

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Strategy and Resources Policy Committee

Meeting held 12 March 2024

PRESENT: Councillors Tom Hunt (Chair), Fran Belbin (Deputy Chair), Angela Argenzio, Penny Baker, Dianne Hurst (Group Spokesperson), Douglas Johnson (Group Spokesperson), Ben Miskell, Zahira Naz, Joe Otten, Martin Smith, Richard Williams and Mark Jones (Substitute Member)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dawn Dale and 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. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the previous meetings held on 21 February 2024 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Elissa Thompson attended to present the following questions that had been submitted by Mishanth Feinstein: Since September ACORN Burngreave members have been running our #takebackVestryHall Campaign. We are unhappy with the fact that Vestry Hall, given its fantastic location and facilities, remains massively underused - especially given the desperate need for more community facilities in our area.

Following a number of community meetings, we have identified two main reasons for Vestry Hall's massive underuse - the high price of room booking, and the lack of any community outreach or involvement to ensure it is filled. We believe Vestry Hall could and should be a community hub for Burngreave, instead of an near-empty husk which at the moment is best known in the area as a feeding place for pigeons.

Given it is the councillors on the Strategy and Resources committee that set the room booking policy and charges for Vestry Hall, will the committee Chair meet with us to discuss our proposal on how we can turn around Vestry Hall, ensuring

it is used by community groups and becomes the community hub our area needs?

- 5.2 Elissa Thompson attended to present the following questions that she had submitted: My name is Elissa Thompson and I run a new community group with Ekram Ali in Burngreave and Pitsmoor called Clean Zone Community Network. We offer signposting, benefits help, activities such as cultural crafts, healthy eating advice for people with or at risk of type 2 diabetes, physical activities such as walking and running and we encourage letterpicking and environmental work and provide equipment for our members to take part in these activities.

Currently we have no income and all our resources, including food for each week which we provide as part of our healthy eating education, have been paid for from our own bank accounts. We are in the process of looking for funding and networking/hosting with other local charities however we need a central space to hold our drop in. Currently we use Abbeyfield House however this is not central enough and many of the people who would like to attend, especially those who are older and physically vulnerable are unable to get to this location, plus it does not have disability access.

A room at Vestry Hall would be ideal. However due to the cost of Vestry Hall, we are unable to offer our service to the community in this area, as for 4 hours, the cost would be £70, or in some cases depending on security cost and cleaning fees, even more. We are aware of a discount for community groups which we applied for in November but so far have not been awarded.

Vestry Hall is chronically underused - for instance in the months of September and October the Main Hall was unused 86% of the time. Does the council agree that the high price of booking is making it nearly impossible for community groups to use, what is meant to be a community building?

Vestry Hall would be a fantastic location for our drop in, which runs every Friday from 10am till 4pm. We are also hoping to hold an Eid Event mid-April which would be open to all ages, of every ethnic, cultural and religious background, to provide food for the community and offer an opportunity for social cohesion. Holding an event such as this at a central location such as Vestry Hall would be vital as this is easy to access, central, has good transport links and disabled access.

Finally, Ekram and I are both healthcare workers with over 20 years' experience between us (Ekram is a senior support worker and I am a qualified psychiatric Nurse). We understand the complexity of social and mental health issues in the north of Sheffield and have excellent links with the community, having lived and worked here for many years. We feel we can offer our community some vitally needed support, if we are offered the appropriate funding.

Our question is, what can the council do to enable groups like ours to run, free of charge from Vestry Hall which is a prime location, for the long term, given our group is likely to have a significant impact on many of the social and environmental issues Burngreave faces and will help improve the lives of some

of the most vulnerable and socially excluded people in our local community?

- 5.3 Lois Cole attended to present the following questions that she had submitted: When are you going to fulfil your obligations as Sheffield council to the residents of Burngreave?

As you know it's the second most deprived area in Sheffield, yet we don't even have a library. As a local resident I struggle to access any help with benefit and consumer advice and help with job hunting, since the local CAB office shut down several years ago. There is nowhere safe and welcoming where local residents can mix and meet, and get involved in local activities. This is why we need to make Vestry hall a community hub.

- 5.4 Ronnie Lewin attended to present the following questions that he had submitted: As Former Chair of Burngreave New Deal for Communities, I would like to know how the local buildings bought by the Burngreave New Deal programme (which are fully owned by local resident resources for local community income generation) are to be opened up for some free use to enable local resident development, as a part of the "Levelling Up" ... "Left Behind Communities!" agenda.

