

Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee

Monday 13 November 2023 at 2.00 pm

Town Hall, Sheffield, S1 2HH

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Richard Williams
Councillor Janet Ridler
Councillor Marieanne Elliot
Councillor Tony Downing
Councillor Alan Hooper
Councillor Bernard Little
Councillor Karen McGowan
Councillor Robert Reiss
Councillor Garry Weatherall

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Community, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee discusses and takes decisions on:

- Communities
 - Community Development
 - Cohesion and Migration
 - Community Safety including Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Prevention and Early Intervention
 - Youth Services
- Parks, Leisure and Libraries
 - Sport, physical activity and leisure facilities
 - Community events
 - Parks and Countryside (including non-highway Trees and Woodlands)
 - Allotments
 - Ecology
 - Bereavement Services
 - Libraries
- Voluntary Sector
 - Voluntary Sector Liaison
 - Voluntary Sector Grant Aid Programme
 - Relationships and development with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector

Meetings are chaired by Councillor Richard Williams.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda. Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Policy Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the [Council's webpages](#) or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Policy Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last on the agenda.

Meetings of the Policy Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, please report to an Attendant in the Foyer at the Town Hall where you will be directed to the meeting room. However, it would be appreciated if you could register to attend, in advance of the meeting, by emailing committee@sheffield.gov.uk, as this will assist with the management of attendance at the meeting. The meeting rooms in the Town Hall have a limited capacity. We are unable to guarantee entrance to the meeting room for observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers and those that have registered to attend.

Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the [website](#).

If you wish to attend a meeting and ask a question or present a petition, you must submit the question/petition in writing by 9.00 a.m. at least 2 clear working days in advance of the date of the meeting, by email to the following address: committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be recommended to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times within the venue. Please do not attend the meeting if you have COVID-19 symptoms. It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting.

If you require any further information please email committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**COMMUNITIES, PARKS AND LEISURE POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA
13 NOVEMBER 2023**

Order of Business

Welcome and Housekeeping

The Chair to welcome attendees to the meeting and outline basic housekeeping and fire safety arrangements.

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Exclusion of Press and Public

To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public

3. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting

(Pages 7 - 10)

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on

(Pages 11 - 16)

5. Public Questions and Petitions

To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public.

(NOTE: There is a time limit of up to 30 minutes for the above item of business. In accordance with the arrangements published on the Council's website, questions/petitions at the meeting are required to be submitted in writing, to committee@sheffield.gov.uk, by 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 9th November 2023).

6. Members' Questions

To receive any questions from Members of the committee on issues which are not already the subject of an item of business on the Committee agenda – Council Procedure Rule 16.8.

(NOTE: a period of up to 10 minutes shall be allocated for Members' supplementary questions).

7. Work Programme

Report of the Director, Policy and Democratic Engagement

(Pages 17 - 28)

Formal Decisions

8. **2024/25 Budget Savings for CPL to set a balanced budget** (Pages 29 - 46)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
9. **Asylum Dispersal Grant** (Pages 47 - 64)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
10. **Allotment Rents** (Pages 65 - 80)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services

Updates and Briefing Items

11. **Bereavement Strategy** (Pages 81 - 94)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
12. **Update on work of the Task and Finish Group** (Verbal Report)

NOTE: The next meeting of Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee will be held on Tuesday 12 December 2023 at 2.00 pm

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its Policy Committees, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from David Hollis, Interim Director of Legal and Governance by emailing david.hollis@sheffield.gov.uk.

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Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee

Meeting held 25 September 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Richard Williams (Chair), Janet Ridler (Deputy Chair), Marieanne Elliot (Group Spokesperson), Tony Downing, Alan Hooper, Bernard Little, Karen McGowan and Barbara Masters (Substitute Member)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Denise Fox and Cllr Robert Reiss.

2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

2.1 a. **RESOLVED:** That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on the appendix to **item 13** of on the agenda on the grounds that, if the public and press were present during the transaction of such business, there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information as described in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no formal declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 June 2023 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 A petition was received from Sarah Saunderson who did not attend the meeting. The Chair read out the petition details which were as follows:

P: We the undersigned petition the council to either allow daily access for the public to the buildings in Meersbrook park (building at top with carpark, or pavillion at the bottom) to allow them to use the toilet facilities there or provide public toilets near the playground either in the form of permanent or a couple well maintained portaloos.

The park is heavily used by parents and families and many others who just can't make it back up the big hill when caught out and can't afford to go to a cafe and buy something just to use the toilet.

It would be a huge asset which would be appreciated by all. Even if just allowed to use one toilet in the building at the top. There's nothing worse than busting for the loo but not being able to go due to screaming children who won't leave the playground fast enough so you can make it.

There's a toilet in the walled garden that can only be accessed at times when it is opened to the public, there are toilets in the other building but we can't access them.

The Chair responded with:

R: Thank you for your petition regarding toilets in Meersbrook Park. Toilets are an important part of green spaces as we know that they facilitate people being able to visit our green spaces and potentially stay longer than they might otherwise. We are reviewing the arrangements in Meersbrook Park, in our different areas and buildings, to see whether there are options to provide toilet facilities more regularly in the park. We hope this will be possible, but need to make sure that we can do so safely.

Cllr Marieanne Elliot commented on this petition and said she was happy to support the petitioner and contact her as the ward Councillor.

- 5.2 Questions were received from Janet Smith who did not attend the meeting. The Chair read out the question on their behalf and gave responses which were as follows:

The main grassed areas of Hillsborough Park – not just the main large field – remain fenced off and are likely to remain so for several weeks. This means that a large part of the park will have been inaccessible to the public for over 3 months. SCC have already confirmed that Tramlines will take place in Hillsborough Park in July 2024, “because Tramlines operates on an 18-month cycle”.

Q1. Are there currently any limits - in terms of the level of damage, the area affected, and how long the area remains inaccessible whilst remedial work is done – to how much damage an event can do to a park before that and similar events are stopped from happening in the future?

A1. No, there is no limit as this is hard to quantify. However, the council has given its commitment to learning lessons from this year's event and not allowing this level of damage to happen again.

Q2. If no such limits exist, will they be put in place before Tramlines 2024?

A2. Please see answer to 1. In addition, our strategy for 2024 will be prevention, rather than rectifying after the event.

Q3. If limits were in place, and Tramlines breached these limits in 2024 or subsequent years, would the need to give Tramlines 18 months' notice mean that the festival could take place for a further year, irrespective of the damage caused?

A3. This is a hypothetical question that cannot be directly answered because limits are not in place. Tramlines have an obligation to rectify damage at their own costs and they have fulfilled these obligations.

- 5.3 Questions were received from Andy Chaplin who did not attend the meeting. The Chair read out the question on their behalf and gave responses which were as follows:

Q1. By agreeing to Tramlines in Hillsborough Park the council is approving 16 days of construction and generator noise then 3 days of music at 75dB. What does the council – not Tramlines – give back to the residents of Hillsborough in compensation for this disruption? **A1.** As with any major event, there is unavoidable disruption and the council

works closely with its event partners, in this case Tramlines, to reduce disruption as far as possible for residents. Of the customers who attended the 2023 event, over the 3 days, 16.5% had an address registered in the S6 area; this is in addition to those who received tickets through the resident's scheme, meaning over 8,000 people attended from the Hillsborough area. In 2023, 1614 free or discounted tickets were distributed, an increase of 16% from 2022, at a cost of £171,440 to the festival. Since its move to Hillsborough, Tramlines has donated over £560,000 worth of tickets to the Hillsborough residents. Tramlines has parking schemes in place to mitigate disruption to residents, holds resident drop-in sessions and also provides a dedicated resident's web page.

Q2. Will the Council increase the fee for Tramlines to use Hillsborough Park by £200k per year given that Tramlines could easily recoup that on ticket prices as these sell out well in advance of the event?

A2. The fee is and will be negotiated on a commercial basis and in consideration of other similar events.

Q3. Will the Council also increase the fee by a further £150k on the basis that Tramlines could recoup that by not giving away residents' tickets?

A3. The council would not advocate for Tramlines ending the resident ticket scheme as this helps to mitigate some of the disruption felt by local residents.

Q4. Will the council insist on re-entry in order to boost the economic benefit to the local economy?

A4. We know that some people who go to Tramlines need to re-enter the festival. In 2022, 929 requested to re-enter, 916 were granted and 13 were denied. In 2023 the number of requests dropped to 587 and 12 were denied

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

6.1 No Members questions were received.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The Principal Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which contained the Committee's work programme for consideration and discussion. The aim of the work programme was 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.

Thanks were expressed for training and development opportunities.

7.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That:-

1. The Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. Consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1; and
3. 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.

8. LIBRARIES APPROACH TO COLLECTIONS AND STOCK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 The Head of Libraries, Archies and Information Services introduced the report which outlined that Sheffield City Council had not previously had a documented approach to Collection Management in the Libraries, Archives and Information Service.

By Collection Management it was meant how they select, manage, promote and dispose of library stock, including hard copy books, electronic books, magazines and newspapers.

The service has been operating within this framework for a number of years, which is in line with other Library Authorities across the UK. As part of our commitment to being open and transparent we are seeking approval of the framework in order to make this publicly available.

The Framework applies to statutory Libraries within Sheffield and also covers the Co-delivered Libraries, where the Libraries, Archives and Information Service purchase new materials.

As all Libraries use the library catalogue, all material on the catalogue must follow the principles and spirit of the Collection Management Framework.

Note: The Library Collection Management Framework covers library materials including the Local Studies Library. The City Archive collections are covered by an existing policy document.

- 9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-**

1. To approve and endorse the content in the Library Collection Management Framework.

9.3 Reasons for Decision

- 9.3.1 We are bringing our Collection Management Framework to Committee for approval. We have been following this approach, which is in line with other Library Authorities and supports the 2005 national Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP's) statement on intellectual freedom. To increase openness and transparency we are documenting this approach to inform staff, customers, Elected Members of the Committee and the wider public.

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 9.4.1 Not applicable.

9. AMENDMENT TO BEREAVEMENT SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES

- 10.1 The Head of Bereavement and Coronial Services introduced the short report which was to outline and correct an error in the Bereavement Services Fees and Charges, approved on 13/03/2023.

10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-**

1. Note the typographical error in the report on Bereavement Services Fees and Charges, considered on 13 March 2023 in which the width of a coffin priced £125 was referred to as 600mm up to 7600mm in width.
2. Authorise the correction to Coffins over 600mm up to 760mm in width - £125.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 To bring the formal decision in line with what was intended and what has been applied by the service.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 None.

10. COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

10.1 The Chair was advised by officers that the item was asked to be placed in the agenda in error: a pre-existing authorisation was in place meaning that there was no requirement to bring a paper.

