

Public Document Pack

Cabinet

Tuesday, 14th June, 2022
at 4.30 pm

Council Chamber, Civic Centre,
Southampton

PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING

Members

Leader – Councillor Kaur
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and
Leaning – Councillor Dr Paffey
Cabinet Member for Finance and Change – Councillor
Leggett
Cabinet Member for Housing and Green Environment –
Councillor Mitchell
Cabinet Member for Economic Development – Councillor
Bogle
Cabinet Member for Health, Adults and Leisure –
Councillor Fielker
Cabinet Member for Transport and District Regeneration -
Councillor Keogh
Cabinet Member for Safe City – Councillor Renyard
Cabinet Member for Communities and Customer
Engagement – Councillor Kataria

(QUORUM – 3)

Contacts

Cabinet Administrator
Claire Heather
Tel. 023 8083 2412
Email: judy.cordell@southampton.gov.uk

Director of Legal and Business Services
Richard Ivory
Tel: 023 8083 2794
Email: richard.ivory@southampton.gov.uk

BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT INFORMATION

The Role of the Executive

The Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members make executive decisions relating to services provided by the Council, except for those matters which are reserved for decision by the full Council and planning and licensing matters which are dealt with by specialist regulatory panels.

The Forward Plan

The Forward Plan is published on a monthly basis and provides details of all the key executive decisions to be made in the four month period following its publication. The Forward Plan is available on request or on the Southampton City Council website, www.southampton.gov.uk

Implementation of Decisions

Any Executive Decision may be “called-in” as part of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny function for review and scrutiny. The relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel may ask the Executive to reconsider a decision, but does not have the power to change the decision themselves.

Mobile Telephones – Please switch your mobile telephones to silent whilst in the meeting.

Use of Social Media

The Council supports the video or audio recording of meetings open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. However, if, in the Chair’s opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council’s Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting.

By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and or/training purposes. The meeting may be recorded by the press or members of the public. Any person or organisation filming, recording or broadcasting any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so. Details of the Council’s Guidance on the recording of meetings is available on the Council’s website.

Municipal Year Dates (Tuesdays)

2022	2023
14 June	17 January
19 July	7 February
16 August	21 Feb (budget)
13 September	14 March
18 October	18 April
15 November	
20 December	

Executive Functions

The specific functions for which the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members are responsible are contained in Part 3 of the Council’s Constitution. Copies of the Constitution are available on request or from the City Council website, www.southampton.gov.uk

Key Decisions

A Key Decision is an Executive Decision that is likely to have a significant:

- financial impact (£500,000 or more)
- impact on two or more wards
- impact on an identifiable community

Procedure / Public Representations

At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may address the meeting on any report included on the agenda in which they have a relevant interest. Any member of the public wishing to address the meeting should advise the Democratic Support Officer (DSO) whose contact details are on the front sheet of the agenda.

Fire Procedure – In the event of a fire or other emergency, a continuous alarm will sound and you will be advised, by officers of the Council, of what action to take.

Smoking policy – The Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

Access – Access is available for disabled people. Please contact the Cabinet Administrator who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

Southampton: Corporate Plan 2020-2025 sets out the four key outcomes:

- Communities, culture & homes - Celebrating the diversity of cultures within Southampton; enhancing our cultural and historical offer and using these to help transform our communities.
- Green City - Providing a sustainable, clean, healthy and safe environment for everyone. Nurturing green spaces and embracing our waterfront.
- Place shaping - Delivering a city for future generations. Using data, insight and vision to meet the current and future needs of the city.
- Wellbeing - Start well, live well, age well, die well; working with other partners and other services to make sure that customers get the right help at the right time

CONDUCT OF MEETING

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference of the Cabinet, and its Executive Members, are set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

The meeting is governed by the Executive Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any "Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" or "Other Interest" they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that they or their spouse, partner, a person they are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner in relation to:

(i) Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(ii) Sponsorship:

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Southampton City Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expense incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

(iii) Any contract which is made between you / your spouse etc (or a body in which the you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest) and Southampton City Council under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and which has not been fully discharged.

(iv) Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Southampton.

(v) Any license (held alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Southampton for a month or longer.

(vi) Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) the landlord is Southampton City Council and the tenant is a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interests.

(vii) Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Southampton, and either:

a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or

b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest that exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

QUORUM

The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 3.

Other Interests

A Member must regard himself or herself as having an, 'Other Interest' in any membership of, or occupation of a position of general control or management in:

Any body to which they have been appointed or nominated by Southampton City Council

Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature

Any body directed to charitable purposes

Any body whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy

Principles of Decision Making

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

2 DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and the Council's Code of Conduct, Members to disclose any personal or pecuniary interests in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting.

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

3 STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER

4 RECORD OF THE PREVIOUS DECISION MAKING (Pages 1 - 6)

Record of the decision making held on 14 March 2022, attached.

5 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE COUNCIL OR BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR RECONSIDERATION (IF ANY)

There are no matters referred for reconsideration.