Currently Vestry Hall is charged by the hour for use by local residents, although, it is fully owned by the very same community! This damages community voice, development and access, by the privatisation of a community owed asset in one of the poorest areas in the city, notwithstanding the entire country!

How will "Levelling Up" change this immediately as apart of the City's plans, in a lasting and meaningful fully costed way?

- 5.5 Elissa Thompson attended to present the following questions that had been submitted by Helen from ACORN Burngreave: Burngreave is the second most deprived ward in Sheffield, out of 28. Average household income is just over £20,000 a year, while nearly 30% of children are on Free school meals. There are wards on the other side of the city (for instance Eccleshall) that have over ten years more in life expectancy. The fact that in these circumstances, the Burngreave Vestry Hall which was built to be used by the community but is at the present time mostly empty, is unconscionable.

Will the Committee Chair commit to meeting ACORN Burngreave and discuss our proposal of turning Burngreave Vestry Hall into a community hub?

Answers to questions 5.1 to 5.5: Thank you all for bringing these questions to us today. Firstly, I want to apologise for the fact these questions could have been addressed at the last meeting of this committee. The advice at the time was that that Strategy and Resources Policy Committee would not be the appropriate committee to answer these questions. That was incorrect and so on behalf of the committee I apologise again for the confusion, and thank you for your patience. Policy matters come under the council's Community Building Review which falls under the remit of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee of the council.

I completely understand the strengthen of feeling of residents for the building and the crucial role it plays for communities. Vestry Hall has a prominent and proud place in Burngreave and we are putting in place a new Community Buildings Policy so that there is open, fair, transparent, and consistent process to enable the management of Community Buildings and for the Council to work with the voluntary, community and faith sector and promote their long-term success.

The Council has around 100 Community Buildings that we manage and maintain, with a further large number owned by the Council, but leased to voluntary, community and faith sector groups and organisations. We want to have a more consistent, sustainable and asset-based approach to community buildings which is why we will today consider the adoption of a new Community Buildings Policy to help us to do that.

This approach is being developed with full engagement with the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (who are consultees to the policy via the Community Buildings Board). The principles of the policy will be tested and a period of learning will take place during a Pilot period of up to 12 months, at which point the policy can be reviewed.

This is the context for discussion today, and for my answer on the specifics of Vestry Hall.

Regarding the question about fees and charges from Mishanth – Thank you for coming today. The current fees and charges set for Vestry Hall have been in place for some time and were determined by officers considering the operational expenses of each building.

The policy sets out that land and Property is not a free resource – we are under significant budget pressures - and Council Members and officers have a fiduciary duty to ensure that property is effectively financially managed. A standard pricing methodology will be put in place to ensure that users are charged consistently across the Community Building portfolio. In the case of ad-hoc rental of Community Buildings the 'hire-rate' will be set annually, formally as part of the Council's fees & charges setting process.

The North-East Local Area Committee (LAC) in partnership with the Council's Facilities Management Service agreed, as part of a response to a public question at the meeting held at Vestry Hall to look at how we could improve the use of the building for users and its accessibility. We are holding a community consultation event on Thursday 4th April between 1-6pm at Vestry Hall. This event will invite the community to come along and have their say and share their ideas with us. I hope you'll all be able to attend.

The event will also give details on current rates, booking processes and funding available to groups. There will be stalls from services and partners who can provide advice and help to the community, such as cost of living, and housing.

We will share details of the event shortly and send through a flyer. The North-East LAC team will be there to share the community plan and work it has been delivering in the Burngreave area over the past year and ask for your ideas for futures projects. In the first instance I would suggest you meet with the LAC team and your ward councillors to discuss the building but I am always happy to meet residents of the City.

Regarding directly the questions from Elissa Thompson and Ekram Ali. Thank you for coming today and for your long service as healthcare workers. The North East Local Area Committee (LAC) team has been in touch with Clean Zone Community Network and sent through a funding application request form. The LAC has agreed to fund the request for the EID Event of £750.

The request would also like further funding to hire Vestry Hall to hold Healthy Eating and Provide Food drops in sessions. The North East LAC currently has a cost of living small grants scheme live that invites groups to request funding up to the sum of £2,000. This is open until 22nd March, the application form and details have been sent to Clean Zone Community Network.