11. 2023/24 Q1 BUDGET MONITORING

8.1 The Senior Finance Manager introduced the report which brought the Committee up to date with the Council's outturn position for Q1 2023/24 General Fund revenue position.

8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-**

1. The Committee is asked to note the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the Q1 2023/24 Revenue Budget Outturn as described in this report.

8.3 **Reasons for Decision**

8.3.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget.

8.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

8.4.1 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.

12. SPORTS IMPROVEMENTS - CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

12.1 The Service Manager for Physical Activity Sport and Health provided an update on the Sports Improvement Capital Project and projects currently being developed and delivered, including: Woodburn Road Football Facilities, Gordon Banks Sports Hub Pitch Refurbishment, Parson Cross Sports Hub Pavilion and Pitch Improvements, Parson Cross Sports Hub Cruyff Court, Osgathorpe Park Cruyff Court Feasibility, Playzones Consultation, Mather Road Sports Improvements Consultation, Tinsley Green Ball Court

Resurfacing, Coleridge Road Pitch Improvements Consultation, Bents Green Playing Field, Totley Bents Recreation Ground Cricket Improvements and Wadsley Park Village Pitch Improvements.

12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-**

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Note that further updates and decisions (where required) on these projects will be taken to the appropriate Committee as required.

12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 Committee members to note the sport capital improvement projects currently in development and delivery.

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

12.4.1 This is an update report.

13. TRAMLINES UPDATE

13.1 The Director of Parks, Leisure and Libraires provided a briefing to the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee regarding the Tramlines Festival, the issues encountered in 2023 at Hillsborough Park, a summary of the debrief and learnings so far from Tramlines 2023 and confirmation of arrangements for Tramlines 2024.

13.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-**

1. Note the contents of the report.
2. Note that further updates and decisions (where required) on events and the Tramlines Festival will be taken to the appropriate Committee as required.



Report to Communities, Parks and Leisure Committee

13th November 2023

Report of: Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

Subject: Draft Committee Work Programme - Communities Parks and
Leisure

Author of Report: Rachel Marshall, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims 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.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Chair, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings to which all Group Spokespersons are invited.

The following potential sources of new items are included in this report, where applicable:

- Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
- References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
- A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1;
3. That 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; and

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

1.0 Prioritisation

1.1 For practical reasons this committee has a limited amount of time each year in which to conduct its formal business. The Committee will need to prioritise firmly in order that formal meetings are used primarily for business requiring formal decisions, or which for other reasons it is felt must be conducted in a formal setting.

1.2 In order to ensure that prioritisation is effectively done, on the basis of evidence and informed advice, Members should usually avoid adding items to the work programme which do not already appear:

- In the draft work programme in Appendix 1 due to the discretion of the chair; or
- within the body of this report accompanied by a suitable amount of information.

2.0 References from Council or other Committees

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

Issue	
Referred from	Council Motion 4 October 2023
<i>Details</i>	"resolves to ask the relevant Policy Committees to consider placing on their work programmes consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on Council land and buildings to generate energy and income"
<i>Commentary/ Action Proposed</i>	It is proposed that an overarching Climate Statement, including a series of specific committee statements will be submitted to the December Strategy and Resources Policy Committee for approval. Informal work is ongoing

	<p>with each Committee to develop these. The sections in respect of each Policy Committee will set out what each Policy Committee will commit to undertake to take climate action – reduce emissions and adapt to a changing climate. The sections for each Committee will include a direct reference to the issues raised in this motion.</p> <p>In addition, officers are exploring how we can commission a specific renewable energy scoping strategy, that will then provide recommendations on the actions that the Council (and each committee) will need to take to deliver this.</p>
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3.0 Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings. Appendix 2 is an example ‘menu’ of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

2.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.

Title	Description & Format	Date
Site Visits / Updates	A programme of site visits is being arranged to key Parks and Countryside sites	29/09/23 Full Day Further dates being confirmed
Site Visits / Updates	A programme of site visits is being arranged to libraries	June – September 2023
Site Visits	A programme of site visits has been undertaken to key Parks and Countryside sites	24/10/22 AM 31/10/22 AM 24/11/22 Full Day
Site Visits	A programme of site visits is being arranged for Libraries	February/March 2023

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

Item	Proposed Date	Note
NEW: ‘2024 to 2027 Revenue & Capital Budget	November 2023	
NEW: Allotment Rents Decision	November 2023	Decision on allotment rents for 2025/26
MOVED: City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO	January 2023	Moved from Nov meeting to Jan to allow additional time to complete the work required.
MOVED: Community Cohesion	March 2024	Moved from the Nov meeting to the March meeting due to more work being needed with VCFS.
MOVED: Future of Central Libraries	Dec 2023	Moved to allow more time to carry out the work required.
NEW: Update on work of the Task and Finish Group	November 2023	To provide and update on the work of the task and finish group to date.

Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee’s next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Topic	
Description	
Lead Officer/s	
Item suggested by	

Type of item	
Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	
Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	
Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s)	

Appendix 3 – Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

Meeting 3	13 th Nov 2023	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) 	<i>(re: decisions)</i> Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	<i>(re: decisions)</i> Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer
NEW: Bereavement Strategy	To provide an update and discussion in Bereavement strategy and approach to burial land	Ellie Fraser	Update and discussion			

NEW: 2024/25 Budget Savings for CPL to set a balanced budget	A report to set out the savings proposals to balance the CPL 2024/25 budget	Lisa Firth and Jason Siddall	Decision		To follow	This committee
NEW: Asylum Dispersal Grant	That the Communities, Parks & Leisure Committee approve proposals for expenditure of the 2023/24 Asylum Dispersal Grant and Asylum Dispersal funding and delegation for expenditure to the Head of Communities.	Jason Siddall and Beth Storm	Decision			
NEW: Allotment Rents	Decision regarding allotment rents for 25/26	Rowan Longhurst / James Musgrave	Decision	Engagement via Allotment Advisory Group primarily	Survey of existing allotment tenants being undertaken around rent increases	This Committee
NEW: Update on work of the Task and Finish Group	To provide and update on the work of the task and finish group to date.	Ruth Bell	Update			

Meeting 4	11 th Dec 2023	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service) 	<i>(re: decisions)</i> Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	<i>(re: decisions)</i> Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer

			<i>performance/ monitoring)</i>			
MOVED: Future of Central Library	To provide an update on Central Library	Hilary Coulson	Update			N/A
2023/24 Q3 Budget Monitoring	Approval of Budget Monitoring Report	Jane Wilby	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Allotment Policy Review	Update for discussion prior to decision	Ruth Bell/Rowan Longhurst	Update			

Meeting 5	29 th Jan 2024	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/monitoring) 	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer
MOVED: Library re-design and Opening Hours	To provide an update	Hilary Coulson	Update	N/A		
MOVED: Green and Open Spaces Strategy Review	Discussion prior to decision	Ruth Bell	Update			N/A

<p>NEW: City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)</p>	<p>To set out the current position regarding anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the city centre and seeks approval of a draft Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and approval to consult the public and other stakeholders on the introduction of the PSPO.</p>	<p>Amanda Perrott & Jim Dee</p>	<p>Decision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee briefings – Feb, July and September 2023 • Leader briefings – August and September 2023 • Political Group briefing – Labour 25th Sept, Lib Dem 2nd Oct, Green TBC. 	<p>The Committee is asked to decide whether the Council should consult with the public on a draft PSPO.</p> <p>The Council has engaged with stakeholders (such as businesses and South Yorkshire Police) to gather and assess the evidence in support of making a PSPO.</p>	<p>This Committee</p>
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Meeting 6	11 th March 2024	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Decision</i> • <i>Referral to decision-maker</i> • <i>Pre-decision (policy development)</i> • <i>Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i> 	<i>(re: decisions)</i> Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	<i>(re: decisions)</i> Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Cttee • Another Cttee (eg S&R) • Full Council • Officer
<p>MOVED: Strategic review of Libraries: Next Steps</p>	<p>Update for discussion prior to decision</p>	<p>Hilary Coulson</p>	<p>Update</p>			

2023/24 Q4 Budget Monitoring	Approval of Budget Monitoring Report	Jane Wilby	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
MOVED: Community Cohesion	To provide an update to the PC on the work around Community Cohesion	Lorraine Wood/Colin Harvard	Decision	This Cohesion Strategy approach has previously been approved by the Cabinet Member for Communities	This approach to cohesion was consulted with a wide range of VCF partners previously and is reflected in many of the current strategic developments such as SCC's Corporate Plan Themes and City Goals.	N/A

Items which the committee have agreed to add to an agenda, but for which no date is yet set.						
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer

Item 1	SUDs policy and approach	Jo Pearce	Decision	Committee Briefing and Briefing Paper prior to decision	Specific community consultation has been used to help inform the approach	This committee
Item 2	Food and Healthy Weight Commissioning Model	Jessica Wilson	Decision	Committee Briefing and Briefing Paper and consultation prior to decision	Key stakeholder and Service User consultation	This Committee

Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 2)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit

Public Engagement Toolkit

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its ‘menu of options’ for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what’s worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

- a. Public calls for evidence
- b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as ‘hackathons’) led by committees
- c. Creative use of online engagement channels
- d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
- e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
- f. Citizens assembly style activities
- g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
- h. Committee / small group visits to services
- i. Formal and informal discussion groups
- j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
- k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick ‘how-to’ guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee’s work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Lisa Firth, Director of Parks, Leisure and Libraries
& Lorraine Wood, Interim Director of Communities

Report of: Executive Director, Neighbourhood Services

Report to: Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 13th November 2023

Subject: Budget Proposals 2024/25

<p>Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Some of the options may have equality impacts if accepted. Impact Assessments are being considered and detailed Impact Assessments will be completed once this Committee agrees which options to take forward.</p>
<p>Has appropriate consultation taken place? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Appropriate consultation is being considered and will take place once this Committee agrees which options to take forward.</p>
<p>Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Some of the options may have a climate impact if accepted. Climate Impact Assessments are being considered and detailed Impact Assessments will be completed once this Committee agrees which options to take forward</p>
<p>Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Part B of this report (appendices) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i></p>

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to set out the financial pressures facing the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee (CPL) in 2024/25, and the proposed options available to the council to offset these pressures.

Recommendations:

The Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:

1. Acknowledges the recommendation approved at the Strategy and Resources Committee on 7th September 2023 that “Policy Committees will be asked to develop savings / additional income options that cover their own pressures – in effect cash standstill” and to “require Policy Committees to report at their meetings in November on how they can balance their budgets.”
2. Notes, as this Committee's response to the Strategy and Resources Committee's request, the set of budget proposals set out in the closed Part B to this report.
3. Notes that Officers will now work with Members to consult with relevant stakeholders (including with partners, staff, trades unions and in respect of equalities and climate change) on the proposals in this report to inform final budget proposals.
4. Notes that Officers will work to develop any necessary detailed implementation plans for the proposals in this report so that the proposals can be implemented as planned before or during the 2024/25 financial year.
5. Notes a further report will be brought to this Committee in December 2023.

