

## CITY OF SHEFFIELD

### METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

#### MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022

##### COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

###### *Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)*

**Q.1** How many bus lane fines have been charged over the current financial year?

A.1 Officer Information not gathered in time. Written answer to follow.

**Q.2** What was the total value of these fines?

A.2 Officer Information not gathered in time. Written answer to follow.

**Q.3** How does this compare to the previous three financial years?

A.3 Officer Information not gathered in time. Written answer to follow.

**Q.4** How many bus gate fines have been charged over the current financial year?

A.4 Officer Information not gathered in time. Written answer to follow.

**Q.5** What was the total value of these fines?

A.5 Officer Information not gathered in time. Written answer to follow.

**Q.6** How does this compare to the previous three financial years?

A.6 Officer Information not gathered in time. Written answer to follow.

**Q.7** Do you believe that the £420,854 spent to date on the container park represents good value for taxpayer money?

A.7 No

**Q.8** Given the chance, would you repeat the container park project?

A.8 Yes

**Q.9** What is the total value of Council Tax arrears in Sheffield currently?

A.9 Since its introduction, Sheffield will, over time, collect 99% of Council Tax. Currently over 97% of Council Tax billed has been collected. The figure of arrears accrued up to 31st March 2022, which is owing across all financial years, stands at £74,395,988 (including amounts for South Yorkshire Police and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority precepts). However, to put this in context, this equates to 2.48% against a figure of c£3b Council Tax that has been billed over time.

The value of arrears outstanding has changed considerably over the last two financial years, where the year-end figure carried over has increased and is outside of the usual pattern in previous years due to the COVID pandemic. Naturally, the decision to suspend Council Tax recovery during the pandemic greatly impacted this.

We have now recommenced our procedures for the recovery of Council Tax once again, which includes making customer contact on the relevant accounts and putting in place suitable repayment arrangements (which are also being requested more frequently by customers in the current economic climate). When we last reported on the same arrears figure the position in June 2022 stood at £83,376,000, so the November 2022 figure shows a reduction of £8,980,012 during that period.

It is also worth noting that we have a council tax reserve that is used to 'smooth' the collection fund so that any outstanding tax not yet paid doesn't impact on the current budget.

**Q.10** How many Council owned properties are currently in rent arrears?

A.10 The number of tenants owing arrears (over 0.01p) at end of Nov 22 was 21,141. Many of these pay by monthly direct debit, so accrue 'technical' arrears until the rent-free weeks in December, when they will then be in credit.

As a comparison, the number of tenants owing arrears (over 4 weeks net rent) at end of November 2022 was 8,391. We need to be doing more to tackle rent arrears, and ensure that as an organisation we are doing everything we can at the earliest possible stage to help people from falling into arrears. This needs to be considered as part of the wide-reaching review and restructure of early intervention and prevention services

**Q.11 What is the total value of Council rent arrears?**

A.11 The total amount of arrears owed on current rent accounts at end of November 2022 was £11,411,313.

**Q.12 Since the closure of the John Lewis building, how much has been spent on security for the building?**

A.12 There are £80.7k costs relating to security currently on the Block I business unit. Please see the breakdown below. Note that these are costs up until 4th September when the asbestos contractor took over.

**Q.13 How much has the closure of the John Lewis building cost the Council in lost business rates?**

A.13 £882K lost on Business rates. This is made up of the cost of the 3 month exemption from NNDR following vacation by JLP, and then the removal of the building from rating liability following re-occupation by SCC. This £882k is the difference between the current situation, and the hypothetical situation where JLP remained in occupation and paid the bill in full.

**Q. 14 Since the reduction in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), how much CIL has been raised by the Council? How much has been spent?**

A.1 4 Since Sheffield became a CIL collecting authority in July 2015 we have received approximately £23 million in CIL related funds and have spent approximately £4.9 million. Additionally, approximately £12.6million has been committed across this period to be used on either strategic infrastructure projects or, in relation to Neighbourhood CIL, for LACs to allocate in accordance with their to local priorities.

**Full figures are in the table below.**

<i>Type</i>	<i>Total CIL Received</i>	<i>Total CIL Allocated (includes allocation that has been spent)</i>	<i>Total CIL Unallocated</i>	<i>Total CIL Spent</i>
<b>Strategic CIL</b>	<b>£19,533,09 4.96</b>	<b>£14,225,14 7.64</b>	<b>£5,307,94 7.32</b>	<b>£4,272,96 2.18</b>

<i>Neighbourhood CIL</i>	<b>£3,416,087.78</b>	<b>£3,416,087.78</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£638,432.22</b>
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**Questions of Councillor Douglas Johnson to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)**

**Q.1 In view of the publication of the Bevan Brittan report into attempts to conceal e-mails from Freedom of Information Act requests by use of purported legal professional privilege, when can we expect a clear procedure for handling FoI requests?**

A.1 It's clear that lessons should be learnt from the report, however, as found in the report that there was no attempt to conceal this LLP information. Information identified as being in scope has always been reviewed against the relevant exemptions/exceptions. There is a legitimate interest in protecting lawyer/client confidentiality and such information is subject to the public interest test.

The use of the flag 'not subject to FOI' was only ever meant to highlight those emails that were sensitive, so that, should they be subject to an FOI/EIR request, the IM Team could make that determination with Directors, but we have accepted its use was inappropriate. However, it is clear that this was not completely understood by all of those using emails under this subject heading.

We have clear processes, but as with anything, will look to update them as appropriate and the learnings from the Bevan Brittan report help inform that.

**Q.2 How many requests under the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations are currently outstanding?**

A.2 206 requests in the backlog.  
10 are tree requests.

**Q.3 Would you unequivocally welcome a low-cost proposal to both improve air quality and support our buses and taxis?**

A.3 Yes

**Q.4 Do you think the new Committee system is working well?**

A.4 No

**Questions of Councillor Martin Smith to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)**

With regards to the Council's procurement policy:-

**Q1. Are there regulations that require the Council to put orders or contracts above a certain value out to tender and, if so, what is that value?**

A.1 Local Authorities must adhere to the following procurement regulations:

- The Public Contracts Regulations (2015)
- The Concession Contract Regulations (2016)
- The Utilities Contracts Regulations (2016)

The thresholds at which these regulations are applicable are subject to change and variable based on a) the regulation, b) the type of contracting authority and c) the type of procurement being undertaken. The latest summary of thresholds applicable to Local Authorities from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 is as follows:

A.1 The Council's Contract Standing Orders within Part 4 of the Constitution set out how it will operate in an open, fair, and transparent manner in all its procurement and contract management activity.