Concerning specifically the questions from Lois Cole on the lack of library provision. Thank you for joining us today. I would like to note that Burngreave does have a library. It's a volunteer led Library and it's based at Sorby House.

The library does provide Connections to Health services – e.g. self help groups, health chats, access to Health Trainer and Connections to other services: Sheffield Citizens Advice, Community Learning, Work Clubs.

The North East Local Area Committee received additional funding for the Cost of Living around £90,000, it agreed to provide CAB with half of that funding in a sum of £45,000 to help support the advice line and widen their capacity to provide advice across the North East area.

Firth Park library also has a CAB interactive tablet in a private room that can be accessed easily. I have previously mentioned about the North East LAC community consultation event on Thursday 4th April, and I hope you might be able to attend meet with other groups and networks in the area.

Concerning the questions from Ronnie Lewin on how the recent Levelling-up awards, and concerns over the use of this Vestry Hall. Thank you for coming today and for your work with Burngreave New Deal. Sheffield City Council's levelling up programme is geographically based in the Castlegate, Parkwood and Attercliffe areas and therefore there is no resource from the programme for the Burgreave area.

However, the Council is working to implement a Community Buildings Policy and associated Pilot, to be discussed today. As mentioned earlier, this will set out a proposed approach to build a sustainable and asset-based approach to Community Buildings, working closely with residents and stakeholders to do so.

And finally concerning the question from Helen about turning Vestry Hall into a

community hub. Thank you. Understanding the potential of our buildings and interest in them is a key part of the review. We know that provision and use of Community Buildings is a tool which can be used to support communities and forms part of a wider strategy to help local communities. That's why our forthcoming review of community building will involve all local councillors, community organisations, and the voluntary sector in shaping the policies related to community buildings, costs, use and transfers. The event on April 4th is an initial opportunity to discuss future use. Will make sure you are all sent details.

5.6 Julie Pearn attended to present the following questions that she had submitted:

Q. As we understand it, Strategy and Resources is the committee charged with debating matters of "significant strategic importance" and for considering "any policy matter not otherwise allocated to a committee."

In the light of this, we note that the drafting of a statement of unity and solidarity, agreed in full Council on March 6th, has not been referred to a committee per se, but to a "cross-party group". Our questions relate to that group. When will this group meet? What is the composition of that group to be?

Answer: Under the constitution, each policy committee may set up task and finish groups to look in more detail at particular issues. The group referred to in the question will be a task and finish group of Strategy and Resources Committee. Any formal decisions that need to be made in relation to the petition, following the work of the task and finish group will be made by Strategy and Resources Committee in a public meeting as normal. This approach is being adopted because it will allow the committee to move quickly in responding to the issues raised in the petition and debate at Full Council.

The drafting and issuing of a statement is not one that requires a formal decision of the Policy Committee, so will be able to be actioned more quickly and as per the commitment I made as Leader at Full Council last week we will do our best to agree this before the pre-election period.

The composition of the group is Cllr Shaffaq Mohamed, Cllr Douglas Johnson, Cllr Dianne Hurst, and myself. We will meet as soon as possible within the coming days.

Q. Matters pertaining to the composition of the group: In a previous cross-party group of three, a decision was taken by two of the three members to fly the Israeli flag on October 10th 2023. Other West Yorkshire Councils chose to fly the peace flag, so discretion was an option.

Would it be appropriate to reconvene only this group of three, given a past decision by two of them to adopt a partisan position?

Answer: The decision to fly the Israeli flag on 10th October, as I have said before, was taken to show solidarity with the victims of the Hamas attacks on 7th October. That decision will have no bearing on the task at hand now.

The cross party task and finish group will reflect on and consider this very different set of circumstances when making recommendations about the next steps that the council should take in relation to the petition.

Q. Would it be appropriate to include a member who said on March 6th (inter alia) "...Passing a resolution at Sheffield City Council in November didn't bring about a ceasefire... If you really think that passing a resolution is going to change the situation on the ground, I have to disagree with you."

Does this committee agree that those utterances suggest a lack of understanding of: the central importance of statements of moral leadership to the role of elected representatives? And the way that this builds confidence in the electorate that those elected to serve have high moral integrity?

No, I don't agree. Let me explain why. At Full Council last week I said that words matter, and the words of elected politicians in this chamber do matter. They matter in Sheffield, but can have much greater impact further afield as well.