Background Papers: None

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Adrian Hart
		Legal: Sarah Bennett
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton
		Climate: Kathryn Warrington
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	EMT member who approved submission:	Ajman Ali
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Cllr Richard Williams
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Lisa Firth Lorraine Wood	Job Title: Director of Parks, Leisure and Libraries Interim Director of Communities
	Date: 13 th November 2023	

1.0 PROPOSAL

This report asks Members to approve Communities, Parks and Leisure services General Fund savings options for 2024/25

1.1 The Strategy and Resources Committee (S&R) considered the overall budget situation being faced by the Council in their report in September 2023. This report gave an early view of the forecast financial position for the Council for the next 4 years and estimated a budget gap over the 4-year period of c£61m. Based on an early review of the most significant budget pressures facing services for 2024/25, the total savings and / or additional income required to set a balanced budget for 2024/25 will be in the region of £18m.

1.2 Each Committee is required to deliver a cash standstill budget for 2024/25, which requires them to find mitigations for any Service pressures over and above 2023/24 budget. The purpose of which is to allow the Council to achieve a balanced position for 2024/25.

The pressures and savings proposals to address this are set out in this report. Should the savings proposals in this report be approved, this committee will have a gap of **£469k** to meet its balanced budget target. Further work will be undertaken to address this gap and to ensure delivery plans are in place and a report brought to this committee in December 2023.

All Committees savings proposals will be considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee before final sign off to ensure a balance 2024/25 budget for the Council as a whole.

2.0 BUDGET PRESSURES 2024/25

S&R set a Communities, Parks and Leisure services General Fund savings target of £1,938k for 2024/25. The CPL comprises two service areas, Parks, Leisure and Libraries (PLL) and Communities (CS).

2.1 **The target saving set by Strategy and Resources Committee for the CPL is £1,938k.** The majority of this is due to the pay award, the pressure for the costs of dealing with Ash Die Back, Community Safety Team funding, Family Hub staffing pressure and historical budget pressures for the Library and Archives service.

2.2 **Of this, the amount of cost pressure for the Parks, Leisure and Libraries (PLL) service in 2024/25 is c£1,344m.** £719k of this amount relates to the pay award. In 2024/25 services are not expected to absorb the impact of this award within their existing budgets and a corporate contribution is being made available to offset this increase. The remaining pressure for Parks, Leisure and Libraries is therefore **£625k.**

2.3 **The amount of cost pressure for the Communities service (CS) in 2024/25 is £594k.** £502k of this of this amount relates to inflationary pressures for the pay award. In 2024/25 services are not expected to absorb the impact of this award within their existing budgets and a corporate contribution is being made available to offset this increase. The remaining pressure for Communities is **£92k.**

2.4 There is a further corporate contribution of £200k to this committee budget made available as per the MTFAs. This has been split proportionately between PLL and CS reducing the respective pressures to £493k and £294k. The net CPL committee pressures are set out in Table 1

Table 1 2024/25 CPL budget pressures

CPL Balance Budget Pressures	Description	PLL	CS	Total
	Pay Award	719k	502k	1,221k
	Family Hub Staffing pressure	-	92k	92k
	Ash Die Back	500k	-	500k
	Libraries cost pressure.	125k	-	125k
	Total Committee Pressures	1,344	594k	1,938
Mitigations	Corporate Pay Award	719k	502k	1,221
	Corporate Contribution	132k	68k	200k
	Committee Pressure	493k	24k	517k

2.5 Since the MTFAs were presented, additional service pressures have been identified of £382k for PLL and £330k for CS. These additional pressures are set out in Table 2.

Table 2 Additional Service Pressures 2024/25

In Service Pressures	Description	PLL	CS	Total
	Medico Legal / Coronial Service additional costs	232k		232k
	Business Rates	150k		150k
	Page Hall Team Around the Community		£330k	£330k
	Total In Service Pressures	382k	330k	712k

2.6 The cumulative net pressures for the CPL committee and for each of the services are set out in TABLE 3

TABLE 3 TOTAL SERVICE PRESSURES 2024/25

Cumulative Pressures	Description	PLL	CS	Total
	CPL Committee budget	493k	24k	517k
	Service budgets	382k	330k	712k
	Total Service Pressures	875k	354k	1,229k

3.0 SAVINGS PROPOSALS

There are several options for Cllrs to consider including a Sales, Fees and Charges notional increase that would help to avoid subsidisation of income generating services.

3.1 Savings to be proposed for consideration fall into one of the following categories:

- Increase income via increased charges and/or charging for services.
- Doing things more efficiently
- Reducing some services
- Stopping some services

3.2 S&R resolved to apply a notional Sales, Fees and Charges (SFC) target in line with September 2023 CPI of 5.4%. The aim being to avoid possible subsidies for income generating services.

Table 4 below gives an overview of the proposed SFC increases to contribute to a balanced budget for CPL. These increases are wholly generated in PLL as there are no SFC in Communities. As part of this review, it will be important to assess the equality impacts of any additional fee increases. Ensuring fee uplifts do not disproportionately affect groups already struggling with the cost-of-living crisis will be a priority, and where identified, the Council will seek to target support at those affected. However, it is vital that where possible and appropriate, sales, fees and charges are increased to generate much needed funds and to avoid taxpayer’s subsidisation of the related services.

Table 4 SFC Increases by Service

5.4% Sales, Fees and Charges Increase by service	Saving £000
1. Parks and Countryside	55k
2. Libraries, Archives and Information Services	14k
3. Bereavement & Coronial Services	45k
4. Sport, Leisure and Events	292k
Total SFC Mitigation	406k
Net Pressure to meet balanced budget (PLL)	469k

3.3 Additional details for each of these savings is set out in the closed Appendix 1 in part B of this report, along with mitigation for the remaining Community Service pressures.

4.0 HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

The proposals recognise the council’s difficult financial situation.

4.1 The proposals in this report are aimed at maximising financial resources to deliver Communities, Parks, Libraries and Leisure services outcomes to residents in Sheffield considering developments in national policy especially with the impending Environmental Act, the current economic climate, and that rightly, public expectations are still high for Communities, Parks and Leisure services.

4.2 The services within the scope of this policy committee are a key part of the current Delivery Plan and have made significant contributions to the plan, such as:

- Fair, inclusive and empowered communities
- Strong and connected neighbourhoods which people are happy to call home.
- Tackling inequalities and supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis
- Healthy lives and wellbeing for all
- Clean economic growth
- Happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want.

4.3

The Council is developing a new corporate (council) plan setting out our strategic priorities. As the new Corporate Plan emerges, we will continue to ensure that our committee and service priorities link and feed into the broader corporate priorities. We’ll also align our services with the Sheffield City Goals framework which aims to deliver a city where everyone, no matter who they are

or where they come from, can live well and be part of Sheffield's story on terms that make sense to them.

5.0 HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

Consultation will be undertaken as proposals develop.

Briefings have been held with Cllr Williams, Cllr Ridler & Cllr Elliot and a further briefing session held with all Communities, Parks and Leisure committee members. Further consultation will be undertaken as proposals develop.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

6.1 Equality Implications

6.1.1 Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are underway for all the proposals within this report.

6.1.2 EIAs (Equality Impact Assessment) are live documents and will be kept up to date as proposals are further developed and, as appropriate, consulted upon. Further proposals will be required to balance the budget gap and EIAs will be undertaken for those as they are identified and brought forward.

6.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

6.2.1 Each Committee is required to deliver a cash standstill budget for 2024/25, which requires them to find mitigations for any Service pressures above the 2023/24 budget. The purpose of this is to allow the Council to achieve a balanced position for 2024/25 by the time the Strategy and Resources meets in December.

6.2.2 The pressures and savings proposals to address this are set out in this paper.

6.2.3 All Committees savings proposals will be considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee before final sign off to ensure a balance 2024/25 budget for the Council as a whole

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 By law, SCC (Sheffield City Council) must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions. This can consider cost savings and/or local income growth strategies, as well as use of reserves. However, a budget will not be balanced where it reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, which sets obligations of adequacy on controlled reserves.

6.3.2 The recommendations in this Report contribute to the process of setting a budget but do not otherwise have any immediate legal implications.

6.3.3 Implementation of the specific proposals outlined in this report may require further decisions in due course, which will need to be made in accordance with the council Constitution. It is important to note that in making these decisions, full consideration of the Council's legal duties and contractual obligations will be needed.

6.4 Climate Implications

Climate Impact Assessments (CIA) are underway for all the proposals within this report. CIAs are live documents and will be kept up to date as proposals are further developed and, as appropriate, consulted upon. If further proposals will be required to balance the budget gap, CIAs will be undertaken for those as they are identified and brought forward.

6.5 Other Implications

There are no other implications.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council is required to both set a balanced budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. The options presented in this paper, if accepted, will negate the need to make any staff or resource cuts to the respective services and therefore, should allow the continuation of good quality customer services.

8.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the challenging budget situation

Members are asked to note the unsustainable financial position highlighted by the medium-term financial analysis presented to Strategy and Resources Committee in September 2023. This report and its recommendations, sets out the scale of the challenge ahead, the limited resources available and some of the difficult decisions that will need to be taken.

Open report ends

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Beth Storm,
Strategic Lead, Asylum

Tel: 0114 474 1844

Report of: *Lorraine Wood*

Report to: *Communities, Parks & Leisure Committee*

Date of Decision: *13th November 2023*

Subject: *Asylum Dispersal Grant*

Type of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken	Initial <input type="checkbox"/>	Full <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Insert EIA reference number and attach EIA	2427	
Has appropriate consultation/engagement taken place?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-		

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is to:

- Seek approval to allocate the Asylum Dispersal Grant (the **Grant**) in line with the recommendations below;
- Seek delegated authority to the Director of Communities from November 2023 to March 31st 2026, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the General Counsel and informed by, and working with the voluntary, community and faith sector regionally and nationally, to make decisions on the allocation of funds from the Grant to meet the aims and objectives outlined in this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Communities, Parks & Leisure Committee:

- approve the use of the Grant to fund the continuation and development of the current SCC Strategic Asylum function in Communities Service, until March 2026.
- approve the decision to ring fence part of the Grant from November 2023 to March 2026 for the purpose of responding flexibly to asylum and migrant community needs in Sheffield, along with the wider sanctuary cohort, to support their integration.
- delegate authority to the Director of Communities from November 2023 to March 2026, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the General Counsel and informed by, and working with the voluntary, community and faith sector regionally and nationally, to make decisions on the allocation of funds from the Grant to meet the aims and objectives outlined in this report.
- approve the decision to appoint dedicated resources to work for the benefit of people seeking asylum, the migrant community in Sheffield, and the wider sanctuary cohort in accordance with Table 1.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

Lead Officer to complete:-									
1	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed.</td> <td>Finance: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Sonya Oates</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Legal: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Rita Collins</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Equalities & Consultation: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Ed Sexton</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Climate: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> N/A</td> </tr> </table>	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed.	Finance: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Sonya Oates		Legal: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Rita Collins		Equalities & Consultation: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Ed Sexton		Climate: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> N/A
I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed.	Finance: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Sonya Oates								
	Legal: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Rita Collins								
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> Ed Sexton								
	Climate: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i> N/A								
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>								
2	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>SLB member who approved submission:</td> <td><i>Ajman Ali, Executive Director, Operational Services</i></td> </tr> </table>	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Ajman Ali, Executive Director, Operational Services</i>						
SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Ajman Ali, Executive Director, Operational Services</i>								
3	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Committee Chair consulted:</td> <td><i>Richard Williams</i></td> </tr> </table>	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Richard Williams</i>						
Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Richard Williams</i>								
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.								