	Supplies & Services (Except Subsidised Services Contracts)	Subsidised Services Contracts	Works (Including Subsidised Works Contracts)	Light Touch Regime ( <i>certain social &amp; other specific services</i> )	Small Lots		Concession Contracts
					Supplies and services	Works	
Public Contracts Regulations	£213,477	£213,477	£5,336,937	£663,540	£70,778	£884,720	
Utilities Contracts Regulations	£426,955		£5,336,937		£70,778	£884,720	
Concession Contracts Regulations							£5,336,937

**Q.2 Are there any grounds under which the Council could decide not to put such orders out to tender and, if so, what are they?**

A.2 There may be specific circumstances permitted within the regulations when it is possible for a Local Authority to award a contract without publishing a

tender. The circumstances are not common and could be brought about by exceptional events.

For example, one reason cited within the Public Contracts Regulations which may allow this is: "insofar as is strictly necessary where, for reasons of extreme urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by the contracting authority, the time limits for the open or restricted procedures or competitive procedures with negotiation cannot be complied with".

Another applicable scenario may be where it is identified that, having undertaken due diligence in assessing the market, there is a single supplier available / capable of delivering the required goods or service, necessitating a Direct Award of the contract.

There are also a number of exceptions applicable to the Concession Contracts Regulations, including the 'existence of exclusive rights, defence, and security, and lottery services and electronic communication and water'.

**Q.3 If a decision is taken not to put a high value order or contract out to tender, who makes that decision?**

A.3 Other than in specific circumstances where the Constitution reserves the decision to the relevant Committee the decision on which procurement strategy to adopt is delegated to officers. The decision would generally be taken by the relevant Director after taking professional advice from Procurement & Supply Chain.

**Questions of Councillor Joe Otten to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)**

**Q.1 How was the decision made to apply to the Government for £340,000 for a grant to a developer to convert eight flats in Orchard Square?**

A.1 Investment in the open space, office refurbishment and residential conversion of vacant upper floors at Orchard Square was proposed in the Full Business Case submitted and approved by Government for Future High Streets Fund. This proposed investment acknowledged Orchard Square's past, current and future importance to the offer and vibrancy of Sheffield City Centre, alongside investment on The Moor, HoC2 and Fargate/High Street.

The level of grant funding was determined through an open book valuation process which identified a 'viability gap' and this investment was endorsed by Government.

I Note that, along with your other Lib Dem colleagues on the sub-finance committee, that you did not vote against this decision.

**Q.2 Do you think this represents good value for public money?**

A.2 I assume that Liberal Democrat Councillors do, as they voted for this investment at the recent Strategy and Resources meeting.

**Question of Councillor Barbara Masters to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)**

Q. I have asked questions before over the potential of heat recovery as a power source for Sheffield. In June this year, you stated that Government consultants are looking at utilising waste heat from manufacturing and industry, and that feasibility for mine water heat projects were being conducted by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Coal Authority. You stated these findings should be known later in the year. Are these feasibility works now complete, and can you share the findings of this work?

A. This question should be redirected to Cllr Joe Otten, Chair of Waste and Street Scene Committee

**Questions of Councillor Alexi Dimond to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)**

Q.1 How was the decision made to continue banking with Barclays Bank plc? Was there an Equality Impact Assessment and Climate Impact Assessment?

A.1 The Banking Services contract was awarded to Barclays following a full competitive tender on a specification set out by Treasury and Banking overseen by Commercial Services with input from Legal Services. Barclays emerged as a clear winner scoring competitively on price and best on service levels.

A Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) wasn't a requirement at the time and a formal Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) wasn't completed. However, the questions asked in the tender did place a very high importance on climate,

social and equality issues. Our local economic and social value question (which included Climate) carried the joint highest weighting of any question (7.5% of the service element) and was given an extended word count to allow a detailed submission. Barclays were a clear winner on this question providing more detail than the other banks by including information such as:

- links to climate policy strategy and progress [Barclays-Climate-Strategy-Targets-and-Progress-2022-Final.pdf](#) (home.barclays)
- Equality and diversity reports [Barclays-PLC-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Report-2021.pdf](#) (home.barclays)
- Engagement with local schools and support for GPs and Care homes
- On line educational package for children and young people.

No other bank provided close to this level of detail.

We also questioned the ongoing stability of each bank's branch network as closures will likely disproportionately affect elder residents who are less likely to rely on online banking. All responses were broadly the same to this, that there were no current plans to close branches in Sheffield, but this would be subject to ongoing reviews and demand for in branch services.

***Question included in tender***

***Local Economic Impact and Social Value (Specification section 6.11)***

*In line with the Social Value Act 2012, there is a duty to consider the Social Value contractors can deliver, and also as Sheffield City Council has its own Ethical Procurement Policy.*

*Bidders are therefore invited to advise on their Social Value commitments under this contract.*

*Examples include (but are not necessarily limited to) offering volunteer hours (e.g. to Sheffield schools); environmental considerations; fighting climate change (e.g. environmental considerations and carbon reduction); reducing waste; economic or employment-related values (e.g. Living Wage); and promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace, being a Disability Confident employer etc.*

*Additionally, Bidders may wish to consider whether there is any further local economic impact available; and how you may make a positive impact on Sheffield should you win the bid, for example in relation to our One Year Plan commitments.*

**Q2 Did the Council take into account Barclays' investments in both the fossil fuel industry, arms trade and companies operating in the illegally Occupied Palestinian Territories?**

General environmental and labour law obligations were considered as part of the preliminary checks of all bidders in line with standard pre-selection criteria. Barclays also provided links to their climate change page Addressing climate change (home.barclays) demonstrating progress away from fossil fuels:



A.  
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As shown in the graph below, our lending to the Power and Energy sectors reduced by 8.3% to £25.6bn in 2021 versus 2020<sup>1</sup>. In the same year, the volume of capital markets financing we helped arrange for Power and Energy companies dropped by 20.3% to £27.3bn<sup>2</sup>. Over the same period our green financing increased 70% to £29.8bn<sup>3</sup>. We expect to see continued growth in our green and sustainable financing as we focus on supporting the transition to net zero.



**Question of Councillor Martin Phipps to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)**

Q. Do you agree that for future royal visits the Council should not pick up the bill for expenses related to them, as normally happens, and instead the royal family should pay the associated costs, given their extreme wealth and the sovereign grant settlement which gives them millions a year from public funds, especially as we are in a cost of living crisis?

A. Not aware of any costs.

**Questions of Councillor Maroof Raouf to the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee (Councillor Terry Fox)**

Q. The 2021 census has confirmed that around a quarter of Sheffield's population see themselves as BAME (Black & Minority Ethnic). What is Sheffield City Council's overall representation of BAME in their workforce?

- A. SCC's BAME representation currently stands at around 16.6%. This data snapshot was taken in August 2022

BAME employees	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021
	14.5%	15.0%	15.6%	15.7%	16.6%

- Q.2 In comparison to all other ethnicities, do you believe there is an under representation of Asians within the workforce at Sheffield City Council?**

- A.2 As of August 2022 there was an under representation of Asian/Asian British at 4.8%. As Leader of this organisation I accept that we must go further in closing that gap.