But I must accept that, however just our calls, however loud our voices, they of course may have limited or no impact at times. This is a reality, and it would be completely incorrect to overstate what the council can achieve. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't speak out,

I am proud that Sheffield has a long history of speaking up, on international matters. This clearly remains the case today, and I do think we have raised our voice loudly on this issue in the last few months.

Q. Can we assure petitioners that the composition of the cross-party group will be made up of members who: inspire confidence that they are equal to the task and understand the clear brief of producing a "statement of unity and solidarity with the Palestinian people" Reflect the supportive tone of Councillors' contributions in the chamber on March 6th?

Answer: I have full confidence in every member of the cross-party task and finish group. We will come together to do what is right, and in a timely manner.

5.7 Annie O'Gara attended to present the following questions that she had submitted:

Q. At the full Council meeting on March 6th, the petition signed by some 7,500 people was discussed. After some intense and revealing debate, it was decided to refer the petition to this committee. Petitioners expressed strong concerns about further delays to the Council's response to this important petition. They had no option but to contrast the numerous supportive measures, offered without let or hindrance by the Council, to the Ukrainian people, clearly demonstrated on the city Council's website. Unnecessary delays will exacerbate concerns about what is seen as the Council's selective morality when it comes to some sorely oppressed people, in contrast to others, like Ukrainians.

Community cohesion, often referred to as a priority by Council leadership, cannot be achieved by failure to oppose genocide, apartheid or by flagrant

double standards on whose lives we value. This committee now has the weighty responsibility of discussing further the petition. Our questions today require urgent answers which must then be communicated to the large number of petitioners. What is the time frame for this discussion? Will the matter be tabled for the April 17th meeting, the agenda of which has not yet been set?

Answer: As referred to in the earlier answer, our clear intention is to issue a cross-party statement of solidarity, in line with the resolution of Full Council, as soon as possible and before the beginning of the Pre-Election Period on 26 March. This does not require a decision of a policy committee.

The other matters contained in the petition will require detailed work, and a report to be brought forward to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee with options and officer advice.

That will not be able to be considered at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 17th April as the Council is prohibited from making decisions on issues that may be politically sensitive in the period immediately before an election. This year that period runs from 26 March to the close of poll on 2 May. The report therefore will be considered at the first meeting of the committee after the election.

Q. How will that discussion be structured? E.g. Will the Strategy and Resources committee consider each element of the petition separately and also reach a determination on them separately (as we understood from comments in Full Council)?

Answer: That is to be considered by the task and finish group, but it is likely that each element will be discussed and determined separately as suggested in the question.

Q. Will the Strategy and Resources Committee undertake to reach a full decision on all the petition's elements within that meeting?

Answer: This is the clear intention. However, it is possible that there may be more complex areas that will require further work. But do please rest assured we will do this in timely manner.

5.8 Hilary Smith attended to present the following questions that she had submitted: I note that this committee is today considering a report recommending a new flag protocol, and that the report contains a number of days which will be marked by specific flags being flown each year. I note the absence from that list of the United Nations Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, marked on November 29th each year.

General Assembly resolution 32/40B, passed in December 1977, introduced the day of solidarity, and the UN has marked the day ever since. The UN resolution also encourages Member states to continue to give the widest support and publicity to the observance of the day of solidarity.

Some of you may not be aware that Sheffield City council flew the Palestinian flag on 29th November each year between 1995 and 2000 but has failed to do so since then. Recently the leader of the Council has reaffirmed that the Council recognises the State of Palestine. If this is to mean anything at all, it is surely time for the Council to commit to fly the Palestinian flag each November 29th. Will this committee agree to do so?

Answer: The annual list of flag days does not include the flags of any sovereign nation other than the United Kingdom, and we would not propose that we should add particular national flags to our annual calendar.

However, as you will see, the new flag protocol includes a mechanism for ad hoc requests to be made to fly particular flags and a clear decision-making route for how those requests will be determined.

The United Nations flag is included on the list to be flown on United Nations day, which is 24th October.

5.9 Chella Quint attended to present the following questions that she had submitted:

Q. Language matters, we have observed that the language in the Charter draft needs updating. Use of terms like sanitary products and repeated use of the phrase women and girls, with only a very brief mention of trans and non-binary people who also menstruate can perpetuate stigmas and exclusion. Will the Council commit to updating the charter language and seek out training to improve this standard going forward?

