

Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee

Meeting held 21 February 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillors Martin Smith (Chair), Minesh Parekh (Deputy Chair), Henry Nottage (Group Spokesperson), Terry Fox (Group Spokesperson), Kurtis Crossland, Brian Holmshaw, Abdul Khayum, Barbara Masters and Laura Moynahan

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 No apologies for absence were received.

**2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 Councillor Nottage declared an interest in item 11 due to him being a business owner that had received a carbon audit under a Shared Prosperity Fund scheme.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 20th December, 2023 were approved as a correct record.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

5.1 The Policy Committee received no petitions and one question from a member of the public. The member of the public did not ask their question in person, a written response would be provided.

**6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

6.1 No questions were received from Members.

**7. WORK PROGRAMME**

7.1 The Principal Democratic Services Officer presented the Work Programme and made reference to a referral from Council asking that the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee consider adding to its work programme, the completion of the Green Jobs and Skills Strategy initiated by Greens during the Cooperative Executive. Officers confirmed that details on this would be provided in the skills update to be provided at the March meeting of the committee.

7.7 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that, having considered if they required any further additions or adjustments:-

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;
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. **CULTURE STRATEGY**

8.1.1 The committee considered a report seeking approval to make the grant award of £118,250 revenue funding from the Project Feasibility Fund to Harmony Works Trust Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), for the development and completion of a detailed business case for a regional music education hub at Castlegate.

8.1.2 The Chair noted the thanks of the committee to everyone that had contributed to the project including the University of Sheffield and Arts Council England.

8.1.3 The committee offered its thanks to Rebecca Maddox, Head of Business Development for all her work on the strategy.

8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee:-

1) Notes:

- the progress so far in developing a new Culture Strategy for Sheffield
- details of the Shared Prosperity Fund Year 3 Cultural Showcase activity
- detail of the Place Partnership bid which was recently submitted
- progress with the Cultural Pipeline Fund

2) Approves the grant award of £118,250 revenue funding from Project Feasibility Fund to Harmony Works Trust (CIO) for the development and completion of a detailed business case for the creation of a regional music education hub at Castlegate.

## 8.3 **Reasons for Decision**

8.3.1 The report provides a progress update on SCC's new Strategic Approach to Culture. The recommendations build on previous reports in September 2022, February 2023 and September 2023. The recommendation to support Harmony Works Trust (CIO) with Project Feasibility Funding builds on the principles of the Strategic Approach to Culture, and will create strong positive outcomes for education, skills, culture, regeneration and heritage.

## 8.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 8.4.1 The proposed allocation of PFF funding to Harmony Works Trust (CIO) could be refused. This would create a funding gap for the project and slow or stop the development work on the project. It would put at risk significant funds already secured by the project from Levelling Up Fund and National Lottery Heritage Fund. If the project did not proceed, this would be a huge loss for the city, especially for our young people and music-based groups.

## **9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & SKILLS CAPITAL STRATEGY**

- 9.1.1 This report set out the key priority areas for capital investment for Economic Development and Skills and provided an overview of potential projects and priorities for the years 2024 to 2029, together with an overview of anticipated developments and challenges up to 2052. The Committee was asked to endorse the general approach to inform the Council's overarching Capital Strategy (which would be brought to Full Council for approval in March 2024).
- 9.1.2 Members queried the information provided in item 6 of the report and officers agreed to seek further clarification from the Finance team.
- 9.1.3 Discussion took place around the weighting that had been given to the climate emergency and the committee's responsibilities in relation to this. It was noted that the Transport, Climate and Regeneration Policy Committee had climate change as one of its remits, but consideration was given to whether this should be spread more widely. The Chair agreed to take this away and discuss with the Governance Committee as part of their work on committee remits.

### **9.2 RESOLVED:** That the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee:-

1. Endorse the proposals set out in this report.
2. Note that the proposals will now be included in the draft Capital Strategy to be submitted to Full Council for approval in March 2024 and, if approved:
  - a) Officers will work with Members to consult with relevant stakeholders (including with partners, staff, trades unions [if required] and in respect of equalities and climate change) on the proposals in this report to inform final project proposals;
  - b) 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; and
  - c) Approval for detailed proposals will be sought as part of the monthly capital approval cycle by the Finance Committee

(NOTE: The result of the vote was FOR – 8 Members; AGAINST – 0 Members; ABSTENTIONS – 1 Member)

### **9.3 Reasons for Decision**

- 9.3.1 Members were asked to note the unsustainable financial position highlighted by

the medium-term financial analysis presented to Strategy and Resources Committee in September 2023.

- 9.3.2 This report and its recommendations set out how capital projects can continue to be developed and delivered, despite the limited resources available and continue to deliver quality infrastructure for the people of Sheffield.

#### 9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 9.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balanced budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. Committee is invited to comment upon and endorse the current proposals to form part of the Council's wider Capital Strategy for 2024/25

### 10. **CLIMATE STATEMENT**

- 10.1 The committee considered a report of the Executive Director for City Futures seeking endorsement of the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee's Climate Statement.

- 10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee:-

- a) consider and agree the committee climate statement to ensure that the proposed actions contained within are reflected in their Work Programme.
- b) agree to the development of a monitoring process which will be presented to Committee for consideration in June 2024.
- c) review what other measures could be used to support or encourage further reduction in emissions from business and industry

#### 10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 10.3.1 It is important that the response to the Annual Climate Progress Report is open and transparent in setting out the challenges which the local authority faces in making progress and clarifies future expectations on the part we all have to play in addressing climate change.
- 10.3.2 Committee does not currently have specific strategic goals for climate. The process required to develop these, and have the statements approved to be read at each committee meeting meant that option 5.2 was not feasible with the available resource and timeframe.

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

- 10.4.1 Not providing committee climate statements considered due to the resource required to collate.
- 10.4.2 Providing more detailed Committee Climate Statements that provided an overview of strategic climate goals, with each Chair then reading the committees statement publicly at their respective committee meeting following release of the report.

## **11. LIFELONG LEARNING AND SKILLS QUALITY UPDATE REPORT**

11.1.1 The committee considered a report of the Director of Education and Skills containing updated information about provision in the Lifelong Learning and Skills Service up to 31 December 2023 as presented to the Lifelong Learning and Skills Advisory Board in January 2024. The report contained statistical information about the service, the numbers of learners being supported and the quality of provision.

11.1.2 Members requested feedback on the service from learners and officers agreed to share this with the committee and also a breakdown of the data by ward.

11.1.3 A question was asked about whether the survey that had been carried out gave any indication that learners were looking for courses that were not provided by the service. Officers acknowledged that this was the case and advised that a report on curriculum design would be brought to the committee at a future meeting.

11.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee:-

1) Note the content of the report.

2) Note that officers will provide the committee with updated information at regular intervals to ensure the activities of the service are appropriately shared to demonstrate performance and the against the grant funding received.

### **11.3 Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 This paper is to provide an update on the quality of provision current delivered.

### **11.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.4.1 No decision is required from Committee, this paper is to provide an update on the quality of provision current delivered.

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