### Ethnicity and Diversity

	Number	Percentage	Census 201 Comparator
Asian/ Asian British	370	4.8%	7.5%
Black/ Black British	363	4.7%	3.4%
Mixed/ Multi Heritage	220	2.9%	2.2%
Other Ethnic Group (Including White Other)	317	4.1%	6.4%
White	6392	83.5%	80.5%
Prefer not to say*	107	n/a	n/a
Unknown*	367	n/a	n/a
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8136</b>		

- Q.3 How many BAME employees are there at Sheffield City Council in Chief Officer grades (those in director grade 7 roles and above)?**

- A.3 Currently 10.5% of our workforce at Chief Officer level is made up of people from BAME backgrounds (9 BAME staff out of a total of 89). Again, I think as an organisation we must do better to close this gap and the findings of the Race Equality Commission, and the on-going work of the legacy group, will be invaluable in helping us deliver the required change,

BAME employees	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	8.5%	6.4%	7.4%	9.9%	10.5%

**Q.4 Over 1,000 employees at Sheffield City Council are unpaid carers, what is the City Council doing to ensure that as much support and flexibility is provided to these employees, should they need it?**

A.4 There are a number of interventions currently in place to support unpaid carers in the workplace.

- In 2022 the council introduced the Workplace Adjustments Passport which records any flexible working requests or reasonable adjustments employees have, which is of particular importance to staff with unpaid caring responsibilities. This means that should the employee change roles or line manager within the council then their flexible working and reasonable adjustment arrangements will stay the same. - [Workplace Adjustments Passport | Sheffield City Council Intranet](#)
- The council recently introduced Paid Carer's that gives carers up to 6 days of paid leave. Carers can also take a reasonable amount of unpaid leave to care for dependents - [Carers' leave | Sheffield City Council Intranet](#)
- The council has committed to the Carers Charter and joined Employers for Carers with Carers UK. The council has a Staff Carers group which is run through the Equalities and Engagement Team and there is support and advice available on the intranet - [Support for carers | Sheffield City Council Intranet](#)

**Q.5 How many Staff Race Equality Networks are there at Sheffield City Council?**

A.5 In total there are at least 8 staff networks operating currently some are targeted towards specific themes (race, menopause, disability, LGBTQ) and at least two are portfolio based Equality and Inclusion networks. There is one Race Equality Network.

**Q.6 Are these volunteer-led or are there paid positions attached to the networks? If paid, what amount of FTE is it paid at?**

A.6 The networks have evolved and changed over the years and we now have a position where some staff involved in running these networks are getting paid time to dedicate to this work. Other networks don't get this. Following a report and discussion at the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board on 8<sup>th</sup> December, it has been agreed that a review of the networks will be carried out and one of the issues to be addressed as part of this review is to achieve greater consistency across the networks.

**Q.7 Are you aware of any concerns from members of Sheffield Race**

**Equality Network (SREN) that they are not being listened to and safe spaces are not being provided by those running the networks?**

- A.7 Yes I am aware. For information, the council's Staff Networks provide valuable insight into the way we deliver our services, how we manage and support our workforce and so help the Council meet its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as well as responding to the Sheffield Race Equality Commission.

The Council is currently reviewing employee engagement and as part of the review the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board, which oversees equality work in the Council, asked officers to conduct a review into all of our Staff Networks. The aim of the review was to understand how all staff networks in SCC are functioning, to identify any issues we need to address and to determine how we can improve and support networks better.

As part of the Review we had a range of views and opinions expressed by staff, including members of the SREN, these were fed into the review. Also as part of the feedback we received some contradictory views, which is not unusual for employee engagement in the EDI arena. So yes, some people feel the Network does not provide them with what they want but others feel it does. Therefore moving forward in a balanced way is important, networks are voluntary meetings and staff can and do, meet outside the main Network meeting.

Also following the first stage of review the Board have agreed to set up a task and finish group to respond to areas that need to be improved upon. It was further agreed to hold an away day with all Staff Networks to discuss future governance, support and ways of working.

**Questions of Councillor Maroof Raouf to the Co-Chairs of the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee (Councillor Dawn Dale and Councillor Mick Rooney)**

**Q.1 King Edward VII School was most recently inspected by Ofsted on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September. What was the overall outcome of that inspection?**

A.1 The inspection outcome and full report has not yet been published therefore this information remains confidential.

**Q.2 Does the school leadership at King Edward VII School do enough to keep children safe? How does Sheffield City Council monitor this?**

A.2 In October 2022, Local Authority Safeguarding Officers carried out a Safeguarding review at King Edward VII School. The school is currently working through a number of actions in relation to this review and milestones are in place to ensure a review of compliance, including the roles and responsibilities of leaders and governors.

**Q.3 Have there been any concerns raised about the overall effectiveness of the leadership, as well as safeguarding, at King Edward VII School since January of this year?**

A.3 Yes, King Edward School has been identified as a school of concern.

**Q.4 Are the arrangements for safeguarding effective at King Edward VII School? How does the City Council monitor this?**

A.4 Please see above.

**Q.5 How many providers offer an alternative education provision at King Edward VII School?**

A.5 Sheffield City Council maintains a citywide framework of approved alternative provision providers. King Edward VII School currently access six providers through the framework.

**Q.6 Will Sheffield City Council commit to carrying out a survey of local schools, including academies, to see which are engaged with, and promote the exchange of school uniforms, to help parents lower their household costs?**

A.6 Yes.

**Questions of Councillor Nighat Basharat to the Chair of the Housing Policy Committee (Councillor Douglas Johnson)**

- Q.1 In the light of the tragic Awaab Ishak case and the subsequent letter from the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, to local authorities about homes affected by mould, what data do we hold on the incidence of damp/mould in:-**
- (a) council housing stock;**
  - (b) other social housing stock; and**
  - (c) the private rented sector?**

- A.1
- (a) Sheffield City Council has had 5,954 reports of damp and mould from the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 to the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022.
  - (b) The City Council do not collate this data with regards other social landlords in the city as we do not have a regulatory role in that respect. Regulation for social housing sits with the Regulator of Social Housing.
  - (c) We do not have any specific city-wide statistics about damp and mould, but we have recently completed a private sector housing stock condition survey for the city. The survey did provide information that could be an indicator of possible damp and mould prevalence, but this was through associated data related to excess cold, low income, low Energy Performance Certificate (EPCs) and fuel poverty. We are working with multiple data sets to better understand the range of archetypes in our city and will use this to inform our approach to conducting future individual surveys. We have remediated the following number of damp and mould hazards between April 2019 and March 2022 in the private rented sector
    - April 19 – March 20 - 81
    - April 20 – March 21 - 20
    - April 21 – March 22 – 40

We have taken enforcement action (including prosecutions and the serving of civil penalties) on the following number of remedy damp and mould hazards from the same period:

- April 19 – March 20 - 14
- April 20 – March 21 - 10
- April 21 – March 22 - 16

- Q.2 How many repairs/complaints to Sheffield City Council relate to mould in properties where tenants have also reported respiratory illness in the household? Do we routinely record this data in order to prioritise repairs?**

A.2 The City Council has a workstream for damp work which currently has 157 open jobs.