Q. We believe it is vital for the Council to demonstrate transparency and choice in the procurement process for menstrual products, so as not to tacitly promote one brand over another. Can the Charter ensure fairness and transparency regarding existing relationships with product companies and around new partnerships, purchases, donations and charitable arrangements and ensure environmentally friendly options such as plastic free and reusable products are included.

Q. Our work has been instrumental in shaping Sheffield's approach to menstruation and menopause awareness since long before the very welcome recent motion and Charter and we are proud to see several of our campaigns long standing aims included in several motion and Charter points. How will the Council ensure that the Charter acknowledges the legacy of the voluntary work of our partners, volunteers and colleagues across Sheffield, so that this continues to be recognised and celebrated within the City. In conclusion we are here to ensure that our collective efforts towards menstrual literacy and equity and menopause awareness are acknowledged, respected and continued.

Answer: Thank you for submitting your questions Chella, which I will respond to in a minute, but before I do, I just wanted to acknowledge the contribution you have made with your work over a number of years on period equity, and in particular your Period Positive campaign.

You and colleagues have done a huge amount to raise awareness of the challenges that so many have with access to period products in our city and

across the country, and to advocate for change. I would also like to thank you for working with officers and councillors on the report that we are considering today and I am sure that the rest of the committee will join me in that.

As well as the questions you have asked today, I know that you had wanted to ask many more but given the timescales permitted at today's meeting it is not possible to go through all of these. However, a full written response will be provided and will also be made available online as part of this meetings' record.

On language, we have used the Equality Act as the basis for our understanding and looked at the impact on all protected characteristics. This has included feedback that language has to be simple and understandable to people of different faiths, ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds, to disabled people, to lesbians, bi and trans and non-binary and to people of all ages.

We are happy to take specific feedback and suggestions on how language in the charter may be improved and made more inclusive. The document is published in draft, and we are keen to seek feedback to refine and improve it further.

With respect to procurement, the council notes that donations may take the form of partner to partner rather than via the council and this response relates specifically to council procurement activities. The Council does not currently purchase menstrual products at this time and would be subject to our existing procurement regulations and our own policies if we do in the future, including in relation to social value and ethical procurement. It is important to note that we do not have any existing relationship with any providers of period products.

Finally, the council is proud to have worked alongside a variety of partners over months and years on matters of period equity, menopause and matters of sex and gender equity. Many partners are specifically acknowledged in the annex 2 of the committee report, including Period Positive Initiative. The council has explicitly recognised the contribution of Period Positive and offers thanks for participation at the international women's day event last week, as well as the significant work that it has done with Learn Sheffield and with schools in the city and we hope that this will continue into the future.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

6.1 There were no Members' questions.

7. RETIREMENT OF STAFF

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

7.2 **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>
<u>Children's Services</u>		
Shanti Davis	Support Worker	28
Jane Riddell	Teacher, Limpsfield Junior School	23
<u>Neighbourhood Services</u>		
Diane Deakin	Cleaning Operative	21

(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.

Details of the Council motion on 7 February 2024 in respect of "5 years since declaring a climate emergency" were outlined and it was noted that three aspects of that motion were for Strategy and Resources Policy Committee to respond to. A suggested response in respect of the advertising policy element of this was set out in the report and that further work is required on the other aspects. A suggested response from the Committee to these aspects of the motion would be submitted as soon as possible.

In addition, it was reported that the Chair of the South East Local Area Committee (LAC) had written to the Strategy and Resources Committee, on behalf of that LAC in respect of concerns about the future of Birley Spa Bath House that had been discussed at their last meeting.

This is a formal request of the LAC and needs to be dealt with as set out in the constitution. The Committee has three options as to how to deal with the referral. The three options are: (i) refer the matter to a Strategic Director (ii) refer the matter to another relevant officer (iii) refer the matter to the Committee by way of a report.

- 8.2 **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) Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme;
- (c) approval be given to the consideration of cross cutting issues as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (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; and
- (e) the Executive Director Neighbourhood Services be requested to meet with the Chair of the South East Local Area Committee (LAC) to discuss the concerns with regard to Birley Spa Bath and then assess if a report needs to come back to Committee.

9. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2024- 28 AND ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT INCLUDING WORKFORCE REPORT FOR 2022-2023.

