kennedy does not only support academic research that reveals the truth, but also supported 'a campaign to persuade the UK government to give the UK high court the role in investigating whether genocide is occurring in Xinjiang.' (2) As a result, she has been sanctioned by the Chinese Communist Party Regime since 2021. It's all because Baroness Helena Kennedy believes that we need to work hard to protect international justice. As a university student and resident at Sheffield, I would like to ask the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee of Sheffield Council:

Does Sheffield really want to be twinned with cities from a regime that violates human rights and suppresses academic freedom?

Also, I want to ask, as I am telling you about Helena Kennedy Centre's research now, and sharing with you the data provided by Helena Kennedy Centre's websites, does the committee know that the people living in Chengdu and Anshan, who are Sheffield's twin cities in China, actually cannot obtain this research data, without risking to be arrested? If Sheffield Council decides to maintain the twinning relationship and collaboration agreement with the cities in China, can Sheffield Council please share the research data about forced labour and genocide situation in Uyghur region with the people living in Chengdu, Anshan, Daqing and Nanchang?

Answer: Thank you for your questions and for sharing information with me. Firstly let me pay tribute to the work of Baroness Helena Kennedy for her work over many decades to champion the cause of human rights and international justice.

Sheffield twinned with Anshan in 1983. It must be noted, however, that whilst we remain Twin Cities, there has been limited engagement with Anshan since 2006.

In respect of Chengdu, this is one of our most recent international partnerships, established in 2010 through a 'Memorandum of Friendly Cooperation', together with a Collaboration Agreement between Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park and Chengdu's HI Tec Zone.

The Collaboration Agreements with Daqing and Nanchang were signed in 2016, both for an initial 3-year period. Neither of these agreements have subsequently been renewed.

At the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee on the 24 January 2023 the Council confirmed that a review is being carried out by the Council into Twinning and Sister City relationships. As you may be aware, this led to the formation of the paper being presented to S&R today on establishing a new Partner City Policy.

Given Sheffield's broad range of existing international links, with a variety of terminology in place, the purpose of this report is to propose the creation of a clear Partner City Policy, to ensure consideration of each of these different types of arrangements. This will provide a future framework for: a). Assessing new approaches, and b). Reviewing the effectiveness of existing international relationships – which will of course include our pre-existing relationships with Chinese cities.

As the report notes, the Council has limited resources, which need to be focussed on improving service delivery and value for money to residents. International partnering arrangements may also create the potential for reputational risks as well as benefits for the Council and the city.

For this reason, there must be clear and objective criteria for entering into and maintaining such arrangements. Criteria will establish whether a proposed arrangement will benefit and contribute to the life of the city and its residents.

As part of the new Partner City Policy there will be an increased focus on due diligence considerations. Considering any potential risks including reputational issues through association with the location and/or key individuals – concerning matters such as Human Rights issues.

It would not be appropriate for me to comment further on the validity of the currently held relationships, but do please rest assured that you all the issues you have raised will be considered within the review of our current twinning arrangements. This is one of the main purposes of the paper coming before the Committee today and I fully support it.

- 6.3 Annie O'Gara attended to present the following questions that she had submitted:  
Q1. In the Full Council meeting of November 1st, a decision about the Council's

discussing the project initiated by the Sheffield Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid was deferred to this committee. The proposal for such a discussion had been approved by the Full Council, it being one strand of the Motion put forward by the Sheffield Green Party. Despite this important matter being referred to this Committee, it does not appear on your agenda. Why has this issue not been tabled as part of your agenda?

Answer: The resolution about giving consideration to joining the Coalition Against Israel Apartheid has been referred to the Strategy and Resources Committee from Full Council. It has been placed on the committee's Work Programme and is currently being considered for the new year.

We are hopeful this will enable officers sufficient time to prepare a thorough report for consideration by the committee, taking into account the legal, equalities and other policy implications of joining the coalition and making a recommendation to the committee. It will also provide time for appropriate consultation and discussion with community groups in order to ensure that the committee has as much relevant information before them as possible.

This will include discussion with the coalition, but will also take into account conversations with faith and community leaders that have and are continuing to take place following the agreement of the council resolution, about how to show solidarity with all communities affected by the conflict in Israel and Gaza, and to support reconciliation in the city. The time taken for that may impact on when the matter can next be brought back to the committee, but this will be in the New Year.