We also have a painting programme workstream which applies mould resistant paint with 599 open jobs (nb this has increased from 149 on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 following an exercise to identify open jobs in other workstream areas that included anti-mould treatment). These jobs have been moved into the painting programme to prioritise the mould treatment aspect of those jobs.

There are currently 26 open jobs which are potentially damp and mould related where the customer has informed us of a respiratory issue. Of these, six are in the painting programme /damp work workstreams.

There are currently 27 open complaints relating to mould and damp issues, 10 of these are new requests.

We routinely record this data and ask the customer whether there are any vulnerabilities or health considerations when we receive a report of damp or mould.

A Damp and Mould Task Group has been established, Chaired by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods, which will review all data collected in relation to damp and mould to ensure we can prioritise the Council's response based on each individual report.

**Q.3 What steps are the Council taking to proactively tackle damp/mould in properties, e.g. consistent, practical advice to tenants and programmes to install adequate ventilation in flats?**

A.3 As noted in Q2 a Damp and Mould Task Group has been established to review all aspects of how the City Council responds to both the preventative and remedial aspects of damp and mould.

In the private rented sector, we are ensuring that reports relating to damp and mould from tenants are prioritised and fast tracked to inspecting officers for investigation. Where we find high scoring hazards, we take strong and robust enforcement action including serving significant financial penalties on the most serious offenders. Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, we have reviewed our approach to damp and mould and in addition to the above actions, Enforcement Officers have been instructed to have particular regard to category 2 damp and mould hazards. We had already instructed officers to consider excess cold and damp and mould this winter period as we had identified the importance of tackling these hazards considering the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

We also provide information on our website on how to prevent condensation and damp and we have leaflets that provide advice on damp and mould which we issue to tenants in the private sector.

**Q.4 What steps are the Council taking to pressure the Government to provide funds to effectively tackle damp/mould issues in all housing sectors?**

A.4 Sheffield City Council is lobbying Government across a number of areas to address issues relating to the fabric of the building. The primary source of lobbying is in relation to the decarbonisation agenda and the Road to Net Zero. Much of this work will centre around making homes more thermally efficient which will reduce the amount of condensation forming on walls, which is the biggest cause of damp and mould. This relates to public and private sector housing.

**Questions of Councillor Tony Downing to the Chair of the Housing Policy Committee (Councillor Douglas Johnson)**

**Q.1 For a number of winters, the district heating system at Westfield in the Southeast of the City has failed during the winter period, leaving residents without heating and hot water. The district heating system has not been upgraded in 45 years, hence the problems tenants and residents are experiencing. What steps are being taken by you to ensure the district heating system is being upgraded from the capital investment programme?**

A.1 We are currently reviewing the district heating system at Westfield to assess what options are available to us to upgrade the system. Our first assessment has been to check if the site could be connected to an existing heat network in the city. Unfortunately, this is not possible, so we are now reviewing the site with a commercial partner to seek their expertise on options available to us to upgrade the system.

We have invested in the site over a number of years to provide better insulation of properties/blocks to assist if the system suffers from a breakdown. This investment has meant that where we do have failures, we can identify problems and isolate a smaller number of properties to rectify the problem. This has avoided wholesale failure of the heating at the whole site which serves around 585 properties.

We are aware that we need to significantly invest in the site and once we are clear on what options are available to us to upgrade, we shall be developing a business case to invest in upgrading the whole site. This will be to invest in the boiler houses and the distribution pipework that serves all individual homes.



**Q.2 Flats, including in the southeast of the city such as at Westfield and Waterthorpe, are damp to the extent that there are spores and black mould on the walls and ceilings. This is leading to serious ill health among our tenants. What steps are being taken to address this?**

A.2 Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, the City Council is reviewing all of its outstanding damp and mould cases to see what additional support and re-assurance can be offered. Also, a Damp and Mould Task Group has been established to review how the City Council responds to all cases of damp and mould and how a robust asset strategy can be developed to make sure resources are targeted in the properties which require immediate work.

**Questions of Councillor Tom Hunt to the Chair of the Housing Policy Committee (Councillor Douglas Johnson)**

The Full Council resolution to agree the HRA business plan and budget for 2022/23 said: “this Council welcomes the five year investment programme commitment to bring all council homes up to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) level C, but commits to develop, by Spring 2022, a ‘road map’ to show how we not only can get our homes to EPC C, as quickly as possible, but for a deliverable vision and timetable by which we can get to net zero for the Council’s housing stock.

**Q.1 Can you please provide an update on the progress since May 2022, when you became Chair of the Housing Committee, to implement the roadmap?**

A.1 The work to develop a ‘road map to carbon net zero’ for the Council’s housing stock was commissioned to Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB), a consultancy partner of the Council with expertise in this field. There was a delay in the commencement of this work and the property surveying phase has taken longer than anticipated, though is extremely important to ensure sample data is reliable.

RLB is presently building the final report that will contain technical detail across the different property archetypes. to achieve (i) EPC C (for the 15% of homes currently below this), and (ii) net zero, together with indicative costs. The report is due within the coming weeks, and it is planned to share the outcomes with Housing Policy Committee Members at the earliest opportunity. The roadmap will then be used to help inform the future asset management strategy, policy development and the funding model in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

**Q.2 How many homes since May 2022 have been brought up to EPC C and how many homes are forecast to be brought up to EPC C by the end of March 2023?**

- A.2 There are 629 homes that have improved to an EPC C rating since April 2022 and we currently anticipate that a further 145 properties will be improved to an EPC C by the end of March 2023

**Questions of Councillor Mike Levery to the Chair of the Housing Policy Committee (Councillor Douglas Johnson)**

**Q.1 What is the current unit rate and standing charges for district heating in sheltered housing?**

- A.1 The District Heating Standing Charge for Community Heating is £4.90 per week. The Standing Charge is the same price across all properties connected to the District Heating network throughout the city.

There are some sheltered schemes where the hot water provided by the district heating system is not metered and there is a separate charge for this which has increased from 69p to £1.38 from 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2022.

**Q.2 Has this unit rate and standing charges increased from 12 months ago?**

- A.2 The standing heating charge increased by 65p from the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 for all properties across the city connected to the District heating system . The current charge since 14<sup>th</sup> November is £4.90 per week

**Q.3 How does this compare to the unit rate and standing charges on the Veolia District Energy Network?**

- A.3 The customer District Heating Standing Charge and kWh charge are a standard amount independent of which boiler house a site/property is connected to. The current charges across the District Heating network are: a weekly Standing Charge of £4.90. This charge is collected through the tenants rental account and is payable over the 50 rental weeks of the year (£245 a year) and a charge of 12p per kWh.