6 REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (IF ANY)

There are no items for consideration

7 EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS 2022-2023 (Pages 7 - 20)

Report of the Director Legal and Business Services detailing the Executive Appointments for 2022-2023

ITEMS FOR DECISION BY CABINET

8 SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - ACCESSIBLE SOUTHAMPTON FINAL REPORT (Pages 21 - 88)

Report of the 2021/22 Scrutiny Inquiry Panel Chair recommending that Cabinet receive the attached Scrutiny Inquiry Panel report to enable the Executive to formulate its response to the recommendations contained within it.

9 BUDGET MATTER - JUNE 2022 □ (Pages 89 - 92)

To consider key financial decisions relating to the acquisition of vehicles through purchase or lease.

10 NITROGEN MITIGATION POSITION STATEMENT (Pages 93 - 110)

Report of Cabinet Member for Economic Development detailing new development achieves nitrogen neutrality in accordance with the Habitat Regulations.

Monday, 6 June 2022

Director of Legal and Business Services

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DECISION MAKING

RECORD OF THE DECISION MAKING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2022

Present:

Councillor Moulton	Cabinet Member for Growth
Councillor Hannides	Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Assets
Councillor Vassiliou	Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Heritage
Councillor White	Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care
Councillor P Baillie	Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care

Virtual:

Councillor J Baillie	Cabinet Member for Education
----------------------	------------------------------

Apologies: Councillor Fitzhenry and S Galton

59. CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION CAB 21/22 33197: ST MARY'S LEISURE CENTRE

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33695)

On consideration of the report of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, Cabinet considered and rejected the following recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting held on 10th March, 2022:

That Cabinet do not proceed with the decision agreed at 21 February 2022 meeting to close St Marys Leisure Centre and that Cabinet seek to find a partner to keep it open for community use.

If the Administration is not minded to accept this recommendation it is recommended that:

- A) The Administration honours the Leader's commitment to the community and restricts the sale of the building solely for affordable housing or community use.

If the Administration is not minded to accept this recommendation, or is unable to meet this commitment, it is recommended that:

- The outcome of the Best Value consideration report which determines the viability of restricting disposal of the site for residential use, as outlined in recommendation two of the Cabinet report, is reported back to this Committee at the appropriate time.
- B) The Administration honours the Leader's commitment to the community that all or some of the capital receipt raised is re-invested in the local community, that the community are meaningfully involved in determining how the money is spent, and, that the Administration report back to this Committee at the appropriate time

on how this has been achieved. The Committee have expressed support for initiatives that promote the health and wellbeing of the local community.

If the Administration is not minded to accept this recommendation it is recommended that:

- The criteria for determining the level of capital receipt to be re-invested in the local community is provided to the Committee.
- The Administration report back to this Committee at an appropriate time outlining how it has utilised the capital receipt to benefit the local community.

C) That a public meeting is held within the community to enable answers to be provided to the questions that still remain unanswered, specifically those relating to how the capital receipt will be spent and how they will be involved in determining the need in the community.

60. SOUTHAMPTON CARE LEAVER OFFER

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33531)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Cabinet agreed the following:

- (i) That the proposed Draft Care Leavers offer as detailed in appendix 1 be adopted by the Council.
- (ii) That the Offer be reviewed by the Executive Director of Children's Services by 1st September 2022 to consider further offers available to our young people leaving care from across the council developed through a task and finish group.
- (iii) That the care leaver offer is published on 1st April 2022 and thereafter discussed and reviewed with the care leavers forum biannually to consider if there are any gaps in the offer and how, as corporate parents, Southampton City Council and partners can mitigate these.

61. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGY 2022-2027

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33527)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Cabinet Member for Education, Cabinet agreed the following:

- (i) To adopt the Children and Young People's Strategy; and
- (ii) To recommend that Council approve the Youth Justice Strategic Plan.

62. HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33480)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Heritage, Cabinet agreed the following:

- (i) To adopt the Housing Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) as the tool upon which property investment decisions are to be based, for the Council's housing portfolio.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director Communities Culture and Homes following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to make any minor changes to the strategy during its life span.
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director Communities, Culture and Homes following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to take all necessary actions to give effect to the above recommendations.

63. SAFE CITY STRATEGY 2022-27

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 32925)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Heritage, Cabinet agreed to approve the final strategy and recommend the strategy is adopted at Full Council.

64. EXTENDING CONTROLS ON STREET DRINKING

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33483)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Heritage, Cabinet agreed the following:

- (i) To consider the representations received in relation to this matter in response to the consultation carried out between 21 January and 18 February 2022 as set out in Appendix 1.
- (ii) To approve the extension of the five Public Spaces Protection Orders to control street drinking in the localities shown in the maps at Appendix 2.

65. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGE POINT CONCESSION CONTRACT

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33440)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Growth, Cabinet agreed the following:

- (i) To give approval to proceed with an openly advertised procurement process to seek a supplier to develop, deliver and operate a network of public electric vehicle charging points on Southampton City Council's land holdings including car parks, public highways, and housing land. The final procured arrangement will be operated as a Concession Contract, whereby a single supplier will be appointed to operate the EV charging scheme at no cost to the Council.
- (ii) To require the Procurement Specification, Tender Pack and Concession Contract takes all reasonable steps to:
 - Limit the liability to SCC;
 - Optimise the development and growth of the public EVCP on SCC's property and in the city;
 - Ensure the EVCP network provided is fit for purpose;

- Ensure there are appropriate opportunities for delivering EVCP in locations that support the transition to EVs for all of the city's communities, including those locations that might otherwise be commercially less attractive;
 - Include mechanisms for income-sharing between the supplier and SCC and, subject to the parameters of the concession relationship.
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Interim Executive Director for Business & City Services (or successor post of equivalent seniority) to stop the pre-procurement process and review options, following consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Customer Service & Transformation, if a Concession Contract is no longer considered to be a practical solution for attracting investment in public EVCP on SCC property.

66. FRAMEWORK OF REGISTERED PROVIDERS TO DELIVER AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN SOUTHAMPTON

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33525)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Growth, Cabinet agreed the following:

- (i) the creation of a framework of Housing Providers to deliver affordable housing throughout Southampton.
- (ii) the use of a competitive tender process to determine the successful HPs.
- (iii) delegated authority to Head of Supplier Management for undertaking the process to implement a framework.
- (iv) delegated authority to the Head of Property to:
 - agree and approve the criteria on which applying HPs are to be assessed on prior to appointment.
 - approve the appointment of successful applicants onto the framework.
 - take any other actions required to give effect to this decision.
- (v) a further report will be brought back to the appropriate decision maker, seeking approval for a schedule of sites to be included in the initial programme of disposals.

67. CONNECTED SOUTHAMPTON TRANSPORT STRATEGY (LTP4) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2022-2024

DECISION MADE: (CAB 21/22 33238)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Growth, Cabinet agreed the following:

- (i) To note that minor changes are being made to the main LTP in accordance with delegated authority granted at Council in 2019, and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth.
- (ii) To consider and recommend that the proposed Connected Southampton Transport Strategy (LTP) Implementation Plan (2022-2025) is approved.

- (iii) To authorise the Head of Service for Green City & Infrastructure, in conjunction with Cabinet Member for Growth, to make minor amendments to the Implementation Plan before publication.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 7

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS 2022/23		
DATE OF DECISION:	14 JUNE 2022		
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Director of Legal and Business Services	
	Name:	Richard Ivory	Tel: 023 8083 2794
	E-mail	Richard.ivory@southamoton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Snr. Democratic Support Officer	
	Name:	Claire Heather	Tel: 023 8083 2412
	E-mail	Claire.heather@southampton.gov.uk	
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY			
N/A			
BRIEF SUMMARY			
Under the City Council's democratic arrangements, it is a requirement that appointments to all organisations and bodies which relate to executive functions are determined by the Executive.			
Although the work of the bodies/organisations listed in the Appointments Register covers all aspects of city life and Council activities and therefore affects all wards, the decision to appoint to them is of administrative effect only.			
RECOMMENDATIONS:			
	(i)	That the Executive Appointments for the 2022/23 Municipal Year be approved as set out in the attached revised Register; and	
	(ii)	That all appointments be for one year save where the terms of reference and or constitution of the body or organisation concerned specify the duration of an appointment or where the decision on any nomination by the City Council to their membership is reserved to the body or organisation concerned to determine the appointment or continuation of appointments, in light of any changes in City Council Administration.	
	(iii)	That the use of the Director of Legal and Business Services delegated urgency powers to appoint to the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd, City of Culture Trust and the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board ahead of this meeting be noted.	
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS			
1.	Member appointments are required to a number of statutory and best practice bodies, as well as a number of external organisations with which the Council has strategic or significant community links.		
2.	Under the constitution or terms of reference in respect of some outside organisation's appointments are in some cases specified as having a term of office/appointment longer than one year or are nominations, the final decision on appointment lying with the body itself. In such cases when a change of		

	Administration occurs, and the appointment term has not expired and is of significance to the incoming administration that member/appointee should be encouraged to step down in favour of a new appointee from the incoming administration but noting that the final decision in some cases lies with the organisation or outside body concerned.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
3.	No other options are presented, it is a matter for the Cabinet to determine whether it wishes to approve the revised appointments and be represented on all the bodies set out in the attached revised Register of Appointments.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
4.	The Executive Appointments set out in the appendix to this report have been the subject of consultation and agreement with all political groups represented on the City Council.
5.	After Annual Council, numerous appointments to a variety of statutory, best practice and external organisations and bodies which require City Council Member representation need to be made by the Cabinet.
6.	The following appointments were made at the Annual Council on 18 May, 2022:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Democracy and Accountability Network for Councillors; • Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority; • Partnership for South Hampshire – Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and • Hampshire Police and Crime Panel
7.	Appointments are categorised into groups developed by the Director of Legal and Business Services as follows:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Statutory Partnership; b) Non-Statutory Partnership; c) Informal Groups; d) Appointments and/or Financial Commitments to Outside Bodies; e) Commercial Partnerships; f) Commercial or Contractual Agreements; and g) Legally Defined Arrangements.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
8.	The cost of travel and subsistence costs for Members meeting the commitment of serving as a representative on an Executive Appointment are met from existing budgets.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
9.	None.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
10.	The Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and the Localism Act 2011.