Lead Officer Name: <i>Beth Storm</i>	Job Title: <i>Strategic Lead, Asylum</i>
Date: <i>27th October 2023</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

Background

- 1.1 The policy of local dispersal of those seeking asylum in the UK was introduced by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Whilst awaiting decision on their claim, people seeking asylum are accommodated in different forms of temporary accommodation managed by the Asylum Accommodation and Support Contract provider for the region, on behalf of the Home Office.

Participation in asylum dispersal was not mandated until 2023. Consequently, not all local authorities took part, resulting in disproportionate burden on those who did. Although the Home Office now work with all local authorities regards dispersal, disproportionality still exists.

In March 2022, the government announced its decision to move to a full dispersal model for asylum, supported by grant funding. The continuation of pressures in the national asylum system and resulting impact on local authorities is recognised by provision of further grant funding to local authorities.

Pressures on the UK Asylum System

The UK asylum system continues to be subject to intensive media coverage, as well as political and public scrutiny.

At the end of July 2023, there were almost 137,000¹ people in the national asylum estate, awaiting *initial decision*, an increase of c.10,491 since October 2022. A predicted additional 56,000² people seeking asylum will arrive in the UK during this calendar year.

Nationally, there are significant, ongoing pressures on the asylum system, including an increasing backlog of undetermined applications and higher demand for accommodation due to the increase in the supported asylum population.

Asylum Dispersal Grant 2022/23

In recognition of '*concerns raised... in relation to pressure on local services associated with supporting asylum seekers*'³, in 2022, the government made provision for an Asylum Dispersal Grant (the **Grant**) to be paid to local authorities, along with additional funding to '*recognise the[ir] existing contribution and longstanding support*', of local authorities in accommodating asylum seekers.

¹ [How many people do we grant protection to? - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-many-people-do-we-grant-protection-to)

² [Britain expects up to 56,000 immigrants to arrive in small boats this year | Reuters](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/britain-expects-up-to-56000-immigrants-arrive-small-boats-this-year-2023-07-27/)

³ [Asylum Dispersal Grant: funding instruction - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/asylum-dispersal-grant-funding-instruction)

All local authorities in receipt of the funding were given discretion on how to disperse the funds, on the basis that the money was '*used to implement and/or bolster services*' for the asylum cohort in 2022/23.

During 2022/23, Sheffield received £492,500, which was ringfenced for specific purposes and carried into the current financial year.

In accordance with proposals approved by Communities, Parks & Leisure and Strategy & Resources Committees in November 2022, SCC allocated the Grant as follows:

- Resourcing the Asylum function within Communities Services (the **SCC Asylum Function**).
- One-off grant payments to identified strategic partners - City of Sanctuary Sheffield and SPRING.
- Provision of an open grant pot round of funding for organisations working for the benefit of the asylum and refugee community.

Grant Funding Allocation 2023/24

The government has announced further Grant funding for the 2023/24 financial year. At the time of writing, SCC has received £1,009,500 Grant funding for the 2023/24 financial year. There is the possibility of additional funding, subject to the creation of additional bedspaces for the dispersed asylum community. However, this is an uncertain variable, and it is therefore not possible to foresee whether the Grant funding to SCC will increase in this financial year.

The intention is to use part of the Grant for 2023/24 for the maintenance and development of the SCC Asylum Function until March 2026 and use the remaining Grant for the purposes as approved in the 2022/23 financial year.

The SCC Asylum Function will consist of the following roles over 2 years:

- Strategic Lead
- Operational Delivery Lead
- 2 x Strategic Development Officer
- Senior Support Officer
- 2 x Sustainable Community Officer
- Community Support Officer

Approximate costs for these officers will be:

Year 1: £385,000

Year 2: £400,000

An additional **£224,500** will be used to responding flexibly to the asylum and migrant community in Sheffield, along with the wider sanctuary

cohort to meet the aims and objectives in this report, as per delegated authority. Therefore the total costs over the 2 years will be **£1,009,500**.

The government have not issued an updated funding instruction since the launch of the Grant in the 2022/23 financial year. The current funding instruction does not stipulate a date by which the Grant has to be expended or allocated.

SCC therefore intend to ringfence and carry forward any residual Grant funds from 2022/23 and 2023/24 into the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial year for the purposes outlined above, which aligns with the government's condition to use the funding to 'to implement and/or bolster services' to asylum seekers, until such time that the government materially update the funding instruction which may impact on the way the Grant is currently used.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

Meeting Increasing Demand

- 2.1 The continuation of Full Dispersal and ongoing pressure on the national asylum estate means it is highly likely that the number of people seeking asylum in the city will increase.

The majority of those seeking asylum will receive leave to remain, in turn, increasing the global Sheffield refugee community, including people from Syria, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen and many others.

Government policy means that support need in the city will increase amongst both those seeking asylum, as well as those granted refugee status. This will impact not only acute demand on both statutory and non-statutory provision, but will result in longer-term implications for the city, sub region and region. We need to consider how we manage both acute demand, and longer-term implications of these new communities.

Integration and Wellbeing

The Sheffield response to asylum, the wider sanctuary estate, and our migrant communities is more vital than ever. Lack of integration and unmet requirements can impact on the ability of people to settle and become socially and economically active. This is likely to impact longer-term, not on only individuals, but the wider city community.

Proposals outlined in this paper bolster efforts by SCC to meet the needs of those seeking asylum, the wider sanctuary estate and migrant communities. They also enable the continuation of productive, collaborative relationships with statutory, non-statutory and voluntary partners working towards an integrated, prosperous, inclusive city.

This funding will enable Sheffield City Council to respond flexibly to the asylum and migrant community in Sheffield, along with the wider

sanctuary cohort, to support their integration.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 The VCFS, led by City of Sanctuary, Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) and SPRING continue to both recognise, and advocate for, the value of SCC demonstrating strong city leadership, driving co-ordination and partnership working, and the importance of this not only to the VCFS, but as being pivotal in helping to create a successful, inclusive city.

SCC engage regularly in a variety of fora with partners, stakeholders and the wider regional and national community of local authorities and organisations working to support those seeking sanctuary.

Foundation, desktop work is underway with VCFS representatives to explore sector financial sustainability, including development of a flexible 'core' offer for those seeking asylum and other sanctuary in the city. In addition, to understand demand, pressures and inequity of asylum and refugee support in Sheffield. Important to this work will be actions to harmonise fairness of offer, regardless of route of entry, as well as a co-production approach to determining future sector requirements.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

The proposal is supportive of the Council's general Duties under the Equality Act 2010, which includes having due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct that is connected to protected characteristics;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- (c) foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been developed and has noted potential indirect impacts in relation to different protected characteristics, (principally Race, Religion/Belief, Sex, Gender, Age and Sexual Orientation) and other equality interests (Health, Poverty and VCF Sector). There are no disproportionate negative equality of opportunity implications arising from this proposal.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

The Asylum Dispersal Grant is funded by the Home Office. Key

features and terms and conditions of the grant are highlighted below:

Funding will be made in respect of costs to the Authority in fulfilling its statutory duties with regard to the scheme.

The grant must not be used for any other purpose than as set out in the Funding Instruction. Funding must also not be moved elsewhere without permission from the Home Office.

Funding issues arising from an Asylum Seeker moving to another authority must be resolved by the recipient and the relevant local authority.

Any overpayments must be reported, including where the funding required is lower than expected. Overpayments will be clawed back, or further payments adjusted as appropriate. Clawback of funds will also occur in the event that the grant conditions have not been met.

Unauthorised expenditure that exceeds funding levels will not be reimbursed.

Final checks will be made after the grant support period to ensure that payments made accurately reflect the grant entitlement.

Site visits will be made to Local Authorities who have received £100,000 or above.

Grant Aid, Loans and Guarantees

SCC will need to ensure that it expends the Grant in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSO).

Any Grant Recipient will need to be made aware of and read and comply with the [Code of Conduct for Grant Recipients](#).

If any goods, services or works are utilised using the Grant, CSO requirements will apply in full to the procurement of services, goods or works. All grant monies must be treated in the same way as any other Council monies and any requirement to purchase / acquire services, goods or works must go via a competitive process, comply with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

4.3 Legal Implications

The Council does not have a statutory duty to provide financial support or accommodation to Asylum Seekers.

Section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 provides that the Secretary of State may provide or arrange for the provision of support Asylum seekers and their dependants who appear to be destitute. Section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 states that the

Secretary of State may enter into a contract (with a local authority or any other person) for the provision of services by way of making arrangements for community activities.

The Council has a general power under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that an individual may generally do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation and the power is exercised in accordance with the limitations specified in the Act which enables the Council to allocate or spend the grant funding as set out in this report.

If an Asylum Seeker is granted Refugee Status, Humanitarian Protection, Discretionary leave (unless there is 'No Recourse to Public Funds'); or indefinite Leave to Remain, they are then able to access mainstream benefits and services on the same basis as a British National. Where an Asylum Seeker is granted one of these statuses the Council may have a statutory obligation to prevent homelessness.

The Council is receiving the Grant from the Home Office under s.110 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and can accept this funding further to s.31 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Home Office have issued a funding instruction setting out the terms and conditions governing the use of the Grant (**Funding Instruction**) to all applicable local authorities and the funds will be paid directly into the Council's bank account.

Key clauses of the Funding Instruction relate to transparency, accounting, eligible expenditure, clawback, overpayments and cessation of funding.

Under clause 3.5 of the Funding Instruction, the Council is free to determine how best to utilise the Grant but must be able to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the eligibility conditions in supporting Asylum Seeker Dispersal.