Q2. Will you, as a matter of urgency, arrange a meeting between the Leaders of the three major parties as well as key Council responsibility-holders on the one hand, and the Sheffield Palestine Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid on the other?

Answer: Full consultation with the Coalition Against Israel Apartheid and community and faith groups will take place so the committee has as much relevant information before them as possible. I've offered to meet with the coalition and am happy to extend the invitation to the other party leaders.

Q3. Will members of this Committee commit to reading the two documents submitted with this question, which give essential background information, without which Council members may lack the necessary contextual knowledge to enter into a full and proper discussion.

Answer: Thank you for providing this information. I will read all of this, as well as circulating it to the other members of the committee, and requesting that they do likewise.

Q4. Lastly, will the Council release to us the letter sent by the Government to Councils, in response to which Sheffield Council chose to fly the Israeli flag on October 10th?

Yes, this will be circulated to you directly following this meeting.

- 6.4 Julie Pearn attended to present the following questions that she had submitted:  
At the last meeting of full council on 1st November 2023 it was resolved that the Council requested the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee to consider whether the Council should join the Sheffield Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid. What action has been taken so far in the light of this resolution and what is the timetable for consideration of this matter?

As I stated in my response to the earlier question a response will be submitted early in the New Year so that there is sufficient time for a thorough report can be prepared and that the necessary conversations can take place within the City and with faith and community leaders and consider the legal, equality and policy implications of joining the Coalition. There have been ongoing conversations with community leaders over the last few weeks about the conflict and how to support reconciliation within the City. This must be done in a way that is respectful to all of our communities in the City and that shows compassion and promoting cohesion in the City.

- 6.5 Hilary Smith attended to present the following questions that she had submitted:  
This committee has no need to delay further in taking steps to end Sheffield Council's support for Israeli Apartheid; the system of oppression, segregation, domination, dispossession, administrative detention, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and extra judicial killings outlined so clearly last week at full Council meeting by a Sheffield student.

This Council has a moral and legal responsibility not to be complicit in supporting war crimes and the crime of apartheid, which is a crime against humanity under international law. Sheffield City council took responsibility in the 1980s in ending its complicity with apartheid in South Africa and it needs to take responsibility now. You cannot say - We did not know, just as no-one could say they did not know in the 1980s about South Africa.

These are the first steps that this committee can take:

- Cease banking with Barclays Bank, a bank that holds over £1 billion in shares and provides over £3 billion in loans and underwriting to 9 companies whose weapons, components, and military technology have been used in Israel's armed violence against Palestinians.
- Ensure that this council ends all financial links with any company that appears on the United Nations list of companies that operate in Israeli settlements;
- Ensure, in particular, that this Council does not directly or indirectly maintain a financial relationship with JCB, a British company which is listed in the UN database and which is responsible for enabling home demolitions across Palestine, including of Palestinians who are citizens of Israel;
- Ensure that this council ends any financial relationship with Israeli arms companies and with any arms company selling arms to Israel.

Will this committee commit to taking these steps? Will you demonstrate, through actions rather than words, that you are serious about ending complicity with Israel's brutal, illegal apartheid system of oppression?

Answer: The Local Government Act 1988 prohibits consideration of a wide range of "non-commercial considerations" in procurement and contracting and this includes:

- any involvement of the business of contractors with fields of government policy such as defence, or foreign, policy, and
- the country of origin of supplies or the location in any country of the business of the provider.

This means that the Council is not able to choose to take such matters into account. The law prohibits it from doing so.

However, the Council has adopted an ethical procurement policy, and this does require prospective contractors to declare any breaches of International Human Rights law that have been found against them.

Within the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy Statement we have an Ethical Investment Strategy, an extract of which states..

"the Council will not knowingly invest directly in businesses whose activities and practices are inconsistent with the Council's values. To that end, the Council commits not to hold any direct investments in fossil fuels, tobacco, arms companies or, to the best of our knowledge, companies involved in tax evasion or grave misconduct".

I am confident that the Council's procurement officers will continue to apply this policy and will provide advice on any future changes made by the government on the legislation relating to non-commercial considerations.

6.6 Russell Johnson attended to present the following questions that he had submitted:

Q1. To demonstrate the sincerity of the Council's stated aim to be accountable for the destruction of thousands of healthy street trees, the harms to individuals and the associated financial and reputational costs incurred by the wrong decisions of Officers and Members, will the Leader ask the Chief Executive to request a Public Interest Report from the Auditor covering the period of probable misuse of public monies during the debacle described in part by Lowcock?

