

Agenda Item 3

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the City of Sheffield held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH, on Wednesday 23 January 2013, at 2.00 pm, pursuant to notice duly given and Summonses duly served.

PRESENT

THE LORD MAYOR (Councillor John Campbell)
THE DEPUTY LORD MAYOR (Councillor Vickie Priestley)

1	<i>Arbourthorne Ward</i> Julie Dore John Robson Jack Scott	10	<i>Dore & Totley Ward</i> Keith Hill Joe Otten Colin Ross	19	<i>Mosborough Ward</i> David Barker Isobel Bowler Tony Downing
2	<i>Beauchief Greenhill Ward</i> Simon Clement-Jones Clive Skelton Roy Munn	11	<i>East Ecclesfield Ward</i> Garry Weatherall Steve Wilson Joyce Wright	20	<i>Nether Edge Ward</i> Anders Hanson Qurban Hussain Nikki Bond
3	<i>Beighton Ward</i> Helen Mirfin-Boukouris Chris Rosling-Josephs Ian Saunders	12	<i>Ecclesall Ward</i> Roger Davison Diana Stimely Penny Baker	21	<i>Richmond Ward</i> John Campbell
4	<i>Birley Ward</i> Denise Fox Bryan Lodge Karen McGowan	13	<i>Firth Park Ward</i> Alan Law Chris Weldon Shelia Constance	22	<i>Shiregreen & Brightside Ward</i> Sioned-Mair Richards Peter Price Peter Rippon
5	<i>Broomhill Ward</i> Shaffaq Mohammed Jayne Dunn	14	<i>Fulwood Ward</i> Andrew Sangar Sue Alston	23	<i>Southey Ward</i> Tony Damms Gill Furniss
6	<i>Burngreave Ward</i> Jackie Drayton Ibrar Hussain Talib Hussain	15	<i>Gleadless Valley Ward</i> Cate McDonald Tim Rippon Steve Jones	24	<i>Stannington Ward</i> David Baker Vickie Priestley Katie Condliffe
7	<i>Central Ward</i> Mohammad Maroof Robert Murphy	16	<i>Graves Park Ward</i> Denise Reaney Ian Auckland Bob McCann	25	<i>Stockbridge & Upper Don Ward</i> Alison Brelsford Philip Wood Richard Crowther
8	<i>Crookes Ward</i> Sylvia Anginotti Geoff Smith Rob Frost	17	<i>Hillsborough Ward</i> Janet Bragg Bob Johnson George Lindars-Hammond	26	<i>Walkey Ward</i> Ben Curran Nikki Sharpe Neale Gibson
9	<i>Darnall Ward</i> Harry Harpham Mazher Iqbal Mary Lea	18	<i>Manor Castle Ward</i> Jenny Armstrong Terry Fox Pat Midgley	27	<i>West Ecclesfield Ward</i> Alf Meade Adam Hurst
				28	<i>Woodhouse Ward</i> Mick Rooney Jackie Satur Ray Satur

1. FORMER COUNCILLOR SIR IRVINE PATNICK

The Lord Mayor (Councillor John Campbell) announced the death of former Councillor and Sheffield Member of Parliament, Sir Irvine Patnick. Members of the Council observed a minute's silence in memory of Sir Irvine. Later in the meeting, Members of the Council paid tribute to him.

2. COUNCILLORS PENNY BAKER AND DAVID BAKER - 25TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On behalf of the Council, the Lord Mayor (Councillor John Campbell) congratulated Councillors Penny Baker and David Baker on the occasion of their 25th Wedding Anniversary.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Trevor Bagshaw, Leigh Bramall, Jillian Creasy, Martin Lawton, Lynn Rooney, Janice Sidebottom and Stuart Wattam.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

RESOLVED: On the Motion of Councillor Pat Midgley, seconded by Councillor Gill Furniss, that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 5th December 2012 be approved as a correct record.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

Petitions

(a) Petition Requesting for Free Skate Parks in the City

The Council received a petition containing six signatures and requesting the Council to provide free skate parks in the City.