- 9.1 The Director Policy and Democratic Engagement presented a report setting out, for approval, a package of activity to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and meet our statutory duties. It brings together our new Equality Objectives 2024-2028, which were previously accepted in draft on 21 December 2023 by this Committee as part of our Equality Framework "equality is everybody's business", which have now been updated following the consultation. These are accompanied by our Council-level Equality Objectives Action Plan 2024-25, proposed Awareness Days to mark in 2024-25, and our Annual Equality Report 2022-23.

The 2022-23 Annual Equality 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. It gives an overview of how we are meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) including summary progress against our previous Equality Objectives with examples of a selection of work to improve equality and to meet the Duties. It also includes the council's Annual Workforce Data Report which 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 report also details our pay gap information.

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

- (a) agrees the new Equality Objectives 2024-2028, as detailed in the report;

(b) agrees the Council-level Equality Objectives Action Plan 2024-25 which will monitor progress against the Objectives;

(c) agrees the Annual Awareness days we will mark in 2024-25, as set out in the report;

(d) notes the 2022-23 Annual Equality Report, specifically:

- (i) progress made in meeting our Statutory Equality Duties and
- (ii) our Statutory Workforce Report, including improvements, ongoing challenges and pay gap information

9.3 Reasons for Decision

9.3.1 Although there are many inequalities within the city as noted in the Council Plan and annual report, colleagues across the Council are working hard to tackle these. Many are because of national factors that impact on the city that are outside our control. We do however seek to address these such as work on health inequalities within the work in the Council and city such as via the City Goals and Council plans and strategies. We want to acknowledge the work whether new projects or work that is business as usual and thank our colleagues for working together to help make Sheffield a fairer, accessible and a more inclusive place to live and work in.

9.3.2 It is therefore recommended that Strategy and Resources Committee approve the Equality Objectives as they will support the fundamental repositioning of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion work in line with the ambitions of the Council Plan and our work to embed anti-racism within the organisation and the city. By agreeing the Objectives, the Committee will also ensure that we meet our statutory obligation to publish a set of four-year equality objectives.

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

9.4.1 The Council has previously agreed that it should pursue a specific approach to equality rather than one where equality is 'mainstreamed' within other activity. Because of the importance given to equality, diversity and inclusion within the draft City Goals and Council Plan this report does not recommend a change to that approach.

9.4.2 The do-nothing option was discounted when discussing this paper as it is a Specific Statutory Equality Duty to set Equality Objectives at least every 4 years and to report annually on how we are meeting our General and Specific Duties as set out in the annual report.

10. PERIOD EQUITY AND MENOPAUSE AWARENESS CHARTER

10.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement submitted a report seeking approval for the Council's Period Equity and Menopause Awareness Charter. It explains the background to and development of the charter and asks for the

committee's support in taking forward the commitments set out in the charter.

The comments made in the public questions item earlier in the meeting in respect of the Charter were noted and it was recognised that the Charter presented was a draft and that the consultation on the matter was still open. There is therefore still an opportunity for changes to be made to the Charter, which can be made by the Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

10.2 RESOLVED: That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) adopts the draft Sheffield City Council Period Equity and Menopause Awareness Charter (draft charter at appendix 1);

(b) agrees that further work should be undertaken to identify a sustainable approach to funding the provision of free menstrual products in Sheffield City Council buildings that are accessible to customers;

(c) recognises and thanks the partners, organisations and individuals who have contributed to the development of the charter over the last 18 months (list of partners at appendix 2); and

(d) notes that Sheffield has a strong tradition of partnership activism to address matters of period equity and that the city council recognises and wishes to contribute to this work.

10.3 Reasons for Decision

10.3.1 In adopting the Period Equity and Menopause Charter, the Council will take a significant step forward in its commitment to improving the lives of women and girls in the city, as well as clearly setting out our commitments to women in the workplace. The Charter actively supports the achievement of the Council's new Equality Objectives which are aligned to the Council Plan commitments.

10.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

10.4.1 This is a project that came from a resolution passed by Council on 2nd November 2022, and the Charter has been created in partnership with other organisations in the city, supported by Sheffield City Council. Due to the fact that this ask for a Charter was from a resolution that was passed we have not considered a 'do nothing' option.

(NOTE: The result of the vote on the resolution was FOR - 10 Members; AGAINST - 0 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 2 Members.