Q2. Does the Leader agree with me that disallowance of both Public and Members' Questions about whether the Labour Group, and by extension the Council, is actually being directed by a shadowy group chaired by the Leader of Ealing Council that leads inevitably to accusations of unnecessary secrecy? If the Leader is concerned about such unfortunate optics, would it not be preferable to accept Questions from any sources, demonstrate transparency and answer honestly?

Q3. Does the Council Leadership persist in clinging to the misguided notion that the Lowcock Report is the 'definitive truth' and the last word on the Street Tree

Scandal and the dysfunction of the Council that gave rise to it? This despite the limited nature of Sir Mark's brief and the rather weak recommendations that do not make possible the comprehensive accountability that is needed following the gross blunders that occurred and clearing the route for significant improvement in governance. Would it be in the Council's interests to cease to hide behind Lowcock and engage honestly with all concerned?

Q4. Is the council confident that the £64,000 for committal proceedings on 24th October 2017 was not misuse of public funds?

Answer: I'm always happy to take questions and always enjoy our exchanges. Where questions have been ruled out, it is because they have nothing to do with the council. I am afraid that conspiratorial accusations fall into that category. So in the interests of full transparency and disclosure, I can honestly but politely say that the basis of your question is entirely incorrect.

Sir Mark Lowcock spent a long time fully investigating what went so badly wrong during the years of the street tree dispute. I am satisfied that this was an extremely thorough and important inquiry which is why we now fully accept all of the recommendations. We are now in the process of implementing those recommendations and engaging honestly with members of the public and our partners to make that happen.

I am focused on that task and expect that all elected members, in my party and from others, and all officers, understand the seriousness of what happened during the dispute and commit to work together to ensure a dispute of that magnitude can never happen again.

In our full response to the Sheffield Street Trees Inquiry, we have spoken to our auditors. The consideration of whether there needs to be a public interest report is a matter for the auditor, but if they want to understand the views of those who have suggested it, the Council will provide them with contact details. The auditors have a statutory right of inspection, and the Council fully engages with that process, as we always do.

The Council has ensured that the auditor has the Inquiry's report, and they can take up any line of enquiry on spending that they think appropriate.

The Council is clear that the money spent on committal proceedings in 2017 did not represent a misuse of public funds. However, it is clear from Sir Mark Lowcock's report that the decision to bring committal proceedings was a misjudged one. In the words of the inquiry report:

"As the dispute progressed, the volume of expensive legal activity increased, as did the level of protests on the streets. This demonstrates that the Council's strategy was not effective in deterring protestors or resolving opposition to Streets Ahead. As one member of the Council legal team told the Inquiry, the Council's legal success was an example of how it could win battles but lose a war. As well as failing to resolve the dispute, relying on legal solutions caused the Council wider reputational damage, as well as costing a significant amount of money that could have been used to fund compromise solutions for street trees."

The decision to pursue injunctions and committal against protestors was misguided and could have actively hampered the possibility of resolution of the dispute. It was a strategy which was always likely to fail and was not, as was claimed at the time, "a last resort". It also caused harm to a number of individuals. We have apologised publicly for this. Individuals have also been offered the opportunity to receive a personal apology in writing or in person for the harms caused to them. That apology process is currently taking place.

## **6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

7.1 There were no Members' questions.

## **7. RETIREMENT OF STAFF**

8.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement submitted a report on Council staff retirements.

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

(a) places on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the City Council by the following staff in the Directorates below:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Years' Service</u>
<b><u>Adults Wellbeing and Care Services</u></b>		
Jayne Clarke	Senior Provider Services Worker	34
<b><u>Children's Services</u></b>		
Georgina Ryalls	Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Gleadless Primary School	34
<b><u>Neighbourhood Services</u></b>		
Steven Pedley	Environmental Services Officer	35
Judith Siddall	Facilities Manager	49

(b) extend to them its best wishes for the future and a long and happy retirement; and

(c) directs that an appropriate extract of the resolution now made, under the Common Seal of the Council, be forwarded to those staff with over 20 years' service.



## **8. WORK PROGRAMME**

- 8.1 The Committee received a report containing the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and discussion. The aim of the Work Programme is to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee. It was highlighted that this is a live document and Members input to it was invaluable.