The Home Office has provided written consent to ringfence the Grant funds and carry forward any unspent funds into the next financial year.

If the Council intend on allocating part of the Grant to strategic partners and/or organisations committed to supporting Asylum Seeker Dispersal, then it must do so on robust and appropriate grant agreement terms, similar to that set out in the Funding Instruction, to ensure that the passported funds are spent on eligible expenditure and that there is a right to clawback funds in the event of a breach.

4.4 Climate Implications

N/A

4.4

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The alternative option to decline the Grant was considered and rejected because of the clear financial and operational need to address asylum dispersal.

Acceptance of the Grant will enable delivery and support of strategic activity to ensure that the needs of asylum seekers in the Asylum Dispersal Scheme are met. This work is essential not only for those directly affected, but also benefits the wider host community, and all who live or work in, and visit our city.

Given the ongoing, national asylum context and continued numbers of people seeking safety in the UK, significant likelihood exists that Sheffield will continue to be asked to accommodate people awaiting asylum decisions. In addition to this, the city is home to an increasing number of refugees, arriving via different routes. Given the clear benefit of this funding for the vulnerable sanctuary community, the alternative action, to decline the funding, was rejected.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Increasingly, the interconnectedness and complexities of the asylum system now mean that this is no longer solely an immigration issue.

Sheffield will continue to welcome those seeking asylum, refugees and migrant groups to the city. As such, there will be increased demand over time for not only infrastructure, but also services including education, health, wellbeing, inclusion and socio-economic independence to support their integration.

At a Full Council motion unanimously passed in July 2023, Sheffield agreed a range of measures reaffirming our commitment to being a City of Sanctuary, as well as a commitment to becoming a Local Authority of Sanctuary. The recommendations in this paper promote the ability of the city to respond effectively to national asylum policy and act meaningfully to help those seeking refuge in our city.

PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: Asylum Dispersal Grant

EIA ID: 2427

EIA Author: Beth Storm (Place)

Proposal Outline:

The policy of local dispersal of those seeking asylum in the UK was introduced by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. In 2022, the government made provision for an Asylum Dispersal Grant (the Grant) to be paid to local authorities. Discretion is given by government regarding how to disperse the funds, on the basis that the money is 'used to implement and/or bolster services' for the asylum cohort. This EIA accompanies a report to the Communities, Parks & Leisure Committee (Form 2a). Proposals outlined in this paper bolster efforts by SCC to meet the needs of those seeking asylum, the wider sanctuary estate and migrant communities. They also enable the continuation of productive, collaborative relationships with statutory, non-statutory and voluntary partners working towards an integrated, prosperous, inclusive city. This funding will enable Sheffield City Council to respond flexibly to the asylum and migrant community in Sheffield, along with the wider sanctuary cohort, to support their integration.

Proposal Type: Non-Budget

Year Of Proposal: 23/24

Lead Director for proposal: Lorraine Wood

Service Area: Communities

EIA Start Date: 01/11/2023

Lead Equality Objective:

Leading the city in celebrating and promoting inclusion

Equality Lead Officer:

Ed Sexton

Decision Type

Committees:

Policy Committees

- Communities, Parks & Leisure

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio:

Operational Services

EIA is cross portfolio:

No

EIA is joint with another organisation:

No

Overview of Impact

Overview Summary:

Receipt of this funding will advance equality of opportunity by improving opportunities for provision of support for those seeking asylum, refugees and the wider sanctuary cohort. The Sheffield response to asylum, the wider sanctuary estate, and our migrant communities is more vital than ever. Lack of integration and unmet requirements can impact on the ability of people to settle and become socially and economically active. This is likely to impact longer-term, not on only individuals, but the wider city community. This funding will enable Sheffield City Council to respond flexibly to the asylum and migrant community in Sheffield, along with the wider sanctuary cohort, to support their integration. There are no disproportionate equality of opportunity implications arising from this proposal.

Impacted characteristics:

- Health
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
- Poverty & Financial Inclusion
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Sex
- Gender Reassignment

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact: No

Impact areas:

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required: Yes

Review Date: 01/11/2024

PART B - Full Impact Assessment

Health

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: Provision of good quality wraparound services for these groups will have a positive impact on mental wellbeing.

Name of Lead Health Officer:

Comprehensive Assessment Being Completed: No

Public Health Lead signed off health impact(s):

Age

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: There are no disproportionate negative equality of opportunity impacts regarding age. The positive impact of these proposals will be felt across different age groups, including children and young people, subject to the numbers within different groups in the asylum, refugee and sanctuary cohort within the city.

Gender Reassignment

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: There are no disproportionate negative equality of opportunity impacts regarding gender reassignment. The positive impact of these proposals may be felt by people who have faced additional risks associated with their gender identity, subject to the numbers within different groups in the asylum, refugee and sanctuary cohort within the city.

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

Lack of integration and unmet requirements can impact on the ability of people to settle and become socially and economically active. This work is anticipated to impact positively in respect of this characteristic.

Race

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

There are no disproportionate negative equality of opportunity impacts regarding race. The positive impact of these proposals will be felt more across some race groups than others, subject to the numbers within different groups in the asylum, refugee and sanctuary cohort within the city.

Religion / Belief

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

There are no disproportionate negative equality of opportunity impacts regarding race. The positive impact of these proposals will be felt more across some race groups than others, subject to the numbers within different faith groups in the asylum, refugee and sanctuary cohort within the city.

Sexual Orientation

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: There are no disproportionate negative equality of opportunity impacts regarding sexual orientation. The positive impact of these proposals may be felt by people who have faced additional risks associated with their sexual orientation, subject to the numbers within different groups in the asylum, refugee and sanctuary cohort within the city.

Voluntary / Community & Faith Sectors

Staff Impacted: Yes

Customers Impacted: No

Description of Impact: VCFS providers occupy a significant space in providing wraparound support to those seeking asylum as well as those arriving via other resettlement and refugee pathways. Therefore, this work is anticipated to impact positively on the voluntary, community and faith sector.

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan: No actions beyond those highlighted in the attached document are required at this stage.

Action plan evidence: As a living document, this EIA will remain under continual review and be developed alongside any further work in this area.

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures: No

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date

Review Date:

01/11/2024

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Rowan Longhurst, Service Manager - Countryside
and James Musgrave, Allotments Manager

Tel: 0114 2500500

Report of: Ajman Ali

Report to: Communities, Parks & Leisure

Date of Decision: 13/11/2023

Subject: Proposal for 2025/26 Allotment Rents

Type of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken	Initial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Full	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insert EIA reference number and attach EIA 2395				
Has appropriate consultation/engagement taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval for an increase in the allotment rent and water charges for 2025/2026 of 5.96% (an increase below current inflation).

Recommendations:

The Committee is recommended to:

- Approve a 5.96% increase to allotment rents for 2025/26

Background Papers:

Minutes of the Allotment Advisory Group meeting 17.07.2023

Outcomes of the rent increase consultation survey, October 2023

Outcomes of the rent increase consultation survey, October 2022

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Holly Nicholl
		Legal: Louise Bate
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton
		Climate: Jessica Rick n/a
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	Ajman Ali
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Councillor Richard Williams
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: (Insert name) James Musgrave	Job Title: (Insert job title) Allotments Manager
	Date: 1.11.2023	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Sheffield City Council fulfils its statutory allotment duty through the provision of over 3400 allotment plots across the city. Allotment rents and charges are reviewed annually, and in line with the respective tenancy agreements. Tenants must be given 12 months' notice of any increase in rents.

1.2 Background – previous years

1.2.1 A significant review of rents was undertaken in 2014/15 and prices were increased substantially. Since then, prices have increased annually as follows:

Date of increase	% increase
April 2014	60%
(No increase April 2015-April 2017)	
April 2018	1.8%
April 2019	2.7%
April 2020	2.6%
April 2021	2%
April 2022	2%
April 2023	2.9%
April 2024	5.5%

1.2.2 In addition to the new pricing model which was developed in 2014/15, a new discount structure was put in place. This increased the discount for those on a low income or with disabilities from 50% to 75%. A large-scale consultation was carried out prior to the 2014 increase. The outcome of that consultation was that most tenants would prefer to see rents increase than have a reduction in service.

1.2.3 A further large-scale consultation was carried out in 2018, regarding rent increases in line with inflation. The outcome was that most tenants were happy for rents to go up in line with inflation, on a year-by-year basis.

1.3 Rents

1.3.1 The allotments service is self-financing – the service receives no further Council funding. The rent and water charges collected fund the service. This includes staffing the allotments team and a small budget which is used to fund improvements or security on sites across the city.

1.3.2 Due to the ongoing cost of living crisis and high levels of inflation, rather than automatically propose an increase of rents in line with inflation, we have instead consulted directly with tenants on the level of increase they feel is appropriate. This is the second year we have taken this approach (as inflation was very high last year).

1.3.3 Following that consultation exercise it is proposed that rents be increased by 5.96% (rounded to the nearest 5p) in 2025/26. This increase is below inflation levels and therefore when considered alongside cost increases for the service, it represents a budget 'reduction'. This proposal does not generate a saving to the Council.

- 1.3.4 The rent increase enables the Council to continue to provide decent allotment sites for people to grow their own food, but since the proposed increase is once again below current inflation, there will be some reduction in the citywide site improvements which can be delivered. To put into context, a 1% below inflation increase reduces the maintenance budget by approximately £3500. The reduction in budget is also compounded by significant increases to services/suppliers we contract in. This proposal would enable us to maintain staffing levels and continue with maintenance of the allotment sites (repairs to infrastructure etc.) albeit at a reduced level.
- 1.3.5 The decision to consult to this extent in future years will be taken based on inflationary levels.
- 1.3.6 Protecting the maintenance and enhancement of the allotment sites is in line with the Green and open Spaces Strategy. Ensuring that communities have access to high quality green spaces.
- 1.3.7 Summary of rental charges

Plot Type	Annual charge 2022/2023	Annual charge 2023/2024 (Current Year)	Annual charge 2024/2025 5.5% Already Set	Annual charge 2025/2026 5.96% proposal
Up to 100m ²	£43.90	£45.20	£47.70	£50.55
101m to 200m ²	£89.70	£92.30	£97.40	£103.20
201-300m ²	£126.40	£130.10	£137.25	£145.45
>301m ²	£177.40	£182.50	£192.55	£204.05
Parson Cross 1	£12.60	£13.00	£13.70	£14.50
Parson Cross 2	£22.00	£22.60	£23.85	£25.25
Pigeon Loft charge (rent only)	£55.10	£56.70	£59.80	£63.35
Note: all these figures are totals including rent and water unless stated otherwise				

- 1.3.8 Annual charges for 2024/2025 (already set):