**Questions of Councillor Sophie Thornton to the Chair of the Housing Policy Committee (Councillor Douglas Johnson)**

**Q.1 What was the average waiting time for a Council house repair issue to be resolved over the last three months? What was the longest wait?**

- A.1 The average waiting time in September 2022 was 25.04 days, in October 2022 it was 19.76 days and in November 2022 it was 22.34 days. The

average for the last three months was 22.42 days. There has been an increase in demand across the service over the last three months due to seasonal demand, an increase in online repair reporting and housing staff reporting repairs directly onto the repairs system. There are notable increases in jobs relating to damp and mould following the recent tragic case in Rochdale, and in working at heights (roof leaks and repairs) due to levels of rainfall (the service has received an increase of 921 new working at heights repairs over the last three months).

The longest wait for a repair was a job completed in September 2022, which took 795 days. This repair was to renew a fire rated letter plate to a front door. There were ongoing access issues involving numerous visits and attempted contact with the tenant from both the repairs and maintenance and housing services.

**Q.2 What was the average waiting time on the Council house repairs phone line before answering each month in the last two months? What was the longest wait?**

A.2 During October 2022, the average waiting time for the Repairs Contact Centre was 18mins 52 seconds. The longest wait was 2 hours and 21 minutes.

In November 2022 the average waiting time was 21 minutes 35 seconds, and the longest wait was 2 hours and 40 minutes.

These increased waiting times reflect increased seasonal demand, demand as tenants call chasing existing repairs and vacancies as staff have moved on to other Council roles (nb new contact centre advisors have been recruited who will commence in post in January 2023). In November, 2022, the online repairs form for customers started to be actively promoted to help the situation, this has resulted in over 900 online repairs being ordered by customers each week over the last two weeks.

Over the last three months there has been a surge in customer demand with an increase of over 2,000 responsive repairs alone. The Repairs Contact Centre handled 15,211 calls in October 2022 and 16,851 in November 2022 equating to an average of 724 and 766 calls a day, respectively.

**Q.3 What is the current number of outstanding or incomplete Council house repairs?**

A.3 As of 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 the current number of outstanding repairs is 11,862 (responsive) and 4,319 (planned repairs).

**Q.4 How many people are currently in temporary accommodation organised by the Council?**

A.4 There are 323 in temporary accommodation, 195 in Emergency B&B accommodation.

**Q.5 How long is the average stay in temporary accommodation?**

A.5 Average length of stay in all temporary accommodation - 119 days  
Average length of stay in Sheffield City Council temporary accommodation – 148 days.  
Average stay in B&B – 67 days.

**Q.6 How long is the current longest stay in temporary accommodation, including household moves between different TA addresses?**

A.6 883 days – single person in temporary accommodation case is pending possession proceedings.

**Q.7 How many temporary accommodation placements are due to maintenance issues at the household's council property?**

A.7 2 cases in B&B.

**Q.8 How many void properties have been repaired and made fit to let over the last three months?**

A.8 During September to November, 794 void properties were made fit to let.

**Q.9 How many void properties are currently awaiting repairs to be made fit to relet?**

A.9 As of 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 there were 322 properties undergoing repairs to be made fit to let.

This has reduced from 748 properties in June 2022. There has been an associated improvement in the time taken to complete repairs to void properties, from an average of 80 days in April 2022 to an average of 38 days in November 2022

**Q.10 How many bedsit properties are in the Council's possession?**

A.10	Property Type Description	
	Bedsit 4 story block or less	153
	Bedsit block over four storey	13
	Sheltered bedsit	<u>187</u>

**Q.11 Of these bedsit properties, how many are currently void, and what is the average length of time they have been void?**

A.11 *There are currently 40 bedsits which are void and have been void on average of 364 days each.*

Here is a breakdown of the bedsits:

32 are Sheltered, eight in the areas (two of which only became void last week).

The majority of sheltered vacant units are an issue for us, they are scattered over 30 schemes. When we carried out Decent Homes work, we reduced significantly the number of bedsit units we have by converting two bedsits into one bedroom flats. This has proved incredibly successful and made these units very popular. We had in some schemes the odd bedsit(s) that couldn't be remodelled at the time due to not having another bedsit next door, or their location to convert so they are still in the schemes. Bedsits are very unpopular due to their small size and layout, many have access issues, don't have access to lifts etc. We are presently looking at other options for them and, if we can do anything externally to make them more attractive or, use them for other purposes in the schemes.

The other vacant bedsits in the areas are much smaller in number and scattered but over time will be remodelled when the opportunity arises. We have a bedsit tracker in place so we know where they are and if we can model in future when they become empty.

Area	Count team	of	Average days_void
Sheltered	32		433
East Sheffield	1		189
South Sheffield	4		32
Southey & Shiregreen	3		128
Grand Total	40		364

**Q.12 In answer to my first question at last full Council, you said that the longest wait was 795 days for a low rise block fire safety repair. Has this repair now been resolved?**

A.12 This job was completed on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2022.

**Q.13 In answer to my fifth question at last full Council, you said that a new procurement will be required for the properties originally included in the Avonside Roofing contract. What are the forecasted procurement**

**costs for this?**

A.13 We are reviewing the address list that remained on the Avonside Contract and propose to procure a new five year contract. At this point in time, work is undertaken to identify addresses to be added to this new contract proposal to be included in this new contract and therefore it is not possible to provide a forecasted cost for the new contract without understanding what types of properties (including blocks of flats) that may need to be included in the new procurement.

**Q.14 How many residents are on the housing register for Council properties?**

A.14 There are 21,336 households currently on the housing register.

**Q.15 How many of those are in a priority band? Please subdivide this information by bands A-C.**

A.15

Band A	36 households
Band B	685 households
Band C	295 households

**Q.16 What is the average time for customers actively bidding on a priority band to get a Council house? Please subdivide this information by bands A-C.**

A.16 Band A 28/07/2022  
Band B 30/05/2022  
Band C 17/08/2022

**Questions of Councillor Cliff Woodcraft to the Chair of the Housing Policy Committee (Councillor Douglas Johnson)**

**Q.1 Can you please inform me of the average numbers of visits to effect a repair in a Council house. In addition, please specify the average time to complete the repair.**

A.1 For jobs completed in November 2022, there was an average of 1.72 visits per job. It took an average of 22.34 days to complete responsive and planned repairs.

The number of visits to complete a job is influenced by the nature and complexity of the repair and can be extended due to additional works required upon inspection. For responsive repairs the average number of visits is 1.49 whilst for planned repairs is six due to the nature and extent of works required.

**Q.2 Last month, I asked about the poor insulation of Council housing on the Westminster Estate and you said that a thermal imaging survey was required. When will this survey be carried out?**

A.2 A thermographic survey has been commissioned to be undertaken through CDS and their strategic Partner and is anticipated to be carried out during in the first quarter of the new year.