In particular it was noted that there was a high volume of business for the Committee in December and as a result an Extraordinary meeting had been arranged for 21 December.

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

(a) the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including the additions and amendments identified in Part 1 of the report;

(b) that, as a result of the volume of items to be considered at the 13 December meeting the Committee note that an Extraordinary Strategy and Resources &R meeting has been scheduled for 21 December. The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement, in consultation with the Chair will give consideration to the distribution of items between the respective agendas;

(c) approval be given to the consideration of cross cutting issues as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report; and

(d) the referrals from Council (petition and resolutions) detailed in Section 2 of the report be noted and the proposed responses set out be agreed;

## **9. SAFEGUARDING PEOPLE - ANNUAL REPORTS**

The Strategic Director of Adults Care and Wellbeing introduced the three safeguarding reports relating to domestic and sexual abuse; Sheffield Children Safeguarding; and Adults Safeguarding. The importance of the issue of safeguarding to the Council and the role and responsibilities that everyone has to play in safeguarding was emphasised. The common themes across all the reports were highlighted and the focus on collaboration and the values of the Council were noted.

### **(a) Domestic and Sexual Abuse Annual Report**

- 9.1a The Director of Public Health submitted a report proposing that the first Annual Report of work on Addressing Domestic and Sexual Abuse / Violence Against Women and Girls is accepted and endorsed.

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

(a) that the Annual Report on Addressing Domestic and Sexual Abuse / Violence

Against Women and Girls 2022/23 be noted and endorsed; and

(b) that the Annual Report's recommendations be considered during the development of the new Domestic and Sexual Abuse / Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy for the city which will be developed in consultation with partners and stakeholders over the coming year.

**9.3a Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1a This is the first annual report produced on the work undertaken on addressing domestic and sexual abuse / violence against women and girls. The report illustrates the range of initiatives and commissioned services that are in place. It highlights the outcomes of commissioned providers, the work undertaken in relation to statutory duties and strategic achievements. It also illustrates the findings of an independent assessment of the city's responses to domestic abuse.

9.3.2a The report describes how services are under pressure and that demand is likely to grow as public awareness increases. It proposes that limited resources mean that innovative solutions to meeting needs must be identified and suggests that the development of guided self help resources and a network of community champions may help to mitigate the resource gaps evident. It also recommends the ongoing commitment to campaigns such as White Ribbon as a framework for addressing violence against women and girls and achieving lasting change in attitudes and behaviour across the city.

9.3.3a It also recommends that business cases are developed for further investment various support elements that are currently under pressure:

- support for children and young people to recover from the impact of abuse
- therapeutic support to aid the recovery of adults such as counselling services
- behaviour change programmes for perpetrators
- community based domestic abuse support for adults

9.3.4a It is recommended that these issues are considered during the development of the new Domestic and Sexual Abuse / Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy for the city which will be developed in consultation with partners and stakeholders over the coming year.

**9.4a Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1a The alternative would be not to have completed an annual report.

**(b) Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 21/22 & 22/23**

9.1b The Director of Children's Services submitted a report presenting the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Reports for 21/22 and 22/23, outlining the continuing progress in the multi-agency work to protect and safeguard children and young people at risk in Sheffield.

Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) is made up of the following

three local safeguarding partners:

- Sheffield City Council: represented by the Director of Children's Services
- NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board: represented by the Chief Nurse
- South Yorkshire Police: represented by the Chief Superintendent District Commander.

The three partners must publish a yearly report setting out the work they have undertaken that year. The attached Annual Reports covers the periods from April 2021 through to March 2022 and April 2022 through to March 2023.

Both annual reports set out how the SCSP have reviewed the partnership's ambition, strategy and key business priorities over the 12-month reporting period.

Both reports provide details of the following areas:

- Priorities, progress and impact
- Dissemination and embedding of learning.
- Conclusion and next steps

The key priorities for 2021-22 were identified as far back as 2019/20 and over the last two years against a background of the Covid 19 pandemic these have continued to roll forward. As outlined in the SCSP 22-23 Annual Report, there has been a huge amount of work undertaken across the city and progress made with regards to meeting the key priority areas.

It was noted that the reports had already been considered by the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee.

9.2b **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee notes the contents of the annual reports (appendices 1-3).

9.3b **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1b It is important that the Committee are aware of the work of the Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership and the content of the Annual Reports.