Plot Type	(A) Rent	(B) Water	(A+B) Total
Up to 100m ²	£31.00	£16.70	£47.70
101m to 200m ²	£63.10	£34.30	£97.40
201-300m ²	£90.75	£46.50	£137.25
>301m ²	£135.05	£57.50	£192.55

Parson Cross 1	£8.90	£4.80	£13.70
Parson Cross 2	£15.50	£8.35	£23.85
Pigeon Loft charge	£59.80		

1.3.9 Proposed annual charges for 2025/2026:

Plot Type	(A) Rent	(B) Water	(A+B) Total
Up to 100m²	£32.85	£17.70	£50.55
101m to 200m²	£66.86	£36.34	£103.20
201-300m²	£96.16	£49.27	£145.45
>301m²	£143.10	£60.93	£204.05
Parson Cross 1	£9.43	£5.09	£14.50
Parson Cross 2	£16.42	£8.85	£25.25
Pigeon Loft charge	£ 63.36		£63.35

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 The proposal supports Our 2022/23 Delivery Plan and future planning of
- Fair, inclusive, and empowered communities
 - Strong and connected neighbourhoods which people are happy to call home.
 - Tackling inequalities and supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis
 - Healthy lives and wellbeing for all
 - Clean economic growth
 - Happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want.
- 2.2 To Enable the Allotment service to contribute and embed the outcomes the review of the ‘corporate plan’ and the emerging ‘Council Plan’.
- 2.3 To Enable the Allotment service to contribute and embed the outcomes of ‘Our City Goals’ “To fulfil that promise, we need to be acting together and driving change towards the same goals”.
- 2.4 Allotments provide an opportunity to contribute to the ‘*Transformation of Sheffield’s Food System*’ with particular reference to Sheffield City Councils ‘*Food Strategy 2023*, vision of fairer, healthier, greener’ and ShefFood’s ‘*Local Food Action Plan for Sheffield, a collective vision for Sheffield where everyone has access to health sustainable food*’.
- 2.5 A thriving allotment community and estate can also contribute to the South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). This strategy will protect and enhance habitats and species whilst also seeking to ‘stack’ multiple ecosystem services such as flood mitigation, clean air provision, carbon sequestration and access to greenspace.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 In 2018 a consultation with all allotment holders about rent setting was undertaken, via a questionnaire. The response rate to the questionnaire was 22%. 70% of those who responded indicated that they were in favour of small yearly increases in charges e.g., in line with inflation.
- 3.2 With the fact that inflation remains high (6.8% in July 2023, when we began the process of consultation) we once again invited all tenants to take part in a rent increase survey for the period 2025/26.
- 3.3 In light of the responses to last year's survey (for the 2024/25 rent period) we adopted a slightly different methodology to address concerns raised by the Sheffield Allotment Federation and some tenants, these being:
- a) A deviation from the 2022 survey where we offered 3 options. The 2023 survey sought a response on proposed rent increases between 5% and 10% in increments of 0.5%. The justification to set the lowest figure of 5% is broadly in line with the previous year's agreement of 5.5% and in part due to significantly increasing costs along with the combined effect of a predicted second year of below inflation rent increase. The options below 5% rent increases on the survey were not provided in this year's survey. A rent increase of below 5% would have a serious detrimental impact on the council's ability to maintain a service level that is expected by tenants.
 - b) When analysing the results of this survey, we made it clear that we would calculate rent increase by applying the average (mean) 'suggested % increase' to the survey results.
- 3.4 The survey was open to all tenants, via an online survey (with a paper-based option available). The results are presented in the table and chart below and shows that 62% of tenants were in favour of the lowest proposed increase of 5% but that the second most popular result (9% of respondents) was in favour of the highest proposed increase of 10%.
- 3.5 The overall levels of engagement with the survey (17.5% of our tenants) is lower than in 2022. The self-selecting nature of the survey it is hard to be sure that we a captured the view from our wider community of allotment tenants, including those with protected characteristics. It is also lower than a response that would be considered statistically representative of all tenants. For the 2004 tenants who had been contacted via email and directed to the survey via the online portal, our response rate was 28.9%
- 3.6 The table below shows 2023 survey results.

Please choose your preferred % increase from the suggestions below	Number of recipients	% of recipients	Total % to add weighted by how many chose each option
5%	362	62.4	3.12

5.50%	20	3.4	0.19
6%	33	5.7	0.34
6.50%	28	4.8	0.31
7%	40	6.9	0.48
7.50%	24	4.1	0.31
8%	14	2.4	0.19
9%	9	1.6	0.14
10%	50	8.6	0.86
	580		
TOTAL PERCENTAGE INCREASE WEIGHTED BY NUMBER OF PEOPLE WEIGHTED BY NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO CHOSE EACH OPTION			5.96

3.7 For comparison the table below shows 2022 survey results

Option	Total	Percent
Rents are increased by 9.4% in 2024/25 and citywide site improvements continue as in previous years	270	29.77
Rents are frozen at 2023/24 levels for an additional year and citywide site improvements are significantly reduced	392	43.22
Rents in 2024/25 are increased but by less than 9.4% and there is a reduction in citywide site improvements	245	27.01

3.8 A snapshot of 2023 survey comments indicate a mixed reaction to the proposal.

- “I’m happy with what I have to pay my allotment is important to me and would keep it whatever the cost”.
- “Whilst any increase will be felt by those renting allotments, if it helps to recoup losses for one year I would be happy to pay the 10% but would not necessarily want to pay 10% each year thereafter. I assume this is due to current inflation rates”.
- “I would be happy if 7.5% were applied as that would allow more investment to take place without testing the renters on fixed incomes”
- “Rents are great value for money. We need to maintain an Allotments Service so would be happy with an above inflation increase”.
- To balance the following comments have been recognised.
- “Why exactly is it always going up? What exactly do I get ? All I am paying for is a plot of land which I have to maintain and keep clear, so why do the prices have to go up ?”

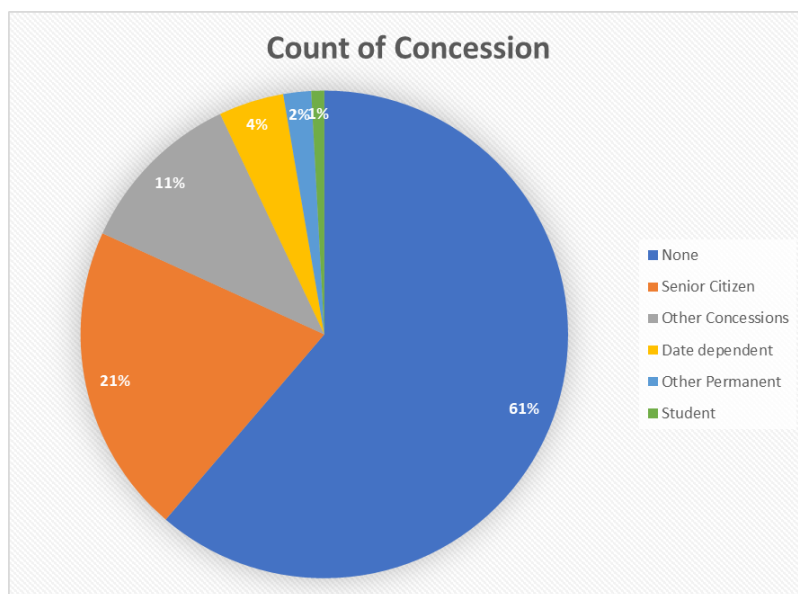
- “larger increases threaten to outprice people on low unsubsidized income out of affording their allotments”
- “I don’t believe it is fair to increase the cost at all”
- “I don’t think you should tie increases to rate of inflation unless you are willing to decrease rents as prices fall. But that won’t happen”

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Overall, there are no significant differential, positive or negative, impacts from this proposal. The decision to increase annual allotment rents would impact on all our allotment holders. The increase in rent would be comparatively small (between £1.40 and £11.50 per customer per year before discount), depending on the size of plot, provision of water and entitlement to a discount. Discounts/concession (up to 75%) are already available to make allotments more affordable to those on a low income, with disabilities or of state pension age.

See Chart below for tenants who receive a discount/concission (2023)



4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 The Council continues to face significant financial challenges and must make difficult decisions about services that the people of Sheffield care deeply about.

4.2.2 The additional funds collected from the rent increase will be invested directly into the allotments service, however, inflation and costs are continuing to increase at a rate greater than the proposed 5.95% increase in rents to tenants. The outcome of the consultation is a compromise of a rent increase and a reduction in the level of service in order for the service to remain self-financing.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The City Council has a statutory duty under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 to provide allotments if it believes there to be a demand for them. Setting of allotment rents is governed by section 10(1) of the Allotments Act 1950 which provides that land let for use as an allotment should be let at “such rent as a tenant may reasonably be expected to pay” for land let on the same terms for such use, provided that the Council may let allotments at a reduced rent if satisfied that there are special circumstances affecting the tenant which make a reduced rent appropriate.
- 4.3.2 In the 1981 case of *Harwood v Borough of Reigate and Banstead* the High Court, when considering the reasonableness of a proposed rent increase, held that the local council, and nobody else, was required to determine the rent that a notional (rather than a particular) tenant might reasonably be expected to pay and that in its determination it should:
- listen to representations made by or on behalf of its allotment tenants.
 - Take into account all relevant circumstances in a broad common-sense way.
 - give such weight as it thought fit to various factors in the situation.
 - come to a right and fair conclusion.
- 4.3.3 The Court gave guidance on the approach to be taken:
"... not to discriminate against this recreational activity as compared with other recreational activities. In other words, unless there are some very special circumstances relating to this particular recreational facility which, if it were some other recreational facility would require that a higher charge should be made for the use of that facility, then in the ordinary case if there is to be an increase in the rent charged then it should be in line with the increases that have been charged for the use of the other recreational facilities. "
- 4.3.4 The rent levels described in this report comply with the statutory requirements and are in line with the High Court's guidance and the discount structure sets out the circumstances in which it is appropriate to charge a reduced rent. Allotment rents are not being set at a level that will make a profit but to maintain a similar level of service (with a small reduction in site improvements).
- 4.3.5 Because allotments are let on yearly tenancies the Council must provide 12 months' notice to tenants of any changes to the allotment tenancy agreement or the amount of rent to be collected.
- 4.4 Climate Implications
- 4.4.1 Due to the nature of this proposal (concerned with rent increase only) a full scored CIA is not required, however there are clearly climate related benefits from the maintenance of a quality allotments service.
- 4.4.2 The proposal will enable us to continue to deliver a quality allotments service, and hence enable our tenants to continue to grow their own food and reduce their carbon footprint. Allotments provide an opportunity to grow and consume food locally. This has a benefit in relation to reducing food miles and recycling through local composting, helping Sheffield to be a sustainable city, and contributes to our ambition to be a net zero carbon city by 2030.