**Questions of Councillor Alexi Dimond to the Chair of the Housing Policy Committee (Councillor Douglas Johnson)**

**Q.1 Please can you advise what progress has been made on the Council's CCTV renewal programme**

**Residents at Callow Tower blocks were promised in Spring that work would commence on CCTV this summer. Can you confirm that the Callow Tower blocks will still be prioritized, and what is the timescale for work commencing?**

A.1 We have an approved capital programme to upgrade CCTV on our tower blocks and sheltered accommodation blocks across the city. We are in the process of procuring a contractor to deliver the work via one of our tendering frameworks. We still expect work to be completed during 2023 and we will complete work at the Callow Tower blocks first once the programme is in place. Our timescales are that we are still expecting work to commence in late Spring but we will keep residents updated once we have a firm programme in place.

**Questions of Councillor Cliff Woodcraft to the Co-Chairs of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee (Councillor Julie Grocutt and Councillor Mazher Iqbal)**

**Q.1 Can you please list the bus lanes and gates within Sheffield city, specifying whether or not permission is granted for taxis?**

A.1 Due to the complexity of the information required to answer this question, we may need to provide this answer in writing. This will be provided ASAP.

**Q.2 Can you please specify which bus lanes and gates can be used by community minibus transport with C19 badge?**

A.2 Officer response not provided in time – written answer to follow.

**Questions of Councillor Penny Baker to the Co-Chairs of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee (Councillor Julie Grocutt and Councillor Mazher Iqbal)**

**Q.1 When will the Castlegate Members Working Group next meet?**

A.1 The Members' Working Group was established prior to the Committee system when there were no arrangements for cross party briefings. With the establishment of the Committee system, governance of the Castlegate project now rests with the Transport and Regeneration and Climate Committee which has representatives from the 3 main political groups. Local Ward members and TRC representatives attend the Castlegate Partnership which brings together elected members and stakeholders involved in the regeneration of Castlegate. Briefings are also provided to Local Area Committee, political groups and other committees as required

**Q.2 Why has the Castlegate Members Working Group not met since prior to the COVID pandemic?**

A.2 As above.

**Questions of Councillor Kurtis Crossland to the Co-Chairs of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee (Councillor Julie Grocutt and Councillor Mazher Iqbal)**



**Q.1 How many buses in Sheffield have accessible audio description? What percentage of the fleet does this represent?**

A.1 This is a question for SYMCA who as Transport Authority hold this information. We advise that you contact them for an answer.

**Q.2 What statistics are held on the accuracy of the real time bus and tram displays?**

A.2 As above.

**Q.3 The clean air zone will make taxis from outside of Sheffield more reluctant to travel through the city. What schemes are in place to ensure that someone who, for example, lives in Eckington and needs to travel to one of our hospitals via taxi, will be able to get one?**

A.3 In line with Government requirements for Clean Air Zones minimum vehicle standards will be set whereby cleaner, less polluting vehicles are not charged to encourage the uptake of these vehicles. The minimum standards for vehicles to be compliant are Euro 6 Diesel and Euro 4 Petrol. For Private Hire Taxis that are car-based the Euro 6 diesel standard was introduced in September 2015 and for Euro 4 Petrol standard was introduced in January 2006. So, vehicles do not need to be new, or zero emission and we therefore expect that similarly to the taxi fleet in Sheffield that there will already be Private Hire Vehicles operating in areas outside of Sheffield that will be compliant.

It is worthwhile highlighting that on 12 December we are launching our Financial Support for Sheffield licensed vehicles to assist them to upgrade if needed, and that Private Cars will not be charged.

It is also worth noting that Liberal Democrat councillors agreed with the implementation of the Clean Air Zone and the requirements therein. Moreover, it was Labour councillors who secured an extra local exemption to provide an extra three month grace period for local taxis to make the required upgrades – with charging delayed to June, instead of late February.

**Question of Councillor Marieanne Elliot to the Co-Chairs of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee (Councillor Julie Grocutt and Councillor Mazher Iqbal)**

**Q. The 3rd December was Small Business Saturday, the importance of supporting small businesses was acknowledged across the city. Small businesses provide diversity and add to the unique character of the city. They also provide jobs and keep money circulating in the local**

**area. What approach is this Council taking through its planning and enforcement functions to support small businesses?**

- A. Small businesses are the lifeblood of our city, and it is vital we support them to flourish and grow. We must also provide the best support possible to encourage new enterprises to start. I note that great work of Business Sheffield in particular with respect to such matters.

Specifically in relation to the Council's function as Local Planning Authority, the approval rate for planning applications has remained very high, with 89% of the approximately 2500 applications determined reaching a successful outcome in the 2021/22 financial year. Whilst this is across all application types, I feel this helps demonstrate the positive and business friendly approach taken. I am also aware that the Planning Teams are exploring further ways to get more focused support to SME businesses who submit planning applications as a key service priority.

Under our stewardship Officers will always seek to take a proportionate response to enforcement, and this includes towards small businesses when relevant. We all want an effective enforcement process that builds confidence, and at times there is a difficult balance to strike around these priorities. In my experience the enforcement teams across the Council are highly professional and generally successful in achieving this.

**Questions of Councillor Maroof Raouf to the Co-Chairs of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee (Councillor Julie Grocutt and Councillor Mazher Iqbal)**

- Q.1 I note a decision will be taken in summer of 2023 to determine what will happen with the modal filter trial at Archer Lane. What will happen to the current measures that are in place between now and when the final decision is to take place, will they remain or will they be removed?**

- A.1 This is ultimately a matter for the Local Area Committee. I look forward to you bringing forward views from your LAC. But in relation to the modal filter, the formal consultation takes place for six months but the ETRO is for a maximum of 18 months (in line with statutory instruments). After the six months, and up to 18 months, is when we will review the scheme and formal decisions will be made around which elements of the trial should stay in place and which should be removed or changed. During this time the scheme will remain in place.

- Q.2 Are you planning on providing any further help, whether that be loans, grants, financing, or an extension to the current compliance date, for Sheffield's Hackney Carriage drivers?**

A.2 Sheffield's Hackney Carriage owners can now apply to our Financial Assistance Scheme which offers support to eligible vehicle owners. Given that the Waste and Streetscene Committee will be considering potential changes to the Vehicle Licensing Policy for Hackney Carriages in February 2023 we will be providing a temporary exemption from charges for Hackney Carriage drivers licensed in Sheffield.

This will mean that following the 'go-live' of the Clean Air Zone on 27th February 2023 Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed by SCC will be exempt from CAZ charges until midnight on 4th June 2023, with charges applying from 5th June.

It is worth noting that Sheffield Green Councillors have publicly criticised delaying charging for Hackney carriages to June, as secured by Labour councillors, instead wanting to see this from February which, I believe, does not give enough time for Hackney Carriage drivers to make the required upgrades, especially so given the upcoming changes to licensing policy.

Further exemptions may be available for drivers that have committed to upgrade their vehicles through our Financial Assistance Scheme and are awaiting the delivery of their compliant vehicle.

**Q.3 Will Sheffield City Council commit to paying at least 50% of the cost of a used Hackney Carriage to enable drivers to purchase a WAV that is compliant with the CAZ?**

A.3 As you will be aware, the exemptions were originally drawn up by Councillor Douglas Johnson when this was in his portfolio.