9.4b **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1b None. Under Working Together 2018 – paragraphs 21-46, all safeguarding partners must publish a report at least once in every 12-month period.

**(c) Adults Safeguarding Annual Report 22/23**

9.1c The Director of Adult Wellbeing and Care submitted a report providing the Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2022/23 for endorsement by Committee.

The Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership (SASP) is a strategic, multi-agency partnership that brings together statutory and non-statutory organisations to actively promote effective working relationships between different agencies and professionals to address the issue of abuse and harm. The Safeguarding Adults

Executive leads and holds individual agencies to account, to ensure adults in Sheffield are supported and protected from abuse and neglect.

It was noted that the report had already been considered by the Adult, Health and Social Care Policy Committee.

9.2c **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee notes the Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2022/23.

9.3c **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1c An endorsed Annual Report gives the public assurance that the Partnership is delivering upon its commitment to protect people from abuse and harm. It will also provide greater accountability and transparency of how will do this.

9.3.2c Asking for the Annual report to be considered at Strategy and Resources Committee will keep the Committee, wider stakeholders, and the public the ability to support increased awareness and understanding of Safeguarding.

9.4c **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1c This is an update on previously endorsed delivery plan in line with recommendations approved at Committee. No alternatives options are available due to this.

**10. COMMUNITY RE-USE OF STEEL CONTAINERS**

10.1 The Executive Director Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the future use of the steel containers from the former Fargate Container park project for approval, in line with the decision made at Strategy and Resources Committee on 24 January 2023.

This report sets out the process used to determine their future use. It describes how individual organisations bidding for their use have been selected as preferred recipients of the eight containers, and notes that the Executive Director for Neighbourhood Services will, following approval of the uses, proceed to confirm those recipients.

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

(a) notes and approves the future uses of the containers, described in the report; and

(b) notes that the Executive Director for Neighbourhood Services enter into agreements to provide containers for reuse, with:

- Friends of Glen Howe Park
- Hallam and Redmire Rangers FC
- Hillsborough Arena
- Sheffield Wednesday Football Club Community Programme
- St Wilfred's Centre

- Wisewood Juniors FC

### 10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 An assessment panel made up of professional officers with experience in dealing with community and construction projects, as well as Councillors from the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee, came to the conclusion that the six preferred projects most closely met the desired outcomes defined by the published criteria. The six projects chosen will help support the community organisations develop and grow their offers for the local community. All the preferred projects will be deliverable construction projects that can be funded by the organisations bidding for them. Overall, the risk of the container projects not being successful was low.

### 10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 There were five expressions of interest that weren't selected. The overall scoring for the six preferred projects was higher. Selecting the lower scoring projects would have resulted in an unfair process and a perception the Council weren't being transparent in their decision making.

10.4.2 If the preferred uses are not deemed suitable by the committee, the council could choose to re-run the expression of interest process with a different set of criteria, however it is unknown whether this would generate any different outcomes to the type of projects which have come forward already, as the distribution of the opportunities was extensively communicated.

## 11. **ESTABLISHING A NEW PARTNER CITY POLICY**

11.1 The Executive Director City Futures submitted a report in respect of the establishment of a new Partner City Policy.

Sheffield City Council does not currently have any formal Policy in place in respect of responding to approaches to establish new international relationships through such mechanisms as Twinning (sometimes referred to as Sister City agreements), through to entering into such things as Friendship or Collaborative agreements.

The Council regularly receives approaches to forge new relationships, whether this is to enter into specific agreements or simply to host a visiting delegation.

There is a need for clear objectives and decision-making criteria for entering into any Twinning / Sister City agreements or developing new less formal international links; identifying outputs and outcomes and the potential to link with key partners to help achieve wider benefits for the city and its residents.

With limited time and resources, deciding on what opportunities to pursue, requires transparent and consistent decision-making criteria. Such criteria should provide quantifiable value to the City and its residents, and be kept under review. Whilst we may choose to maintain existing relationships, new opportunities for city partnership working will inevitably arise. Given Sheffield's broad range of existing

international links, with a variety of terminology in place, the purpose of this report is to propose the creation of a clear Partner City Policy, so called to ensure consideration of each of these different types of arrangements, and to provide a framework.