4.4.3 Enabling tenants to grow their own food also reduces the use of food packaging and connecting people with the production of food helps encourage a reduction in food waste. Furthermore, many allotment holders choose to grow organically, so the provision of the allotment service helps tenants access organic food.

4.4.5 Maintaining a good quality allotment service also helps maintain the land in productive use, providing biodiversity and carbon storage benefits.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 *HR implications*

4.5.2 The proposal will help protect our ability to continue to employ the staff needed to provide the Allotments service.

4.5.3 *Property implications*

4.5.4 The proposal will help us to continue to maintain our allotment estate, although since the proposed increase is below inflation there will be a reduction in site maintenance.

4.5.5 *Public Health*

4.5.6 The proposal will protect our ability to provide allotments for the people of Sheffield. There is considerable evidence that having an allotment has health benefits. For example, having an allotment helps combat loneliness. It can play a part in preventing and alleviating mental ill-health. It provides exercise, and increases the time spent outdoors, hence increasing vitamin D levels. It helps promote a diet of fresh, local, seasonal produce, and helps people enjoy the well-being benefits associated with a greater sense of connection to nature. 'Food Strategy 2023'.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 Rents could remain at 2024/25 levels for an additional year. However, particularly when following a year of below-inflationary rent increases, this would represent a significant reduction to the budget for the service. This option was rejected as the proposal would significantly decrease the level of service and site improvements that can be undertaken.

5.2 Rents could be increased by inflation (6.7% at the time of the consultation). However, during this time of ongoing cost of living crisis it was felt that tenants should be consulted on this option. This option was rejected as it was felt that consultation was required. Following the results of the consultation it was acknowledged that this proposal was not in line with the results of the survey nor the confirmation in the survey that we would calculate rent increase by applying the average (mean) 'suggested % increase' to the survey results.

5.3 Rents could be increased by an amount greater than inflation. However, during this time of ongoing cost of living crisis it was felt that tenants should be consulted on this option. Following the results of the consultation it was acknowledged that this proposal was not in line with the results of the survey nor the confirmation in the survey that we would calculate rent increase by applying the average (mean) 'suggested % increase' to the survey results. larger amount, but this would go against the outcomes of the consultation.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The recommendation to increase the rents by 5.96% in 2025/26, whilst below inflation, protects the staffing levels within the team and maintains a small (and slightly reduced) site improvement budget. It takes in to account the results of the consultation and is in line with the proposal set out to tenants within the consultation (i.e., that we would apply the average (mean) 'suggested % increase' to the survey results).

The proposal entails increasing rent by a relatively small proportion. The survey indicates a favourable response to a rent increase within a Set of % parameters and methodology using the mathematical mean therefore we feel that the proposed increase is reasonable.

It has been stated before that our rents are among the most expensive in the country. Direct comparisons with other authorities can be misleading, as there are many differences in how allotments are categorised and priced, the concessions available, and how the service is delivered. Our 75% discount for those on a low income or with disabilities is generous compared to other authorities: most offer lower discounts, or no discount at all. We feel that the large discount is fair, as it makes allotments more affordable for those who might struggle most otherwise. We are unusual in that all of our sites are directly managed by us, with no self-management (other than Rodney Hill's management of their own water supply). Self-management can be a way to keep rents lower since some of the management of sites is done by volunteers. Previously discussions at the Allotment Advisory Group have indicated a willingness to explore self-management models. This does not apply to all societies and the exact model is something which will be explored further with the group. However, any savings will be in the longer term.

We have sought to compare the rents to rental charges for agricultural land owned by the Council (although the two things are very different, since allotment holders receive different services and facilities). However, information for comparison was not available since charges and reviews of charges for agricultural land depend on specific agreements.

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PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: Allotment Rent proposal increase 2025/26

EIA ID: 2395

EIA Author: James Musgrave

Proposal Outline: To seek approval for an increase in allotment rent and water charges for the year 2025/2026 by 5.96% (an increase below the inflationary rate of 6.8% in July 2023, when we began the consultation process). By increasing rent and water charges we aim to maximise opportunities for people to grow food sustainably through allotments and that the increases are needed to fund the increasing costs associated with the service. The 2023 survey sought a response from tenants where a proposed rent increase ranged between 5% and 10% in increments of 0.5%. The justification to set the lowest figure of 5% is broadly in line with the previous year's agreement of 5.5% and in part due to significantly increasing costs along with the continual impact of rental increases lagging behind inflation as they have to be set over a year in advance. In 2022 we sought responses to 3 options, which included a rent freeze as well as below inflation rates. A rent freeze was not offered this year in the consultation as the costs of the service would have significant budgetary impacts.

Proposal Type: Budget

Entered on QTier: No

QTier Ref: #

Year Of Proposal: 25/26

Lead Director for proposal: Ajman Ali

Service Area: Parks and Countryside

EIA Start Date: 13/10/2023

Lead Equality Objective: Understanding Communities

Equality Lead Officer: Ed Sexton

Decision Type

Committees: Policy Committees

- Communities, Parks & Leisure

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio: Neighbourhood Services

EIA is cross portfolio: No

EIA is joint with another organisation: No

Overview of Impact

Overview Summery:

Overall, there are no significant disproportionate, positive or negative impacts from this proposal. The decision to increase annual allotment rents would impact on all our allotment holders. The increase in rent would be comparatively small (between £1.40 (PC1) and £11.50 (>301m²) per customer per year before discount), depending on the size of plot, provision of water and entitlement to a discount. Our survey indicates an even age range of tenants between the age of 34 to 65+ with only 8% between the ages of 19 to 34. Therefore, we don't envisage a specific impact. For Financial inclusion and those in poverty our offer of discounts (up to 75%) are already available and claimed by 39% of tenants to make allotments more

affordable to those on a low income, with disabilities, students or of state pension age. (Our survey indicates that 14% of respondents have a disability). Tenancies held on behalf of voluntary sectors organisations would also be subject to an increase in rent (as above), our survey has not been able to identify individual organisation, however our 23 allotment societies are broadly accepting of an increase of rents and the process we have undertaken. Allotments by their nature contribute health and wellbeing across the social spectrum. The proposed rent increases will guarantee city wide provision. Please see attachments, for profiling information and survey results to confirm the equality impacts

Impacted characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Poverty & Financial Inclusion
- Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
- Health

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact:

No

Impact areas:

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required:

No

Review Date:

13/10/2023
Page 79

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan: NA

Action plan evidence: NA

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures:

Outline of impact and risks: NA

Review Date

Review Date: 13/10/2023



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: *(Ellie Fraser, Head of Bereavement and Coronial Services)*

Tel: 0114 239 6068

Report of: *Ajman Ali, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services*
Report to: *Communities, Parks and Leisure Committee*
Date of Decision: *13/11/2023*
Subject: *Development of a bereavement strategy and new cemetery development*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2394				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

To seek support for the development of a bereavement strategy and new cemetery provision for the city.

To agree an approach for member engagement throughout the lifespan of this work.

Recommendations:

The Communities, Parks, and Leisure Committee is recommended to:

- Endorse the proposed work on the development of a bereavement strategy and new cemetery development
- Approve the establishment of a task and finish group to report back to the Committee which will be:
 - a. Separated into individually focused thematic groups which examine defined areas of the strategy (eg. burial provision for people of different faiths, or the role of cemeteries as natural green spaces).
 - b. Delegate to the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services authority to appoint to themed task and finish groups following an open invitation to all members of the Council to express interest
- Note that the development of the strategy and work to explore new cemetery service provision will be overseen by the CPL committee by way of regular progress updates before final approval is sought for a delivery plan.

Background Papers:

N/A

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: N/A
	Legal: Rebecca Lambert
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i>
	Climate: Murtaza Awan (in service)
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	

2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Ajman Ali</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Richard Williams</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
Lead Officer Name: <i>Ellie Fraser</i>		Job Title: <i>Head of Bereavement and Coronial Services</i>
Date: 02/11/2023		

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Bereavement affects everyone. Death is one of the only certainties in life. Not only will we all die, but we will also all lose somebody close to us during our lifetime. How we are treated and the support available to us during this difficult time, can define how we survive and recover from this experience. To be a strong healthy city with supportive resilient communities we need to face this reality, be kind, and provide access to services which support people through the most difficult time of their lives.

At present Sheffield City Council (the Council) does not have a bereavement strategy. Without a strategy there is no formal direction or consistent opinion of the role the local authority should play in providing bereavement services.

- 1.2 Local Authorities are burial authorities for the purposes of burial and cremation. Provision should be determined by local demand.

- 1.2.1 Historically up until the early part of the 19th Century Burial facilities in England were provided by the Church of England in parish Churchyards and by other religious bodies. The population increase resulting from the Industrial Revolution meant that many existing churchyards became unable to cope with the increasing number of dead for disposal. From the 1820s a large number of burial grounds, known as cemeteries, were established on the outskirts of a number of big industrial towns and cities including Sheffield. These new cemeteries were private commercial ventures in the form of joint stock companies that were established under individual Acts of parliament. In the 1840s the continuing pressure for more burial space was intensified by cholera and other epidemics. This led to Town Councils being forced to seek their own Acts to allow them to set up cemeteries financed from the rates.

- 1.2.2 During the 1850s a number of new laws were introduced collectively known as the Burial Acts. They established a national system of new public cemeteries. Large numbers of public cemeteries were opened over the next few years and were available to all denominations and faiths. These new cemeteries were run by Burial Boards. A Burial Board was initially elected by the vestry of the parish. Sometimes several smaller parishes joined together to share a burial ground. Under the Local Government Act 1894 these powers were transferred from the vestries and were given to new Parish Councils. In towns and cities, these powers were then given to the borough councils or urban district councils under the Local Government Act 1933. It was from this time that responsibility for the maintenance of cemeteries came under the control of local government.

- 1.2.3 The 1902 Cremation Act allowed all burial authorities to establish crematoria and provided for detailed regulation of their

operation. Although the annual number of cremations was small until after the Second World War, since then the practice has become more widely used. The 1902 Act and the further Cremation Act of 1952 still remain largely in force. New regulations made under section 7 of 1902 Act, the Cremation (England and Wales) Regulations 2008, came into effect on 1 January 2009. They modernise and consolidate all previous regulations relating to cremations.

1.2.4 The Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) consolidated much of the proceeding legislation to reflect the new local government organisation it introduced. Section 214 of the 1972 Act sets out the current statutory provisions relating to burials and cremations. Under section 214(1) of the 1972 Act local authorities are defined as 'burial authorities' and are given the powers to provide and maintain cemeteries. Under S214(5) Local Authorities are also 'burial authorities' for the purposes of the Cremation Acts 1902 and 1952 meaning that these provisions also apply equally to the provision of crematoria services. Section 214(2) of the 1972 states that, '*Burial authorities may provide and maintain cemeteries whether in or outside their area.*' It is important to note this provision grants the Council with the power as a 'burial authority' to provide and maintain cemeteries there is no specific statutory duty on the local authority to provide burial facilities under the 1972 Act.