<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
11.	None.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
12.	None.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
13.	Cabinet approval of the appointments listed in the Register of Appointments appended to this report are in line with the City Council's Policy Framework.
KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Revised Register of Appointments 2022/23
Documents In Members' Rooms	
1.	None
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
Other Background Documents	
Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None

This page is intentionally left blank

REVISED REGISTER OF APPOINTMENTS 2022-2023

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
A1	Cabinet	Joint Pension Fund Panel and Board	The Pension Fund Panel monitors the performance of the investment managers and advises the Audit Committee on matters requiring decisions in connection with the investment of the pension fund. Shared seat with Portsmouth City Council. 2022/23 PCC will have the main seat with SCC as a deputy.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Leggett	June 22	May 23	Steve Harrison (023 8083 4153)
A2	Cabinet	City of Culture Trust		1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur	May 22 under urgency powers	May 23	Mary D'Arcy
A3	Cabinet	Joint Commissioning Board	Board established to make joint decisions on behalf of the Council and CCG on certain agreed functions related to health and care.	3	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur Cllr Fielker Cllr Paffey	June 22	May 23	Claire Heather (023 8083 2412) Terry Clark (023 8029 6941)
A4	Cabinet	Learning Disabilities Partnership Board	Partnership Board established to take responsibility for local delivery of the Government's Valuing People White Paper, led by the Council with the active participation of all key stakeholders.	3	No		Cllr Fielker Cllr Winning Cllr Laurent	June 22	May 23	Kate Dench (023 8083 4787)
A5	Cabinet	Safe City Partnership	The Partnership brings together senior representatives of all the local agencies involved in community safety and includes; Southampton City Council, Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, Youth Offending, Primary Care Trust and Hampshire Probation established 1998 as the primary vehicle for tackling crime and disorder issues in Southampton.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Renyard	June 22	May 23	Romilly Beard (023 8083 3310)
A6	Cabinet	Schools Forum	To receive information on and comment on LEA's school funding formula, other	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Paffey	June 22	May 23	Robert Henderson (023 8083 4899)

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
			issues in connection with schools budgets and service contracts.							
A7	Cabinet	Southampton International Airport Consultative Committee	To act as the consultative body in relation to the Airport for the purposes of Section and of the Civil Aviation Act 1968, between the airport management, users, local authorities and local organisations and the county.	6	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Savage Cllr T Bunday Cllr Vassiliou	June 22	May 23	Mary D'Arcy (023 8083 4611)
A8	Cabinet	Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust	To set the strategic direction of the organisation within the priorities set by the government and NHS, to oversee delivery of planned targets and ensure effective financial stewardship.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Margetts	June 22	May 23	Amanda Luker (023 8029 6941)
A9	Cabinet	Clinical Commissioning Group	Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) helping to meet the health and care needs of local people. They are allocated a budget of just over £350 million a year to achieve this and use it to plan and pay for (or 'commission') health and care services from a number of service providers (such as hospitals, mental health and community trusts).	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Fielker	June 22	May 23	Stephanie Ramsey (023 8083 4162)
A10	Cabinet	Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) and Appeal and Scrutiny Sub Committee	To regulate sea fisheries within the Southern Sea Fisheries District, (coasts of Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight).	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Furnell	June 22	May 23	Kelly Scott (023 8022 6631)
A11	Cabinet	Standing Advisory Council for	Constructed under the Education Reform Act 1998 to advise the Authority on	4	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Windle Cllr A Bunday	June 22	May 23	Alison Philpott (023 8083 3076)

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
		Religious Education (S A C R E)	matters connected with collective worship and the teaching of RE in City Schools.				Cllr Laurent Cllr Harris			
A12	Cabinet	Port Health Consultative Board	ABP led consultative board, non-decision making. Matters of interest to port community.	2	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Leggett Cllr Furnell	June 22	May 23	Mary D'Arcy (023 8083 4611)
A13	Cabinet	Business Improvement Board	Go! Southampton is an independent nonprofit Business Improvement District, businesses can influence the future of our City Centre and take the initiative on specific issues that businesses face.	1	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur (Cllr Bogle Deputy)	June 22	May 23	Romilly Beard (023 8083 3310)
A14	Cabinet	Community Chest Advisory Panel		6	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Cooper Cllr W Payne Cllr Margetts Cllr Houghton Cllr Laurent Cllr Stead	June 22	May 23	Wendy Flanagan (023 8083 2933)
A15	Cabinet	Connect	Southampton Connect is an independent, non-statutory partnership which exists to provide collaborative leadership for the collective development of Southampton.	3		2 Yr	Cllr Kaur Cllr Paffey Cllr Fielker	June 22	May 23	Romilly Beard (023 8083 3310)
A16	Cabinet	Local Safeguarding Children's Board	Statutory overseeing body to ensure all partners adequately discharge their safeguarding roles.	1		1 Yr	Cllr Paffey	June 22	May 23	Robert Henderson (023 8083 4899)
A17	Cabinet	Local Safeguarding Adults Board	Statutory overseeing body to ensure all partners adequately discharge their safeguarding roles.	1		1 Yr	Cllr Fielker	June 22	May 23	Guy Van Dichele (023 8083 2237)
B1	Cabinet	Hampshire	The Hampshire Partnership is a voluntary	2	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur	June 22	May 23	Mary D'Arcy