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

(a) approves the proposals for a Partner City Policy, as set out within Appendix 1 of the report now submitted; and

(b) authorises the General Counsel and Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Executive Director City Futures to finalise the policy based upon the proposals (as currently set out within Appendix 1) and any observations made by the Committee.

**11.3 Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 Implementation of a Partner City Policy, once approved, would seek to address a current gap within the Council's procedures, ensuring that there is a degree of rigour in our assessment of new approaches and that decisions are taken that are fully informed.

11.3.2 Intended outcomes are such that where Sheffield chooses to enter into new international partnerships, the new relationship will have been thoroughly considered in respect of such aspects as: existing synergies; the potential benefits to each party; resource requirements; reputational aspects and potential alignment to key stakeholder activities and strategies.

**11.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.4.1 The alternative option is to retain the status quo and not have any form of stated policy. For the reasons outlined elsewhere in this report, this is not considered to be an appropriate position to continue with, either for the Council, nor for any potential cities that may wish to consider entering into a formal relationship with the City.

**12. THE SHEFFIELD PUBLIC HEALTH GRANT**

12.1 The Director of Public Health submitted a report describing how the ring-fenced Public Health Grant is allocated; outlining the purpose, scope, and progress of the Public Health Grant Review; and seeking approval of a recommended approach to grant expenditure in relation to contract spend and inflation, particularly in relation to staffing costs.

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

(a) notes the current allocation of Public Health Grant, the uplift in the Public Health Grant for 2023/2024 and the accompanying technical guidance and note the progress of Public Health Grant Review;

(b) approves the principle that, as set out in this report and in accordance with the principles set out in the technical guidance, some of the uplifted grant should be

used to increase payments for services commissioned from NHS bodies from the Public Health Grant, wherever contractual arrangements allow, by 3.5%; and

(c) approves the principle that, as set out in this report, some of the uplifted grant should be used to increase payments for services commissioned from VCF bodies from the Public Health Grant, wherever contractual arrangements allow, by 3.5%

### 12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 The recommendations are consistent with the technical guidance issued by the Department for Health and Social Care alongside the grant settlement. They also ensure parity of treatment between different providers delivering services funded from the Public Health Grant.

### 12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

12.4.1 Strategy and Resources Policy Committee could decide to provide a 3.5% increase only to the NHS in line with technical guidance. This is not recommended.

## 13. **COUNCIL'S CONSENT FOR THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER POWERS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE SOUTH YORKSHIRE MAYOR**

13.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement presented a report setting out details of a proposal from the Mayor of South Yorkshire that the powers of the Police and Crime Commissioner ("PCC") should be held by the Mayor following the conclusion of the current PCC's term of office in May 2024.

This transfer of powers requires secondary legislation to be made by Parliament and the consent of all four constituent Councils within the Mayoral Combined Authority, of which Sheffield is one. This report seeks the consent of Sheffield City Council to the transfer of powers, resulting in the abolition of the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Yorkshire from May 2024.

This change would also give the Council's consent to the alignment of the Mayoral election cycle with the current PCC election cycle. This would result in the next Mayoral election taking place in May 2024 (and thereby reducing the Mayoral term of office by two years,) with the Mayor holding the PCC powers from that point.

13.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee gives Sheffield City Council's consent to:-

(a) the making of an order to provide for the Mayor of South Yorkshire to exercise functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner ("PCC") in relation to South Yorkshire with effect from May 2024; and

(b) the reduction of the current Mayoral term by two years so as to align with the PCC election cycle in May 2024.

### 13.3 **Reasons for Decision**

13.3.1 It is recommended that Sheffield City Council provides its support for the transfer of PCC powers to the South Yorkshire Mayor as this will secure the following benefits for the people and communities of Sheffield:

- Create one single accountable, elected politician to represent the interests of communities on South Yorkshire wide issues, whilst also strengthening the opportunities to improve political scrutiny in line with the recently published English Devolution Accountability Framework.
- Deepen collaborative working to further address issues including substance misuse, mental ill health crisis, serious violence – to include gender-based violence, economic crime, anti-social behaviour, road safety and re-offending.
- Realise efficiencies from shared corporate support services and joint business planning to release enhanced funding for frontline policing delivery.

### 13.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

13.4.1 The only alternative option is for Sheffield City Council to withhold its consent. This was dismissed as it would not secure the benefits of integrating the PCC and mayoral powers as set out in paragraphs 2.4 to 2.6 of the report now submitted.