1.2.5 The Council does however have a statutory duty under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984, to bury or cremate a resident within their district in certain circumstances where the deceased has passed away outside of a hospital and there is no one else willing to pay for the funeral. In these cases the Council would make the necessary arrangements for a public health funeral. If the Council cannot find a friend or family member willing to deal with the deceased's estate and pay for the funeral, then Council Officers will try their best to establish the faith of the deceased and arrange a dignified service.

1.2.6 The Council's powers of management of its cemeteries are set out in the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO 1977). The LACO 1977 gives the Council as a 'burial authority' wide ranging powers of management e.g. Article 3(1) states that, '*a burial authority may do all such things as they consider necessary or desirable for the proper management, regulation and control of a cemetery.*' The Regulations also place a number of obligations on burial authorities. Article 4(1) of the LACO 1977 states that, '*A burial authority... shall keep the cemetery in good order and repair, together with all buildings, walls and fences thereon and other buildings provided for use therewith.*' In addition to the duty in article 4 to 'keep the cemetery in good order and repair', burial authorities are also required to:

- Maintain a record of burials
- Maintain a plan showing the number and location of each grave
- Maintain a record of the granting and transfer of exclusive rights
- Issue Deeds of exclusive
- Maintain a record of exhumations

- Store all records securely to preserve them from loss or damage.

1.2.7 The Church of England and other religious bodies continue to provide burial facilities but these and private cemetery companies are not subject to the local authority legislation. The great majority of operational cemeteries are currently run by local authorities as statutory burial authorities.

1.3 Within the Council, Bereavement Services are responsible for managing cemetery and crematoria service provision. The service undertakes cremations and burials across the city of Sheffield, managing and maintaining 16 cemeteries, one garden of remembrance and two crematoria.

Approximately 3000 cremations and 1150 burials take place annually across these sites (with further specific services such as burial of cremated remains, purchasing and displaying of memorials and niche storage of remains also being offered).

1.4 At present the Council does not have a bereavement strategy. For cemetery and cremation services the absence of a strategy has had the following effects:

- a) Depletion of existing burial spaces with very limited capacity in the remaining cemeteries and no forward planning to cater for the future needs of a diverse growing population.
- b) Lack of investment due to an outdated funding model leading to deterioration in quality-of-service provision and loss of income.
- c) 30-year-old rules and regulations in respect of cemeteries have been eroded and flouted leading to inconsistent and unfair practices across the city and mixed messaging to the public.
- d) Deterioration of existing buildings and infrastructure which contravenes Article 4(1) of the LACO 1977, as well as affecting the quality-of-service provision and income opportunities.
- e) No clear plan for the role of cemeteries as green spaces across the city.
- f) No clear direction or funding to enable service growth and improvement. This acts as a blocker to ambition where services do not have a viable framework in which they are empowered to develop to improve the offer to customers and generate more income.
- g) Benchmarking shows that good bereavement services support the wellbeing of communities through providing communal spaces for grief, reflection, learning and connection. The offer in Sheffield is

limited and a strategy is needed to define the role and aspirations of the local authority in respect of this.

- 1.5 We propose to consult widely with the residents of Sheffield, including internal & external partners, and to use this intelligence to formulate a bereavement strategy for the city which sets out our aims and aspirations for the next 25+ years, and provides a politically supported framework for growth and change for the benefit of all city residents.

Alongside this we propose to start work to source new cemeteries to avoid a burial emergency, and then to develop cemetery service provision in line with all city resident's requirements as determined through consultation and strategy development.

This report seeks support for this work and aims to find an approach for member involvement throughout the lifespan of this work.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 2.1 The proposal contributes to the Sheffield Corporate plan across all 6 strategic goals as set out for the city. The proposal will offer an improved and inclusive quality of service across the city and enhanced customer experience through an extensive citywide consultation process. It will also ensure that the service actively and consistently supports the climate emergency in all its activities reducing the carbon footprint whilst providing cleaner greener burial services. The proposal will reduce identified inequalities to provide a consistent, inclusive, and transparent service for all communities. We aim to maximise income opportunities that will support a robust and resilient business model for the future of the service and ensure sufficient provision of burial spaces in the city for the long term.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 This paper is being brought to seek support and engagement prior to the commencement of work. Once work begins broad and extensive consultation will be required across the city with as many residents and partners as possible.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There will be no impact on specific protected characteristic groups as the

project will be for all citizens of Sheffield and accommodate all faiths and religions.

- 4.1.2 The Council as a Public Authority has legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010. Section 149(1) contains the Public Sector Equality Duty, under which public authorities must, in exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is connected to protected characteristics and prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 For the purposes of this paper there are no financial or commercial implications. Subsequent work will have significant implications and officers from the relevant services will be required to contribute.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Council is a burial authority with functions in respect of cemeteries and burial grounds by virtue of section 214 of the Local Government Act 1972; by the same section it is a burial authority for the purposes of the Cremation Acts 1902 and 1952.

S214(1) of the 1972 Act defines Local Authorities as burial authorities and states as follows:

'The following authorities, that is to say, the councils of Welsh counties, county boroughs, districts, London boroughs, parishes and communities, the Common Council and the parish meetings of parishes having no parish council, whether separate or common, shall be burial authorities for the purposes of, and have the functions given to them by, the following provisions of this section and Schedule 26 to this Act;'

The Council is a 'district' for the purposes of this provision as 'district' is defined under section 270(1) of the 1972 Act as *'without more, means, in relation to England, a metropolitan district or a non-metropolitan district'*.

By virtue of section S214(5) of the 1972 Act the Council is also a 'burial authority' for the purposes of the Cremation Acts 1902 and 1952.

- 4.3.2 Section 214(2) of the 1972 Act gives the Council as a burial authority the power to provide and maintain cemeteries e.g. *'Burial authorities may provide and maintain cemeteries whether in or outside their area.'*
- 4.3.3 The Council's powers of management of its cemeteries are set out in the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (The LACO 1977). The LACO

1977 gives the Council as a burial authority wide ranging powers of management e.g. Article 3(1) states that, '*a burial authority may do all such things as they consider necessary or desirable for the proper management, regulation and control of a cemetery.*'

4.3.4 Article 4(1) states that, '*A burial authority may enclose, lay out and embellish a cemetery in such manner as they think fit, and from time to time improve it, and shall keep the cemetery in good order and repair, together with all buildings, walls and fences thereon and other buildings provided for the use therewith.*' The second half of this article places a statutory obligation on the Council as a burial authority to 'keep the cemetery in good order and repair.'

4.3.5 The LACO 1977 regulations also place a number of other important obligations on the Council as a burial authority.

These include the requirements to:

- Maintain a record of burials
- Maintain a plan showing the number and location of each grave
- Maintain a record of the granting and transfer of exclusive rights
- Issue Deeds of exclusive
- Maintain a record of exhumations
- Store all records securely to preserve them from loss or damage

Other significant powers include:

- Under article 5, the burial authority may allocate different areas of the cemetery for the use of different Christian denominations or other religious groups and may also apply to the Church of England for the Bishop to formally consecrate parts of the cemetery.
- Under Article 6, the burial authority may provide chapels.
- Under Article 7, the burial authority may provide a mortuary in connection with burials in a cemetery.
- Under Article 10, the burial authority may grant exclusive rights of burial and memorial rights, subject to such terms and conditions as they think proper.
- Under Article 15, the burial authority may charge such fees as they think proper.

4.3.6 Article 4 of the Cremation (England and Wales) Regulations 2008 requires that a cremation authority must ensure that a crematorium is, maintained and in good working order; provided with a sufficient number of attendants; and kept in a clean and orderly condition. The Council is a cremation authority for the purposes of these provisions as article 2 of the regulations defines 'cremation authority' as including any burial authority.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 For the purposes of this report there are no climate implications either positive or negative, however one of the objectives of the work proposed is to address climate opportunities. The implications of any proposals will be identified in further reports.

4.5 Other Implications

(Refer to the decision-making guidance and provide details of all relevant implications, e.g. human resources, property, public health).

4.5.1 A strategy may have implications for human resources, property, public health etc. which will be determined through the development of this work and detailed in further reports. At this stage the purpose of this paper is to seek support and agree an approach for member engagement and therefore there are no other implications at this stage.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Do nothing. Services continue to deteriorate. Burial provision is exhausted. Work is not conducted in an inclusive and transparent way.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To find a framework for member engagement which is inclusive from the outset. To deliver a strategy informed through public consultation to ensure bereavement services meet the needs of the citizens of Sheffield.

PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: Sheffield Bereavment Strategy

EIA ID: 2394

EIA Author: Murtaza Awan

Proposal Outline: 1. At present Sheffield does not have a bereavement strategy, and this proposal will fill this gap 2. The absence of the strategy has had the following effects: Depletion of existing burial spaces with very limited capacity in the remaining cemeteries. 3. Lack of new cemeteries to cater for the burial demand of the growing population. 4. Lack of investment and proper funding of the service 4. Led to ad hoc arrangements and mixed messaging to the public 5. Rules and regulations in respect of cemeteries have been eroded and flouted 6. Lack of consistent service provision to the residents 7. Deterioration of the existing buildings and infrastructure

Proposal Type: Budget

Entered on QTier: No

QTier Ref: #

Year Of Proposal: 23/24

Lead Director for proposal: Ajman Ali

Service Area:

EIA Start Date: 10/13/2023

Lead Equality Objective: Understanding Communities

Equality Lead Officer:

Louise Nunn

Decision Type

Committees:

Policy Committees

- Communities, Parks & Leisure

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio:

Operations

EIA is cross portfolio:

No

EIA is joint with another organisation:

No

Overview of Impact

Overview Summary:

There will be no impact on specific protected characteristic groups as the project will be for all citizens of Sheffield and accommodate all faiths and religions.

Impacted characteristics:

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative

impact:

1. To consult widely with the residents of Sheffield, including internal & external partners in formulating a bereavement strategy for the city over the next 25 years. 2. To source new cemeteries to avoid a burial emergency 3. To address the above mentioned issues in an inclusive and transparent manner

Impact areas:

Year on Year, Other

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required:

No

Review Date:

11/19/2023

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan:

Consulting across Sheffield with all communities and faith groups.

Action plan evidence:

- Exhausted the current facilities and capacity of all our existing cemeteries and burial sites. Therefore more sites need to be recognised as a matter of urgency.

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures:

No

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date:

11/19/2023