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
		Partnership	collaboration made up partner agencies across Hampshire to promote and facilitate better cross-agency working.				Cllr Guthrie			(023 8083 4611)
B2	Cabinet	King Edward VI School	Governor	1	No	1 Yr	Labour name needed	June 22	May 23	Robert Henderson (023 8083 4899)
B3	Cabinet	F.W. Smith Bequest Purchasing Committee	To provide/buy pictures for the Art Gallery principally from English artists from the income of the F.W. Smith Bequest.	2	No	1 Yr	Cllr Mrs Blatchford Cllr P Baillie	June 22	May 23	Carolyn Abel (023 8083 2882)
B4	Cabinet	Solent Transport Joint Committee	To promote the sub regional transport agenda, implement schemes of a sub-regional nature and lobby and/or influence on all other associated aspects of life within the TfSH Area.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Keogh	June 22	May 23	Pete Boustred (023 8083 4743)
B5	Cabinet	Southampton 2025	To promote the educational and economic benefits of the cultural sector in the City	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur	June 22	May 23	Claire Whitaker (023 8083 4872)
	Cabinet	MAST Board	As A Director of the Trust, the representative is responsible under the governing documents for the governance of the charity. Management and administration are delegated to the CEO and staff. MAL Trustees play a pivotal role in setting the strategic direction of the building as well as holding management to account; acting in the operation's best interest and with reasonable care and skill; complying with the governing documents and the law;	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Mitchell	June 22	May 23	Caroyln Abel (023 8083 2882)

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
			managing resources responsibly, and ensuring the charity is responsible. Meetings are 4 times a year plus some additional subcommittee activity.							
B6	Cabinet	Southampton Energy Partnership	The Energy Partnership brings together organisations and businesses in the City with high energy usage. To share information on best practice and local case studies the Partnership of organisations with the ability and commitment to take action to reduce energy needs and costs, and to reduce the carbon footprint of the City.	1	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Mitchell	June 22	May 23	Jason Taylor (023 8083 2641)
B7	Cabinet	Standing Conf on Problems Associated with The Coastline (SCOPAC)	To provide a more co-ordinated approach to coastal engineering and related matters between authorities on the Central South coast - Lyme Bay to Worthing	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Savage	June 22	May 23	Sam Foulds (023 8083 2076)
B8	Cabinet	Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	The Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) is a committee established by the Environment Agency under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 that brings together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and independent members with relevant experience for 3 purposes: •to ensure there are coherent plans for identifying, communicating and managing flood and coastal erosion risks across catchments and shorelines	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Mitchell	June 22	May 23	Sam Foulds (023 8083 2076)

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •to encourage efficient, targeted and risk-based investment in flood and coastal erosion risk management that represents value for money and benefits local communities •to provide a link between the Environment Agency, LLFAs, other risk management authorities, and other relevant bodies to build understanding of flood and coastal erosion risks in its area 							
B9	Cabinet	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	The principal purpose of the Trust is the provision of goods and services for the purposes of the health service in England.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Fielker	June 22	May 23	Debbie Chase (023 8083 3818)
B10	Cabinet	The Wulfris Educational Foundation	Provision of school clothing, books and equipment to the needy children resident in Southampton.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Paffey	June 22	May 23	Robert Henderson (023 8083 4899)
B11	Cabinet	Future of Work Advisory Board	The Future of Work Advisory Board Southampton exists to provide collaborative leadership for the collective development of local learning, skills and employment provision to meet current and future demands (employer, residents, provider).	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Paffey	June 22	May 23	Romilly Beard (023 8083 3310)
C1	Cabinet	Corporate Parenting	The Council acting as a parent for children in care.	5	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Paffey Cllr A Bunday Cllr Fielker Cllr Fuller Cllr J Payne	June 22	May 23	Robert Henderson (023 8083 4899)
D1	Cabinet	Hampshire British Legion Poppy Appeal	Armed Forces charity providing care and support to all members of the British Armed Forces past and present and their families, administering and supporting the delivery of welfare services and the	1	No	1 Yr	McEwing	June 22	May 23	