We have now released the details of our Financial Assistance Scheme and details are available on the Council's website. Applications for support can be submitted from the 12 December. The Government have set the maximum levels of support that we can provide, and the overall package of support is one of the most competitive in the country. The financial support available for Hackney Carriage owners will be for up to £6000 for those looking to upgrade to a new or used Euro 6 or Euro 4 vehicle or up to £10,000 for those people upgrading to a new or used ULEV vehicle. The level of funding we are able to offer will be based on the circumstances of the applicant and we would encourage people to review the information on our website and to apply.

**Q.4 When are you planning on starting work at the Archer Road, Abbeydale Road and Bannerdale Road junction to make it safer?**

A.4 The works are included as part of the South West corridors, Transforming Cities Fund. There are elements of the proposals which we have indicated as early implementation opportunities, to which this scheme is a possibility. To unlock the funding, we are required to complete another business case

to SYMCA. The current programme indicates that works could start in 2023/24 for this junction, this would be subject to funding award, consultation and construction programming.

**Q.5 There was a road traffic accident at Holt House earlier this year where a child was nearly killed through no fault of their own. What is the City Council doing to ensure the safety of all children who use the drive leading up to Holt House School and Rushey Meadows?**

A.5 Resurfacing and signage works have been completed. Going forward this is for the LACs to oversee and develop works with the school for the path to upper section of public rights of way.

**Q.6 When is the intended date to submit the Shoreham Street Traffic Regulation Order and target date to start works?**

A.6 The current expectation is that the Shoreham Street TRO will be advertised in early 2023. Officers are currently working with partners to determine a feasible start date on site.

**Q.7 Building material has been on the side of Asline Road since October. When is the intended start date?**

A.7 The current expectation is that the Asline Road scheme (which includes a new crossing of Bramall Lane) will start on site in January 2023.

**Q.8 What is the Active Travel 4 bid being worked on by Officers?**

A.8 There is no bid currently being worked on as we are still waiting for guidance on an ATF4 programme from the DfT. Until we receive this, there is no certainty that there will be any ATF4 funding. However, officers have met representative stakeholders to consider ideas for future active travel schemes across the City.

**Q.9 When will the Darnall Mini-Holland submission be ready to be implemented?**

A.9 The Darnall Mini Holland feasibility report is currently in production. This will be completed before Christmas and presented to the TRC in February prior to submission to the DfT by 31st March 2023. The implementation will be subject to the DfT's appraisal of the project, to which we understand there is a £100m national allocation for delivery. Our bid will be tested against other national submissions. Delivery timescales are not yet known, further advice on Mini Holland schemes is anticipated to come from Active Travel England in the new financial year, following submission of the feasibility

studies.

**Q.10 How does Sheffield City Council enforce the requirement that all taxi drivers that transport the city's most vulnerable children hold an enhanced DBS?**

A.10 Councillor Joe Otten has advised that this question would be better answered at the Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee meeting due to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> December, rather than the Transportation, Regeneration and Climate Committee.

**Q.11 What are the key differences between the role of a Cabinet Member and the Chair of a Council Committee?**

A.11 This is not a Transport related question.

**In relation to the Future High Street Fund at Fargate –**

**At full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, a member of the public was told the following about Fargate:**

**“A dedicated cycle lane has not been included in the design for the following reasons:**

**A. Fargate is designed to encourage events, dwelling space, experiences, and play; and is not suitable for a designated cycle route**

**B. Fargate does not have kerbed access route. It remains at single level to provide equitable access and promote pedestrian priority over vehicles across the whole space. In addition, kerbed access would clash with underground utilities, increase excavation and materials costs, and hamper sustainable urban drainage**

**C. Fargate will not be a shared space.”**

**In relation to A and B:-**

**Q.12 This description matches Grey to Green (Castlegate) which hosts the Pollen Markets and the proposed cycleway along Pinstone Street. The consulted upon design for Pinstone Street features the same design, volumes of pedestrians, and vulnerable users as Fargate. Is the Pinstone Street design no longer safe or will it be provided as a kerb separated cycleway, shared with delivery access vehicles?**

A.12 Awaiting officer information. Written answer will be provided.

**Q.13 The full business case for Fargate Future High Street Fund heavily features a cycleway/shared access road. I believe Officers have also said the following "By demonstrating cycling as a viable option it will**

**be possible to free the city centre of up to 1,000 car commuting trips". The removal of the cycleway appears to be against the criteria set out in the full business case, on which funding was given on. Has the funder (MGCLG) provided written agreement to the removal of the cycleway?**

A.13 The full business case submitted and approved by Government did highlight the scope to have a shared service and cycle route on Fargate. This was included in the concept design/plan submitted and consulted on. However, through the detailed design process and taking into consideration other users/stakeholders (and their views) in addition to the high levels of pedestrians, cross movements and number of anticipated events which will increase pedestrian numbers, and a dedicated cycle route was not progressed.

This was on the understanding that alternative options to link with Angel Street would be investigated. The primary vision for Fargate is focussed on the growth of events and infrastructure to support and encourage the repurposing and occupation of adjacent buildings with new commercial uses and/or homes. As destination Fargate will include cycle parking.

Cycling is not being banned.

Whilst major changes to the approved business case such as the reallocation of funding require approval via a change request process (such as a recent one submitted and approved for the Front Door Scheme) the provision of a dedicated cycle route did not. This was based on evidence to highlight that not having a dedicated cycle route had a very minimal impact on the benefit cost ratio of the approved business case and would not require approval by Government. Also worth highlighting that other routes were to be investigated as part of Transforming Cities Fund.

**Q.14 If cyclists will not be provided for along Fargate, are there any plans to link the new cycleway on Angel Street, along Arundel Gate to the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) City Centre scheme which terminates at the rear of the Central Library?**

A.14 The planned improvements to Fargate will be designed to accommodate cyclists. Our aim is to ensure that cycle route improvements are developed so that a connected network is created, even where some sections of the network may need to be delivered in phases or where incremental opportunities arise. Connecting the planned route through Fargate to Angel Street forms part of our overall network plan.

**Questions of Councillor Martin Phipps to the Co-Chairs of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee (Councillor Julie Grocutt and Councillor Mazher Iqbal)**

**Q.1** Have disability groups, such as Disability Sheffield, been consulted about the proposed removal of the Fargate cycle lane? If so, what was their feedback? If not, will the Committee commit to consulting them over this, given that the removal of a specified cycle lane risks uncontrolled shared use which can be much more hazardous than a segregated cycle lane?

A.1 Disability Sheffield have been engaged through the consultation on the scheme and further discussions will be held with them to fully understand their views and position on the proposed approach to accommodating cyclists and other users through Fargate

**Q.2** Were active travel groups, such as Cycle Sheffield, consulted about the impact on the proposed removal of the Fargate cycle lane?

A.2 I understand this position was stated verbally to the Cycle Forum at the time. This was on the understanding that alternative options to link with Angel Street would be investigated.