Representations on behalf of the petitioners were made by Terry Allingham. Mr Allingham stated that there were 2 or 3 large skate parks in Sheffield. Devonshire Green was one such site, although it was relatively small. In some cases, litter accumulated at the Skate Park in the morning. The petition requested more free facilities for

people who wanted to skate or use scooters, which would help people to develop their skills, attract new skaters, would help to provide activity or hobby which might reduce incidents of anti social behaviour among young people and helped people to develop qualities such as courage and dedication. It also provided a potential public tourist attraction for the City.

Mr Allingham made reference to his own personal experience in suffering from depression and to the beneficial effects of learning to skate on his wellbeing, a skill which he had taught himself by watching a video on You Tube after he had purchased a pair of rollerblades. He stated that skating was a 'healthy addiction' in that it provided focus, promoted perseverance and it had helped him to recover from his depression.

He added that skating was a great activity for young people, including those in their early 20s and it was an activity which gave people something to focus upon and a distraction from other less healthy activities or addictions, which might cause young people to get into trouble.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport (Councillor Isobel Bowler). Councillor Bowler thanked Mr Allingham for sharing his personal story about how skating had changed his life. In addition to Devonshire Green, there were 4 other parks in the City which provided facilities for skaters and there was a funded plan to provide another skate park in Hackenthorpe. Further consideration could also be given to the promotion of skating and other opportunities such as training.

Councillor Bowler indicated that she would be pleased to meet with Mr Allingham to discuss matters further and she commented that he had put forward a strong case which was inspirational.

(b) Petition Requesting a Bus Shelter on Wincobank Avenue

The Council received a petition containing 40 signatures requesting a bus shelter on Wincobank Avenue.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall) and to the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive.

(c) Petition Requesting the Removal of the Bus Stop on Longley Avenue West

The Council received a petition containing 14 signatures requesting the removal of the bus stop on Longley Avenue West.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business,

Skills, and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall) and to the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive.

(d) Petition Requesting Improved Parking Facilities for Customers using Millhouses Shopping Centre

The Council received a petition containing 228 signatures requesting improved parking facilities for customers using Millhouses Shopping Centre.

The Council referred the petition to the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development (Councillor Leigh Bramall).

Public Questions

(a) Public Question on Redesign of Early Years' Service

(i) Emma Chadwick asked whether the Council understood that the position in relation to the redesign of the Early Years' Service was still unclear to parents and that it was felt that the Council was making the situation sound better than it really was. She compared the number of people who might have participated in the Council's consultation with the 1,554 people who had signed the petition, presented to Cabinet on 12 December 2012 concerning early years' services. She asked how many parents had indicated that they agreed to these cuts in the early years' service.

(iii) Linda Edwards stated that she understood that £3.8 million needed to be saved from the Early Years' budget and asked why Multi-Agency Support Teams (MAST) were not included in the planned savings as all Early Years' Providers had been. She suggested that some of the savings could have been found from the budget for MASTs. She stated that she had found difficulty in ascertaining the size of the budget allocation for MASTs and, following the submission of two Freedom of Information requests, different budget figures had been obtained and, therefore, it was difficult to accurately evaluate the current position.

(iv) Sally Pearse asked how the Council would ensure that meaningful consultation would take place in view of the short timescales involved. She questioned the quality of the consultation in that the Advisory Board had been given only 24 hours notice of a consultation event, which had excluded many part-time providers from taking part in the consultation. She also suggested that the consultation document included leading questions and that accessing the on-line consultation was too complicated, making it difficult for people to make their views known.

(v) Elaine Bennett stated that the nurseries affected by the Council's

proposals provided for a high percentage of children with special needs and asked where would these children be placed given that specialist nurseries were full.

(vi) Leanne McMain stated that the questions asked in the consultation were misleading and loaded and the consultation did not refer to budget cuts and suggested, therefore, that the consultation was not real or meaningful. She asked that Members consult with Council officers with a view to proper consultation being carried out.

Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families) thanked the questioners for their comments. She agreed that it was vital that any consultation needed to be meaningful, but suggested that the responses to the consultation received so far did not provide a true or balanced view of the Early Years' Service in the City. Councillor Drayton referred to some questions which were included in the consultation concerning: (i) the proposed audit of Early Years' settings in order to achieve high quality services, (ii) whether the Council should focus resources on encouraging those families who have not previously used early years' services and who need support, to use such services and (iii) did people agree that resources should be focussed on the most vulnerable children and families. Negative responses had been received regarding all three questions, which were difficult to comprehend and, she considered, did not contribute to the consultation in a meaningful way. However, the Council would continue to strive to do all it could to ensure that every single parent took part in the consultation, including the voices of those who had contributed to the Council's review of early years, in order to secure an accurate assessment of opinion on the Council's proposals.