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
			membership and fundraising activities of the Legion's branches and clubs throughout Hampshire. It also acts as the national Custodian of Remembrance and safeguards the Military Covenant between the nation and its Armed Forces.							
D2	Cabinet	Solent Skies - Board Of Directors	To preserve the aviation heritage of Southampton. (Conditional appointment subject to satisfactory conclusion of lease and management agreement).	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Bogle	June 22	May 23	Carolyn Abel (023 8083 4516)
D3	Cabinet	Southampton Record Series	To represent the City at the Joint Committee of the Southampton Record Series with the University.	3	Yes	3 Yr	Cllr Denness Cllr Spicer Cllr P Baillie	June 22	May 23	Carolyn Abel (023 8083 4516)
D4	Cabinet	Southampton Solent University Board Of Governors	Co-opted external Governor to sit on the Southampton Solent University Board of Governors to form a link between the Council and the Institute as one of the providers of higher education in the City.	1	No	4 Yr	Cllr Houghton to remain until May 23	June 22	May 23	Debbie Chase (023 8083 3694)
D5	Cabinet	Southampton Voluntary Services	To provide a focus for the voluntary sector activities in Southampton and to act as a local development agency for voluntary action.	2	No	1 Yr	Cllr Noon Cllr Prior	June 22	May 23	Mary D'Arcy (023 8083 4611)
D6	Cabinet	Thorner's Homes	Almshouse Charity providing accommodation for women over 55 in limited financial circumstances.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Furnell	June 22	May 23	Tina Dyer-Slade (023 8083 3597)
E1	Cabinet	Business South	To provide engagement between the private, public and voluntary sectors and promote Southampton City Region	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Bogle	June 22	May 23	Mike Harris (023 8083 2882)
E2	Cabinet	Community	To lead consultation with relevant groups	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Windle	June 22	May 23	Guy Van Dichele

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
		Champion For Older Persons	at both local and city wide level.							(023 8083 2237)
E3	Cabinet	Community Champion for Armed Forces	To strengthen relationships between Southampton's Armed Forces community and the City Council through overseeing the Armed Forces Community Covenant.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr McEwing	June 22	May 23	James Marshall (023 8083 3015)
E4	Cabinet	Community Champion for Heritage		1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kataria	June 22	May 23	Carolyn Abel (023 8083 4516)
E5	Cabinet	Community Champion for Mental Health		2	No	1 Yr	Cllr Fielker Cllr Street	June 22	May 23	Guy Van Dichele (023 8083 2237)
E6	Cabinet	Hampshire and Isle of Wight Joint Health Scrutiny Panel	A Cross Council Panel monitoring the provision of Health Services.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Margetts	June 22	May 23	Mark Pirnie (023 8083 3886)
F1	Cabinet	Local Government Association	Pressure Group and lobbying organisation providing an overall national voice for local government in England with a view to promoting and protecting the interests of member councils by providing advice and support.	4	Yes	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur Cllr Guthrie	June 22	May 23	Romilly Beard (023 8083 3310)
F2	Cabinet	Local Government Information Unit	Independent research and information organisation with the principal aim of making the case for strong democratic Local Government together with information and support services to member authorities and individual councillors.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr M Bunday	June 22	May 23	Romilly Beard (023 8083 3310)
G1	Cabinet	Partnership for	To promote sustainable, economic-led	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur	June 22	May 23	Adam Wilkinson

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
		South Hampshire (PFSH)	growth and development of South Hampshire supported by enhanced transport and other infrastructure and to lobby and/or influence on all other associated aspects of life within the PFSH Area.							(023 8083 4670)
G2	Cabinet	Project Integra Strategic Board	Partnership body consisting of all Local Authorities in Hampshire to deal with waste management in the County.	2	No	1 Yr	Cllr Leggett Cllr Mitchell	June 22	May 23	Adam Wilkinson (023 8083 4670)
G3	Cabinet	Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board	To provide a private sector led Local Enterprise Partnership to promote the economic wellbeing of South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	1	No	1Yr	Cllr Kaur	May 22 under urgency powers	May 23	Adam Wilkinson (023 8083 4670)
G4	Cabinet	Solent Growth Forum	The Solent Growth Forum (SGF) provides an external scrutiny panel for the Solent LEP , with involvement of all Local Authorities within the Solent area. SGF meetings are open to the public and deputations can be made.	1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur	June 22	May 23	Adam Wilkinson (023 8083 4670)
G4	Cabinet	Solent LEP – Skills and Advisory Board	The Solent Skills Advisory Panel will: •bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges. This includes both immediate needs and challenges and what is required to help local areas adapt to future labour market changes and to grasp future opportunities	1	No	1Yr	Cllr Paffey	June 22	May 23	Adam Wilkinson (023 8083 4670)
G5	Cabinet	City Eye	Based in Southampton to support the community, arts organisations, individuals, emerging talent and established talent in the achievement of filmmaking goals.	1	No	1Yr	Cllr Leggett	June 22	May 23	Carolyn Abel (023 8083 4516)