11. COMMUNITY BUILDINGS POLICY ADOPTION AND ASSOCIATED PILOT PROJECT

11.1 The Executive Director Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out

a proposed approach to build a sustainable and asset-based approach to Community Buildings, working closely with stakeholders to do so. It seeks to enable priority work to begin with a number of organisations and community buildings, whilst committing to the longer-term development of the policies, skills and resources we need to deliver into the future.

Members recognised the need to reassure communities and organisations that use community buildings that the Council is fully committed to explore the full range of options and opportunities in respect of the proposed approach to community buildings and emphasised the need for Members and officers to make this point absolutely clear in discussions with such local communities and organisations. The Council is fully committed to work with all of the stakeholders in our communities and to take an inclusive approach to the development of policies and supportive structures to deliver the Community Buildings Review and officers are to redouble their efforts to clearly explain to all relevant organisations what this proposed review entails.

- 11.2 Councillor Joe Otten proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Penny Baker, to delete officer recommendation 3 set out in the report ((c) below).

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost. (NOTE: The result of the vote was FOR – 5 Members; AGAINST – 7 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members).

- 11.3 **RESOLVED:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee:-

(a) agrees to adopt the Community Building Policy as detailed in Appendix A to the report;

(b) agrees the proposal for a Community Building Pilot in the South Local Area Committee area, to inform the development of the revised future Community Buildings Policy;

(c) agrees the proposal to prioritise the review of 22 Housing Revenue Account funded Community buildings (see Appendix B) across the city as part of the Pilot; and

(d) agrees that the findings of the pilot project will inform a revised Community Buildings Policy which will be developed working closely with voluntary, community and faith sector representatives and submitted to Strategy and Resources Policy Committee within 12 months.

- 11.4 **Reasons for Decision**

- 11.4.1 The interim Community Buildings Policy will allow the Council to work in a consistent and proactive manner, setting out a clear, transparent the management of Community Buildings. It will enable the Council to make decisions on a number of historic Community Asset transfers that have not been able to progress given the current lack of a policy. As part of these policies the Council will continue to work with local organisations to ensure that

a range of initiatives are in place to support the development of strong and sustainable communities.

11.4.2 The policy sets out a framework for elected members, council officers and voluntary and community organisations to provide clarity on the process the management of Sheffield City Council's Community Buildings.

11.4.3 The proposed Community Buildings Pilot will fully inform a revised Policy which will ensure that full consultation takes place with the community supported by the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector. The development of a revised policy, working with stakeholders, will deliver a better quality, and more sustainable approach to our Community Buildings in the future.

11.5 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.5.1 Do nothing.
Continue to manage and deliver Community Buildings as per the current provision.

11.5.2 As part of the Council's Accommodation Review, its Community Buildings / Assets have been considered. As well as these being managed in an inconsistent way across the Council, it is also important that they provide good quality facilities in the locations that the local community need them and that they are in a good serviceable condition and Health and Safety compliant (building safety), all within an affordable financial model.

11.5.3 To ensure that these requirements can be met, and the community effectively supported through Community Building provision new Community Building and Community Asset Transfer Policies need to be implemented.

(NOTE: The result of the vote on the resolution was FOR - 7 Members; AGAINST - 5 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 0 Members)

(NOTE: During the discussion of the above item the Committee agreed, in accordance with Council Procedure rules, that as the meeting was approaching the two hours and 30 minutes time limit, the meeting should be extended by a period of 30 minutes).

12. 2023/24 QUARTER 3 BUDGET MONITORING

12.1 The Director of Finance & Commercial Services submitted a report bringing the Committee up to date with the Council's revenue outturn position for 2023/24.

12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Strategy and Resources Policy Committee notes the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2023/24 Revenue Budget Outturn position.

12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 12.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

13. **A FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH: PRINCIPLES AND THEMES**

- 13.1 The Executive Director City Futures submitted a report Tsetting out the Council's ambition to develop a Sheffield Growth Plan for 2024-2035 and the principles and themes for growth which we are calling the "Growth Framework". The report seeks approval of these principles and themes, to enable Sheffield City Council officers to move onto Phase 2 of the work and develop a full Sheffield Growth Plan 2024-35 using them as its basis.

This report also seeks approval for the process of developing the Sheffield Growth Plan 2024-35, which will be developed for Strategy and Resources Policy Committee's future consideration by late Summer 2024.