As regards the comments made concerning the consultation being too quick, Councillor Drayton responded that the Council had been preparing for the Early Years' Review for a number of years and had held numerous meetings in many formal and informal settings, both with parents and service providers on a City-wide and area basis, as well as providing to parents and carers a large number of communications about the Service, including letters, pamphlets etc. She added that the Council had carried out a detailed and exhaustive programme of consultation and this consultation had continued when Cabinet, at its meeting on 12 December had given approval in principle to the proposals that were out for consultation now and until the end of January.

In relation to MASTs, Councillor Drayton reminded the questioners that these teams comprised officers from agencies other than the Council, including the South Yorkshire Police, Midwives, the Youth Offending Team, Schools and Early Years' services, with the aim of working jointly with children and families across the City to improve their health and well being, school attendance, behaviour and early years' provision. The teams were crucial in identifying children and

families with additional needs through high quality early intervention support services to avoid potential crisis situations and to provide families with one point of contact rather than their continual referral between agencies. She added that some of the services provided by the voluntary and community and charitable sectors were also important in supporting early years' intervention and prevention.

If early intervention and prevention services were not in place, then the risks would increase of families moving into crisis situations with associated additional long term costs of support and a reduced positive outlook for the families concerned. The Council would continue, with its partners, to work within the MAST system and its whole household approach to address the problems faced by vulnerable families in view of MASTs importance to long-term family outcomes.

Councillor Drayton added that whilst she knew that Early Years' services could make a positive difference to the lives of children and families, the cuts were being imposed on the Council by the Government. Early Intervention Grant of £6.8m had been cut by 28% at the same time as a change in the way Early Years services were provided had been required by the Government. The previous Labour Government had implemented a SureStart Programme of early childcare, but the present Government had now changed the emphasis from supplying funding for childcare to funding free early learning for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. The Council had no further money to fund childcare and it was important that the public understood this. She wished to say that although the proposals made savings in management, premises and administration, it was impossible to cut £3.5m out of a budget without it making a difference, but we would do all we can to protect services to children and families.

Councillor Drayton apologised for some of the scaremongering rumours about the future of the Early Years' service, which must have caused great worry for vulnerable families and children. She stated that we should all be working together to support children and families across the City, particularly those children with a disability and vulnerable families and we needed to strive to provide support in the face of Government cuts instead of listening to the scaremongering on these issues. The Council would continue to seek the views of as many parents, carers and providers as possible under the current consultation and ideally, would not wish to see any nurseries close.

(b) Public Questions on the future of Stocksbridge Leisure Centre

(i) Mr Colin Poppleton referred to the consideration being given by the Council to the closure of the Stocksbridge Leisure Centre and to his families' use of the Leisure Centre over the past 10 years or so. He asked whether it was true that the Council had a legal obligation to keep the Centre open for swimming as swimming was included within

the school curriculum. He commented that the Council had a moral obligation to keep the Centre open as Stocksbridge was a remote area and as such would provide difficulties to families and children in using other Leisure Centres in view of the travelling involved.

(ii) Mr Steven Woodcock referred to the proposed savings which had been identified in respect of the Stocksbridge Leisure Centre and which amounted to £400,000 per annum which equated to approximately £8,000 per week – requiring an estimated £1 per week contribution from each household in Stockbridge and Deepcar. Therefore, could it not be argued that it would be a small price to pay for residents of this area to keep the Leisure Centre open. He also commented that given that residents in Stocksbridge and Deepcar were unlikely to use any other sporting facilities in the City (which received a subsidy), was it right that residents of the area contributed to such a subsidy through the Stocksbridge Town Council (STC).

Councillor Isobel Bowler (Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure) responded that the legal position was that schools had a responsibility for national curriculum targets relating to children's swimming. Should a pool not be available at Stocksbridge, then the Council would work with those schools which used Stocksbridge Leisure Centre for swimming to help them discharge their duty. If necessary, the Council would work with schools on travel arrangements to access other pools.