*Ref No	Appt by	Committee/ Panel/ Group/ Organisation	Summary of terms of reference or purpose of organisation	No. Appts	Prop	Term	Membership	Appt Date	Appt till	Link Officer
		Youth Justice Management Board		1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Renyard	June 22	May 23	Rob Henderson (023 8083 4899)
		Arts Council		1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Kaur	June 22	May 23	Mary D'Arcy (023 8083 4611)
		The Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd		1	No	1 Yr	Cllr Bogle	May 2022 under urgency powers	May 23	Adam Wilkinson (023 8083 4670)
		Southampton Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board	The role of the Board is to provide advice to Southampton City Council ('the Council') on the exercise of its duties under Part 4 of the 2021 Act and the provision of other local authority domestic abuse support in its area. This will include the preparation of a draft strategy pursuant to s 57 of the 2021 Act and a system-wide strategy, addressing the 2021 Act in general and any other relevant need in the Council's area.	1	No	1yr	Cllr Renyard	June 22	May 23	Stephen Barratt 023 8083 3714)
		Violence Against Women and Girls Task Group	Task Group set up by the Police and Crime Commissioner	1	No	1 yr	Cllr Mitchell	June 22	May 23	Mary D'Arcy (023 8083 4611)

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - ACCESSIBLE SOUTHAMPTON FINAL REPORT
DATE OF DECISION:	14 JUNE 2022
REPORT OF:	CLLR VAUGHAN CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL 2021-22

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Author:	Title	Scrutiny Manager	
	Name:	Mark Pirnie	Tel: 023 8083 3886
	E-mail	Mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

BRIEF SUMMARY

From October 2021 to February 2022 the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook evidence gathering sessions as they conducted the Accessible Southampton inquiry. A final report was approved by the Inquiry Panel on 28 April 2022.

The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel final report, attached as Appendix 1, contains a number of recommendations. The report is to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) on 9 June. If OSMC approve the report at their June meeting, Cabinet needs to formally respond to these recommendations, summarised in Appendix 2, within two months to meet the requirements in the Council's constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	Subject to the report being approved by the OSMC on 9 June, Cabinet is recommended to receive the attached Scrutiny Inquiry Panel report to enable the Executive to formulate its response to the recommendations contained within it, in order to comply with the requirements set out in the Council's Constitution.
--	-----	--

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	The overview and scrutiny procedure rules in part 4 of the Council's Constitution requires the Executive to consider all inquiry reports that have been endorsed by the OSMC, and to submit a formal response to the recommendations contained within them within two months of their receipt.
----	--

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2.	Not applicable.
----	-----------------

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3.	The OSMC, at its meeting in September 2021, requested that the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertake an inquiry focussing on looking at opportunities to make Southampton more accessible.
4.	The set objectives of the inquiry were:

	<p>a. To identify whether the physical infrastructure of the city creates barriers for disabled people to access all Southampton has to offer.</p> <p>b. To identify good practice being employed to improve the accessibility of towns and cities elsewhere.</p> <p>c. To identify what initiatives and approaches could work well in Southampton to improve the accessibility of the city.</p>
5.	The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook the inquiry over 5 evidence gathering meetings and received information from a wide variety of organisations. This included Spectrum CIL, AccessAble, Liverpool City Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Derby City Council, The Rose Road Association, Go! Southampton, SO:Let's Connect, transport operators in Southampton, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust as well as officers from Southampton City Council.
6.	The final report, attached as Appendix 1, will be considered by the OSMC on 9 June 2022. The report contains a number of recommendations which, if implemented, the Panel believe will help to improve the accessibility of Southampton. The conclusions and recommendations are summarised in Appendix 2.
7.	Subject to approval by the OSMC, the Executive needs to consider the inquiry recommendations and to formally respond within two months of the date of receiving this report in order to meet the requirements set out in the Council's constitution
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u>	
8.	In practice any future resource implications arising from this review will be dependent upon whether, and how, each individual recommendation within the Inquiry report is progressed by the Executive. More detailed work will need to be undertaken by the Executive in considering its response to each of the recommendations set out in the Inquiry report.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
9.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
10.	None
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
11.	None
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
12.	<p>The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2025 has, as an objective: 'People in Southampton live active, safe and independent lives and manage their own health and wellbeing'.</p> <p>The recommendations within the inquiry report will help to further the delivery of this objective.</p>

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None

<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>
--

Appendices	
1.	Accessible Southampton Inquiry – Final report
2.	Accessible Southampton Inquiry – Conclusions and recommendations

Documents In Members’ Rooms	
------------------------------------	--

1.	None
----	------

Equality Impact Assessment	
-----------------------------------	--

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
--	----

Data Protection Impact Assessment	
--	--

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
---	----

Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
--	--

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
-------------------------------------	---

1.	None	
----	------	--

This page is intentionally left blank

Accessible Southampton? – Final Report



Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

PANEL MEMBERSHIP – 2021/22

Councillor Vaughan (Chair)