**Q.3** Will the proposal to make Fargate a single level be consulted with disability groups? Noting that blind and partially sighted people can benefit from the differences in levels as markers. If Fargate is progressed as a shared space, can it be ensured that there is suitable consultation with disabled groups over how to make this accessible, such as through tactile pavement markings and kerbs?

A.3 There will be a continued dialogue with Disability Sheffield and other groups at key stages as the scheme progresses.

**Q.4** Do you recognise that the removal of a designated cycle lane from Fargate may risk uncontrolled shared use of Fargate, which would be the most hazardous scenario?

A.4 The design of the scheme will be subject to a Road Safety Audit. This process considers the risks and hazards of proposed changes to the highway to ensure that the safety of the schemes we deliver is central to any changes we deliver.

**Q.5** Where have any decisions around the removal of a segregated cycle lane been made and on what date was this made by the relevant Committee?

A.5 The decision was taken to City Centre Programme Development Board and PLT by the then Director for City Centre Development in summer 2021. Which I believe was overseen by Green Councillor Cabinet Member at the time.



**Questions of Councillor Ruth Milsom to the Chair of the Waste and Streetscene Policy Committee (Councillor Joe Otten)**

**Q.1 Following the Food Waste pilot this Autumn, when will you bring in City-wide food waste collections?**

A.1 The requirement to provide weekly food waste recycling collections was written into UK law in 2021. The timescales by which authorities must comply with the regulations have yet to be confirmed by Government. Initially, the indication was that food waste collections would have to be in place by Autumn 2023, however in October 2021, it was suggested that this be put back to 2025. Further consultation with industry, local authorities and stakeholders was expected in 2022, however this is still yet to be released

**Q.2 How much per year will it cost to provide City-wide food waste collections?**

A.2 As a new statutory duty for the Council, the Government is expected to award new burdens funding to cover the costs of this new service. However, the details of this have yet to be confirmed. Typically, new burdens funding is only granted where the service is not already being provided and is being instigated because of the change in legal requirements. As such, with the significant challenges in delivering a balanced budget with existing service pressures, the Council is keen to secure additional funding from Government for this new requirement.

We are working with Veolia to understand the costs of a full citywide roll out of food waste collections, and this will be brought to the Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee meeting in March 2023

**Q.3 What will happen to the collected food waste? Will it be exported and processed out of the City or re-cycled within Sheffield**

A.3 For the duration of the recent 12-week food waste collection trial, all food waste collected was taken to a waste transfer station in Hillsborough, before being taken to an anaerobic digestion plant in Lincolnshire.

Sheffield does not currently have sufficient capacity to recycle food waste within the Sheffield boundary. Food waste treatment facilities are typically located in rural areas, as the outlet from the food waste is a digestate, which is a nutrient-rich fertiliser and soil improver, used on agricultural land to displace traditional chemical fertilisers.

## **Questions of Councillor Angela Argenzio to the Chair of the Waste and Streetscene Policy Committee (Councillor Joe Otten)**

### **Q.1 What powers and resources does the Council have to control smoke pollution?**

A.1 Smoke pollution comes in many forms. For commercial premises, the emission of dark or black smoke from industrial chimneys is an offence. It is also an offence to burn trade waste in the open and it can only be burned under very specific conditions contained in a permit from the Environment Agency. (e.g. Bernard Road Energy Recovery Facility (ERF)).

For domestic premises, most of the Sheffield area is smoke controlled, which means occupiers of dwellings may use only authorised fuels (electricity, gas) or an exempt appliance e.g. an exempt wood burning stove. These usually come with restrictions on the type of fuel that can be used e.g. kiln dried timber of a certain size.

If smoke is emitted from bonfires, we can deal with these as a statutory nuisance provided, we can show that the smoke is having a material effect on the enjoyment of property. We usually ask the complainant to keep a diary of the instances where they are affected, and this helps us judge whether the impact is sufficient to act. If serious enough, we would issue an Abatement Notice, the breaching of which is an offence.

Officers are reviewing the information and engagement we offer out on domestic fuel and smoke nuisance in light of the cost-of-living crisis and we may be able to provide further information to residents if that is required or where there are believed to be problems. Moreover, our street wardens and other staff are targeting areas where there is a high incidence of domestic burning and providing immediate responses where bonfires are seen. We do include a 'no burning' section on abatement notices designed to get rubbish removed from gardens and we are serving large numbers of those.

### **Q.2 What enforcement activity has taken place in the last year?**

A.2 Below is a summary of the requests relating to smoke that we have received in the last 12 months. Most of the enforcement activity will be contacts with the customer and subject by email or letter, or a visit by an enforcement officer, and informally resolved, without the need for court proceedings.

<b>Request</b>	<b>Number</b>
Black Smoke	2
Bonfires	
Domestic	121
Smoke	-
Domestic	189

Smoke	-
Industrial	54
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>366</b>

**Questions of Councillor Barbara Masters to the Chair of the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee (Councillor Richard Williams)**

The then Executive Member for Sustainable Neighbourhoods, Wellbeing, Parks and Leisure, former Councillor Alison Teal, was asked a series of questions over the use of diesel-powered commercial vehicles in the parks and the rollout of electric power points for their use.

Councillor Teal stated that she and other Councillors had received some complaints from visitors to the parks over the use of small diesel generators by commercial operators and she considered it a public health issue.

The tendering process that took place while she was still in post resulted in the ice-cream concession being transferred to a different operator. My understanding is that the new operator uses a vehicle with lower environmental specifications than the Euro 6+ vehicle used by the previous operator.

**Q.1 Is this correct?**

A.1 We are committed to making Sheffield's parks the best they can be. The businesses that trade within our parks play an important role in enhancing visitor experience, generating essential income and supporting our sustainability targets. Several parks' concessions were due for retender for the 2022-2025 period. As with all Council commercial business, we have completed an open and fair tender process, which attracted submissions from many operators. Those who best met the tender criteria have been selected and we will see some existing businesses continue to operate in our parks, and some new businesses being introduced. We understand that this is very difficult for those who were unsuccessful, but we can never guarantee renewal at the end of a contract, we have to conduct a process that is fair to all interested businesses. As part of the tender award process, it was specified that only Euro 6 compliant vehicles are to be used in parks.

**Q.2 How much weighting is given to environmental concerns when awarding contracts and which consideration is given the most weighting?**

A.2 Applications were reviewed holistically with their entire offer considered i.e. from their environmental credentials, to their experience as an operator, to their menu and prices, to their tender price.

**Q.3 In questions to the Parks and Countryside Service and Councillor Teal regarding electric points, I was told no new electric points had yet been installed but it would be working closely with concession operators over the next three years to support operators to make the transition.**

**Has this work been started and what is the progress to date?**

- A.3 Exploratory work has been undertaken for each site – this is now being costed (and the current market means that it may be significantly more expensive than first hoped) and business cases will be drawn up on a site-by-site basis.

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