As respects the cost of the Leisure Centre, Councillor Bowler indicated the facility would require a future subsidy of £400,000 in order to keep it open. However, in order to create further time to explore a solution to the problem, she had been in discussion with the STC and Sport England and a further £40,000 had been identified in order to keep the Leisure Centre operational for a further month (three months' from 1st February to 30 April)

Councillor Bowler hoped this period would provide an opportunity for the City Council to work with the STC to identify potential future options for the benefit of the community and a letter had been sent to the members of STC to this effect. She, and the Council's Director of Culture, had met with Sport England representatives and had advised the latter of the special circumstances of the Stocksbridge and Deepcar communities which were generally isolated. Sport England had offered to work with the Council and the STC to develop business plans for the Leisure Centre and the identification of alternative sources of funding which, she hoped, the STC would take up. She added that Sport England had confirmed that they believed a business case could be made for sustainable facilities in Stocksbridge.

However, Councillor Bowler indicated that the Council were unable to find any sustainable funding for next year and the following years as the Council had, unfortunately, less and less funding available. She

offered to meet with the local community again, if required and stated that the Council would again meet with STC and others on 1st February, 2013 in an attempt to identify a solution for Stocksbridge.

(c) Public Question on Citizen' Charities

Jonathan Marsden asked rather than cut expenditure, would it be possible to organise Citizen's into Charities so that every citizen could offset income tax into such Charities, as they did at Eton?

Councillor Julie Dore (The Leader of the Council) indicated that she could not possibly comment on the individual scheme mentioned. However, she did not approve of tax avoidance schemes, believing in a progressive tax system. She stated that she was more than willing, through taxation, to subscribe to services and the welfare system which was there to protect the sick, vulnerable and those in work. She, therefore, believed wholeheartedly that people should pay their taxes.

(d) Public Question on Housing Waiting List

Ms. Margaret Tew expressed concern that she had been told by Sheffield Homes that she had been at the top of the housing waiting list but nevertheless she had been overlooked, with priority being given to others who had not been on the list as long as she had, namely 12 years. She asked why she was moving down the waiting list and were Council homes only being given to those older people who wished to downsize? She also suggested that some homes were not occupied by their tenants for long periods and some homes had been allocated to some who were not entitled to them according to the Council's policy.

Councillor Harry Harpham (Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods) responded that he did not know the details of Ms. Tew's case but suggested if she wished to let him have the details he would get back to her. However, Councillor Harpham stressed that the overriding problem in housing was insufficiency. The Council needed to encourage those people who were living in homes that they acknowledged were too big for them to live in smaller, more economically manageable homes with smaller rents. This would free up, in some cases, a family home which were in short supply in the City where, in general, there was insufficient housing.

Councillor Harpham added that the Government had reduced the social housing budget by 60% and now there was a need for Government action to stimulate the building of new housing which was desperately needed. He added that he had sympathy with Ms. Tew's predicament and re-iterated that he would contact her on the matter. The Council was continually looking at its Allocations Policy as people had to wait long periods before they were allocated a Council tenancy and the range of priority criteria was considered to be too broad. He

stated that a report would be submitted to Cabinet in the next few months to address the issues that Ms. Tew raised. However, he was concerned at the comments she had made regarding the under-utilisation of properties on the estate where she lived and the occupation of properties by tenants that they were not entitled to.

(e) Public Question on new Housing Development on Green Belt site at Long lane, Loxley

Mr. Ken Fletcher asked whether the Council would investigate an alleged breach of planning conditions in respect of an application for planning permission approved by a meeting of the West and North Planning and Highways Committee on 23rd October, 2012 regarding a housing development being built on a green belt site between Long Lane and Hanson Road, Loxley.

Mr Fletcher indicated that the Loxley Valley Preservation Society had discovered that the site facilities and compound to the development had been built on green belt land adjacent to the site and that no permission had been sought from the Council on this matter. He stated that this was fundamentally wrong and that this caused problems with respect to access to and from the site facilities, the storage of inflammable equipment, as well as the use of the green belt site by heavy traffic and potential drainage problems that local residents were concerned about. He suggested that the Council should, amongst other things, seek a response from the developer as to how it was going to deal with the access and egress of traffic from the site to Long Lane which cut across green belt land.