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

(a) endorses the principles and themes for growth ('the Growth Framework') set out within this report so that Council officers can use them as the basis for the development of a draft Sheffield Growth Plan 2024- 2035 to be produced over Spring/Summer 2024;

(b) approves the process, set out within this report, for developing the Growth Plan which will build on the principles and themes of the Growth Framework; and

(c) agrees to receive and consider the draft Growth Plan in late Summer 2024.

13.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 13.3.1 Sheffield has ambitious plans for the future of its economy across a range of different policy areas. Bringing this together into a coherent narrative to communicate the city's priorities benefits the city's partners, investors and Sheffield citizens. It helps to identify areas of joint working and investment opportunities and sets out the Council's commitment to the city's prosperity.

- 13.3.2 The Growth Framework, as the first vital step towards a Growth Plan, establishes the draft principles and themes for the plan, beginning a conversation with stakeholders about the kind of economy they want to see in the city.

- 13.3.3 The Growth Plan will build on this initial engagement, connecting the city's economic and regeneration activity to the wider social and environmental objectives of the Council Plan and the City Goals.

13.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 13.4.1 Do nothing. This was rejected due to the needs of the city, and the need identified in the LGA Peer Review, for a strong and visible statement of ambition that brings together the city's regeneration plans for partners, investors, elected members and citizens.
- 13.4.2 Continue with a suite of strategies and action plan with no narrative. This was rejected due to the opportunity to create a coherent narrative across various areas of economic and regeneration activity. In doing so, the narrative can connect the city's growth ambitions, partnerships, investment and community engagement to better support and improve the quality of life of the people of Sheffield.

(NOTE: During the discussion on the above item Councillors Zahira Naz and Joe Otten left the meeting).

14. FLAG PROTOCOL

- 14.1 The Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement presented a report noting that Full Council passed a resolution at its meeting on 1 November which called for a review of the council's flag flying protocol. The report provided details of the outcome of that review and proposes a revised flag protocol which the committee is recommended to adopt.

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

(a) adopts the Protocol for flying of flags at Sheffield City Council sites and other commemorative activity as set out in the appendix to the report;

(b) delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, to make decisions on ad hoc requests to fly particular flags, in line with the provisions of the protocol.

14.3 Reasons for Decision

- 14.3.1 By adopting the new flag protocol, the Strategy and Resources Committee will ensure that the Council has a modern and fit-for-purpose approach to the flying of flags on Council buildings, and a mechanism for making decisions on ad hoc requests to fly a particular flag.

14.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 14.4.1 The only alternative option considered was to retain the existing flag protocol. For the reasons set out at paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 of the report, the current protocol is not considered to be fit for purpose, and therefore this option was rejected.

15. LGA PEER CHALLENGE PROGRESS REVIEW

- 15.1 The Chief Executive submitted a report noting that the LGA Peer Team that undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) of Sheffield City Council in November 2022 returned to review our progress in December 2023.

The report provides a summary of the LGA's feedback and recommendations from the Progress Review.

The LGA Team have recognised that there has been strong and positive progress at the council in the last year, with significant progress made against the recommendations made in the original CPC. This has included collaborating with partners to develop Sheffield's City Goals, producing a focused Council Plan for the organisation, continuing to provide robust and stable financial management and developing mature political culture.

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

(a) welcomes the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review report (Appendix 1) which recognises the significant progress that the council has achieved in the last year;

(b) thanks the members of the LGA Peer team for their time and insight in supporting the council's continuous improvement;

(c) recognises the collective effort from Members and officers to deliver vital strategic foundations in the last year – including the development of a Council Plan, proposals for a balanced budget, and collaborating with partners to set out our shared City Goals;

(d) agrees that the council should continue on its improvement journey by embedding the Council Plan across the whole organisation, using the feedback and insight in the LGA's Progress Review report to focus our transformation activity; and

(e) commits to asking the LGA to undertake another Corporate Peer Challenge within the usual timescale (circa 2028).

15.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 15.3.1 The recommendations recognise the significant progress made by the council in the last 12 months and encourage the whole organisation to continue that journey and deliver the Council Plan.

15.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 15.4.1 As a condition of undertaking the Corporate Peer Challenge and the Progress Review, the council agreed that the Progress Review report should be considered in a public meeting.

- 15.4.2 The only alternative option would be to reject some or all of the feedback and

recommendations in the Progress Review. However, given the positive nature of the feedback and the recognised progress made by the council against the original CPC recommendations, this option is not advised.