Mr Fletcher added that he and other residents had accepted the decision of the Planning Committee to grant conditional planning permission in respect of the development. However, he and other residents could not accept any use of the site or adjoining land that was over and above the permission granted. He, therefore, asked that the Council investigate how the planning permission granted was being implemented and open the matter up to further public scrutiny.

In response, Councillor Julie Dore (the Leader of the Council) stated that she would refer the request made by Mr Fletcher for the Council to investigate the circumstances of the planning application and the adherence to planning conditions to Councillor Leigh Bramall (Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development) in order that he could contact Mr Fletcher.

(f) Public Question on Availability of Information

Mr Nigel Slack commented that on the 21st November 2012 he had asked a question in Cabinet about the censorship of the 'Final Business Case' documents of the Amey Highways Contract". He had received a promising response in that Councillor Lodge offered to look

at it again, Councillor Scott said he would provide information about the reason for the redaction and Councillor Dore said she would look at the issue of redaction in general.

Since then (2 months) he had received no further information, comment or contact regarding this subject and, at the time of writing this question, the website remains unchanged and the report still heavily censored.

In raising this subject again he drew the Council's attention to the recent comments by the highly respected Labour MP, Michael Meacher, during a speech in the House of Commons on 17th January. "...specious claims of commercial confidentiality when ATOS (a private company) is the sole provider of what is clearly a public service..."

Mr Slack asked whether the Council had any further response at this time or an indication when a response may be expected?

Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) responded that he replied to Mr Slack at the Cabinet meeting on 21st November, 2012 that the information Mr Slack had referred to was information to be considered by an imminent meeting of the Audit Committee and, therefore, it would not be appropriate for Councillor Lodge to comment. Since the Audit Committee meeting on 13th December, 2013, officers had been fully engaged in working out the implications of the Government's grant settlement for Sheffield which had been received shortly after the Audit Committee. However, he had now discussed with officers, the information within the report submitted to the Audit Committee and to which Mr Slack originally referred and he was still of the opinion that the information should remain confidential due to its commercial nature and the fact that it could only be released on the permission of the company concerned. He added that he fully expected that where information on commerciality was included in reports, then these would not be available publicly.

However, the Council tried to remain as open and transparent as it could and placed details of every transaction amounting to more than £250 on the Council website.

Councillor Julie Dore (the Leader of the Council) added that appropriate procedures had to be followed prior to the redaction of any information and each case was dealt with on an individual basis. She suggested that, if Mr Slack felt that any information had been inappropriately redacted, then he should bring it to the Council's attention.

- (g) Public Question on Sheffield Environmental Services Limited

Mr. Nigel Slack referred to the fact that recently he had occasion to look at the Council's contract register and stated that he noticed at that time that the contract for the City's waste management is detailed as being placed with a company called 'Sheffield Environmental Services Limited'. He suggested that one may be of a mind to think that this is a bit of strategic camouflaging by a huge multinational with a dubious reputation to give the impression of being a local company.

Mr Slack asked could the Council tell him if this was a recent change of name for Veolia or was it simply an unfortunate misleading piece of information that had found its way onto the register.

Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene) responded that Sheffield Environmental Services (SES) Limited was the company with whom the Council had originally signed a contract in 2001 for the running of the Council's Energy Recycling facility. At the time, it was wholly owned by Onyx and was now owned by Veolia. SES was a special purpose vehicle designed solely for the contract it holds. This is a common approach in Private Finance Initiatives for recycling and waste facilities and had been adopted by local authorities nationally. Cllr Scott stated he did not feel there was anything untoward in this structure.

7. REPRESENTATION, DELEGATED AUTHORITY AND RELATED ISSUES

RESOLVED: On the Motion of Councillor Pat Midgley, seconded by Councillor Gill Furniss, that (a) approval be given to the following changes to the memberships of Committees, Panels, Groups, etc:-

Senior Officer Employment Committee - Councillor David Baker to replace Councillor Simon Clement-Jones

(b) approval be given to the appointment of representatives to serve on other bodies as follows:-

Sheffield Media and Exhibition Centre Ltd - Councillor Neale Gibson to replace Councillor Bob Johnson.

8. IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT'S COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT CHANGES

It was moved by Councillor Julie Dore, seconded by Councillor Mazher Iqbal, that Council approve the Council's Council Tax Support scheme as set out in Appendix D to the report of the Executive Director of Resources now submitted, to come into force on 1st April 2013.

Whereupon, it was moved by Councillor Simon Clement-Jones, seconded by Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed as an amendment, that the recommendation set out in the report of the Executive Director, Resources now submitted in

relation to the Council Tax Support Scheme be replaced by the following resolution:-

“RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a) laments the previous Government’s inability to handle public finances, increasing the national deficit year-on-year from 2001 onwards, reaching a total of £43bn prior to the economic crash;
- (b) notes that the previous Government built up a record national deficit, where £1 in every £4 the Government spent was borrowed, leaving the current Government to clean up the mess they had created;
- (c) reminds Members of the commitment of the previous Government to halve the deficit by 2014, by pledging £82bn worth of cuts;
- (d) deplores Her Majesty’s Opposition, who despite making this pledge, have refused to provide any credible plans of how they would have cut the national deficit in Government;
- (e) however, notes the comments of the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Chancellor who have refused to commit to reinstate funding for Local Government if elected, and therefore assumes that they will not overturn the proposed cut in Council Tax Benefit;
- (f) recalls the amendment submitted by Councillor Simon Clement-Jones to the July 2012 meeting of Full Council, which called upon the Government to reconsider the policy, and the amendment submitted by Councillor Diana Stimely to the November 2012 meeting of Full Council, which repeated concerns over the policy;
- (g) for the avoidance of doubt, reiterates its concern at the proposal to reduce the grant for Council Tax Benefit by 10% in 2013;
- (h) maintains that, whilst the Government is taking the right steps in reducing the cost of welfare, the reduction in Council Tax Benefit grant is the wrong policy and should be reconsidered;
- (i) however, notes the Government offer of a £1.1 million Transition Fund if Sheffield’s Council Tax Support Scheme meets certain criteria, including a maximum reduction of 8.5%;
- (j) believes that meeting the Government’s criteria would benefit thousands of struggling families and bring another £1 million into the City;
- (k) understands that struggling families could benefit by £11.53 a month by adopting this policy;
- (l) highlights that members of the ruling Group have had months to consider proposals for Council Tax Benefit and the implications of

alternative proposals;

- (m) thanks the Coalition Government for giving local authorities more flexibility in raising Council Tax funds from second and empty homes, which is projected to increase income for this Council by £2.5 million next year;
- (n) furthermore, understands that £1 million, allocated to Fairness Commission outcomes, remains unspent;
- (o) believes that if Labour councillors were serious about helping the most vulnerable in the City they would use this fund to mitigate against benefit cuts;
- (p) therefore approves the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme as set out in Appendix D to this report, to come into force on 1st April, 2013, with the following three amendments:-
 - (i) recommends that £500,000 of the funding earmarked for the Fairness Commission outcomes should be used to secure the Government's Transition Grant;
 - (ii) recommends that the remaining shortfall of £2.2 million in meeting the criteria of the Transition Grant should be funded from increased income from new taxes on second and empty homes; and
 - (iii) recommends this decision be reviewed for subsequent financial years only if the Government increases or extends its grant mechanisms for this purpose; and
- (q) notes, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.5, the advice of the Director of Finance that the Administration has assumed the £2.2m second and empty homes figure in order to prepare a balanced budget, and appreciates that if this amendment is passed, a balanced budget will still need to be set by the Council on 1st March, 2013."

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

The votes on the above amendment were ordered to be recorded and were as follows:-

For the amendment (20)	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Vickie Priestley) and Councillors Simon Clement Jones, Shaffaq Mohammed, Robert Murphy, Sylvia Anginotti, Rob Frost, Colin Ross, Joe Otten, Keith Hill, Diana Stimely, Penny Baker, Roger Davison, Sue Alston, Andrew Sangar, Denise Reaney, Ian Auckland, Anders Hanson, David Baker, Katie Condliffe and Alison
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Brelsford.

Against the amendment
(55)

The Lord Mayor (Councillor John Campbell) and Councillors Julie Dore, John Robson, Jack Scott, Clive Skelton, Roy Munn, Ian Saunders, Helen Mirfin Boukouris, Chris Rosling Josephs, Bryan Lodge, Denise Fox, Karen McGowan, Jayne Dunn, Jackie Drayton, Ibrar Hussain, Talib Hussain, Mohammad Maroof, Geoff Smith, Mary Lea, Harry Harpham, Mazher Iqbal, Joyce Wright, Steven Wilson, Garry Weatherall, Sheila Constance, Chris Weldon, Alan Law, Steve Jones, Tim Rippon, Cate McDonald, George Lindars Hammond, Robert Johnson, Janet Bragg, Pat Midgley, Jenny Armstrong, Terry Fox, Tony Downing, David Barker, Isobel Bowler, Nikki Bond, Sioned Mair Richards, Peter Price, Peter Rippon, Tony Damms, Gill Furniss, Richard Crowther, Philip Wood, Neale Gibson, Nikki Sharpe, Ben Curran, Adam Hurst, Alf Meade, Jackie Satur, Mick Rooney and Ray Satur.

Abstained on the
amendment (0)

Nil

(Note: Councillor Robert Murphy voted for paragraphs (g) and (i) to (m) and abstained on the remaining paragraphs of the amendment and asked for this to be recorded.)

It was then moved by Councillor Bryan Lodge, seconded by Councillor Harry Harpham, as an amendment, that the recommendation set out in the report of the Executive Director, Resources now submitted in relation to the Council Tax Support Scheme be replaced by the following resolution:-

“RESOLVED: That this Council:-

- (a)(i) deplores the Government’s shambolic mishandling of welfare reform including the localisation of Council Tax Benefit which will be implemented from April 2013;
- (ii) opposes the Government’s changes to Council Tax Benefit which will see a £5.5 million cut in funding for Council Tax Benefit this year alone;
- (iii) believes that the localisation of Council Tax Benefit has been completely mismanaged by the Government and is the passing of responsibility for cuts to local authorities;
- (iv) regrets that due to a harsher settlement than expected, the Council Tax Support has been cut by nearly £1 million more than expected and

the cap proposed in the Cabinet Report of 17th October 2012 of 80% has had to be lowered to 77% which means that working age recipients will have to pay 23% of their Council Tax Bill;

- (v) understands that this 77% cap means a family living in a band A property will have to pay at least £4.32 per week (£225 per year);
 - (vi) welcomes the proposal to operate a hardship fund to help those in severe financial hardship;
 - (vii) notes research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies which indicates that the working poor will be hit hardest by the cuts to Council Tax Benefit, completely contradicting the Government's stated aims in its welfare reform programme;
 - (viii) further notes research by the Local Government Association warning that the cut is also likely to hit hardest councils in the most deprived areas of the country and authorities in the wealthiest areas of the country will receive a smaller cut;
 - (ix) regrets that this mirrors the Government's unfair policy of giving heavy cuts to Sheffield whilst at the same time some of the wealthier areas of the country are receiving almost no cuts at all;
 - (x) further regrets that this is a further example of this Government hitting the most vulnerable the hardest, which is exemplified by cuts to housing benefit, the reassessment of Incapacity Benefit Claimants and cuts to tax credits;
 - (xi) regrets that this cut to Council Tax Benefit is the result of a decision made by Government and is in addition to their heavy cuts to the Council's budget and that, as a result of the £50 million budget gap, and worse to come in future years, the Council could not intervene to prevent this being passed on without further cuts to services which are already being hit extremely hard due to the Government's manifestly unfair cuts; and
 - (xii) therefore acknowledges that as this cut has been made by the Government, it is fully within the power of the Deputy Prime Minister to reverse the cut and proposes to write to the Deputy Prime Minister calling on him to intervene to reverse its decision instead of continuing to stand by and allow some of the poorest people in the City to be hit by these changes; and
- (b) approves the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme as set out in Appendix D to this report, to come into force on 1st April, 2013."

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

The votes on the above amendment were ordered to be recorded and were

as follows:-

For the amendment (55) The Lord Mayor (Councillor John Campbell) and Councillors Julie Dore, John Robson, Jack Scott, Clive Skelton, Roy Munn, Ian Saunders, Helen Mirfin Boukouris, Chris Rosling Josephs, Bryan Lodge, Denise Fox, Karen McGowan, Jayne Dunn, Jackie Drayton, Ibrar Hussain, Talib Hussain, Mohammad Maroof, Geoff Smith, Mary Lea, Harry Harpham, Mazher Iqbal, Joyce Wright, Steven Wilson, Garry Weatherall, Sheila Constance, Chris Weldon, Alan Law, Steve Jones, Tim Rippon, Cate McDonald, George Lindars Hammond, Robert Johnson, Janet Bragg, Pat Midgley, Jenny Armstrong, Terry Fox, Tony Downing, David Barker, Isobel Bowler, Nikki Bond, Sioned Mair Richards, Peter Price, Peter Rippon, Tony Damms, Gill Furniss, Richard Crowther, Philip Wood, Neale Gibson, Nikki Sharpe, Ben Curran, Adam Hurst, Alf Meade, Jackie Satur, Mick Rooney and Ray Satur.

Against the amendment (19) The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Vickie Priestley) and Councillors Simon Clement Jones, Shaffaq Mohammed, Sylvia Anginotti, Rob Frost, Colin Ross, Joe Otten, Keith Hill, Diana Stimely, Penny Baker, Roger Davison, Sue Alston, Andrew Sangar, Denise Reaney, Ian Auckland, Anders Hanson, David Baker, Katie Condliffe and Alison Brelsford.

Abstained on the Councillor Robert Murphy amendment (1)

After a right of reply from Councillor Julie Dore, the original Motion, as amended, was put as a Substantive Motion in the following form and carried:-

<p>RESOLVED: That this Council:-</p> <p>(a)(i) deploras the Government's shambolic mishandling of welfare reform including the localisation of Council Tax Benefit which will be implemented from April 2013;</p> <p>(ii) opposes the Government's changes to Council Tax Benefit which will see a £5.5 million cut in funding for Council Tax Benefit this year alone;</p> <p>(iii) believes that the localisation of Council Tax Benefit has been completely mismanaged by the Government and is the passing of responsibility for cuts to local authorities;</p>

- (iv) regrets that due to a harsher settlement than expected, the Council Tax Support has been cut by nearly £1 million more than expected and the cap proposed in the Cabinet Report of 17th October 2012 of 80% has had to be lowered to 77% which means that working age recipients will have to pay 23% of their Council Tax Bill;
 - (v) understands that this 77% cap means a family living in a band A property will have to pay at least £4.32 per week (£225 per year);
 - (vi) welcomes the proposal to operate a hardship fund to help those in severe financial hardship;
 - (vii) notes research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies which indicates that the working poor will be hit hardest by the cuts to Council Tax Benefit, completely contradicting the Government's stated aims in its welfare reform programme;
 - (viii) further notes research by the Local Government Association warning that the cut is also likely to hit hardest councils in the most deprived areas of the country and authorities in the wealthiest areas of the country will receive a smaller cut;
 - (ix) regrets that this mirrors the Government's unfair policy of giving heavy cuts to Sheffield whilst at the same time some of the wealthier areas of the country are receiving almost no cuts at all;
 - (x) further regrets that this is a further example of this Government hitting the most vulnerable the hardest, which is exemplified by cuts to housing benefit, the reassessment of Incapacity Benefit Claimants and cuts to tax credits;
 - (xi) regrets that this cut to Council Tax Benefit is the result of a decision made by Government and is in addition to their heavy cuts to the Council's budget and that, as a result of the £50 million budget gap, and worse to come in future years, the Council could not intervene to prevent this being passed on without further cuts to services which are already being hit extremely hard due to the Government's manifestly unfair cuts; and
 - (xii) therefore acknowledges that as this cut has been made by the Government, it is fully within the power of the Deputy Prime Minister to reverse the cut and proposes to write to the Deputy Prime Minister calling on him to intervene to reverse its decision instead of continuing to stand by and allow some of the poorest people in the City to be hit by these changes; and
- (b) approves the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme as set out in Appendix D to the report of the Executive Director, Resources as now submitted, to come into force on 1st April, 2013."

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12

The Council received the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2011/12 and the Chair of the Audit Committee (Councillor Ray Satur) gave an introduction to the work of the Committee and expressed thanks to Members of the Audit Committee and officers supporting the Committee.

10. SCRUTINY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES - UPDATE REPORT

The Council received a report providing an overview of activity undertaken during the Municipal Year by each of the Council's Scrutiny and Policy Development Committees. The Committee Chairs (Councillors Chris Weldon, Gill Furniss, Helen Mirfin-Boukouris and Mick Rooney) each gave a brief introduction to the work of their respective Committees.

The Council received and noted the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

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