Councillor Rayment (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Coombs

Councillor Guest

Councillor Streets

Scrutiny Manager – Mark Pirnie



Contents

Contents	Page
Chair's Introduction	3
The Aim of the Inquiry	4
Introduction and Background	6
Key ingredients of an accessible city	9
Accessibility to the built environment and public spaces	11
Accessibility to transportation and related infrastructure	23
Accessibility to information and communication, including ICT	32
Accessibility to public facilities and services	39
Ownership, level of commitment and involvement of disabled people	42
Conclusion and recommendations	49
Appendices	53

Chair's Introduction



Councillor Vaughan - Chair of the Accessible Southampton Inquiry Panel (2021/22)

Disability matters to all of us. Over 14 million people in the UK are living with a disability and 1 in 4 households are affected by disability. This includes people with physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological, emotional, age related and hidden impairments.

Evidence presented to the inquiry has identified that, compared to many places, Southampton is generally a good place to work and live for disabled people, however, significant challenges remain that prevent many of our residents from being able to access all that our great city has to offer.

It is currently perceived that accessibility has not been at the forefront of decisions, particularly on the built environment, with barriers still in place for residents and visitors to navigate the city independently and safely. By becoming a more accessible and inclusive city it will enable disabled people, and those with mobility issues, to access services and contribute fully to public life.

During the inquiry we have been informed about positive developments in the city that will improve accessibility as well as the potential to change attitudes and approaches that the Southampton City Vision Local Plan brings. We have also seen what can happen when cities prioritise accessibility. Getting it right helps all residents and visitors and can deliver significant environmental, economic and social benefits.

Our partners in the business community, through GO! Southampton, have outlined their ambition for Southampton to be an inclusive city that is accessible and welcoming to all. Now is the opportunity for the City Council to follow this example and work with disabled people in Southampton, and other key partners to make this ambition a reality by implementing the recommendations identified in this report.

I would like to thank all those that gave evidence and members of the Panel for their patience and support throughout the inquiry. Despite the challenges that holding meetings virtually can bring the Panel willingly listened to the detailed evidence in order to develop their understanding of the subject. For that I am genuinely grateful.

Accessible Southampton

The Aim of the Inquiry

1. In the foreword to the National Disability Strategy published in 2021, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and Minister for Disabled People state that:
‘Whoever you are, wherever you live, whatever your background, whether or not you have a disability – either visible or hidden – everyone should be able to participate fully, safely and free from prejudice in everyday life, enjoying all the freedoms and opportunities that entails.’
2. The National Disability Strategy identifies that disabled people’s aspirations for their lives are no different from non-disabled people’s aspirations. However, the strategy recognises that disabled people’s everyday experience is very different from non-disabled people.
3. Every day, many disabled people:
 - wake up in a home that is not adapted to their needs
 - rely on an unpredictable transport network to get out and about
 - navigate inaccessible and inflexible workplaces or education settings
 - face limited choice and additional expense when shopping around for goods and services
 - use unresponsive and fragmented public services that do not meet their needs
 - feel excluded from leisure opportunities and socialising
 - find themselves barred from exercising rights due to accessibility challenges.
4. The national perspective outlined above corresponds with feedback provided about Southampton. Findings from a 2020 access audit commissioned by Go! Southampton and undertaken by Spectrum Centre for Independent Living (CIL), identified significant challenges older and disabled people experience accessing Southampton.¹
5. Given the challenges outlined the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee recommended at the September 2021 meeting, that an inquiry focussing on opportunities to improve the accessibility of Southampton is undertaken by the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel.

¹ [Access Southampton – Spectrum CIL, 2020](#)

6. The set objectives of the inquiry were:
 - a. To identify whether the physical infrastructure of the city creates barriers for disabled people to access all Southampton has to offer.
 - b. To identify good practice being employed to improve the accessibility of towns and cities elsewhere.
 - c. To identify what initiatives and approaches could work well in Southampton to improve the accessibility of the city.
7. The full terms of reference for the inquiry, agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, are shown in Appendix 1.

How the inquiry was conducted

8. The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook the inquiry over 5 evidence gathering meetings. At the start of each meeting the Panel received a presentation summarising feedback from an Accessible Southampton focus group meeting attended by disabled people. The focus group, convened by Spectrum CIL, considered the issues to be discussed at the subsequent Inquiry Panel meeting. This ensured that the views of disabled people were represented.
9. In addition to hearing the views of disabled people, the Panel received information from a wide variety of organisations. This included Spectrum CIL, AccessAble, Liverpool City Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Derby City Council, The Rose Road Association, Go! Southampton, SO:Let's Connect, transport operators in Southampton, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust as well as officers from Southampton City Council. A list of witnesses that provided evidence to the inquiry is detailed in Appendix 2.
10. The key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the inquiry are detailed succinctly later in this report.
11. Members of the Panel would like to thank all those who have assisted with the development of this review, in particular the following who has provided the Panel with invaluable advice throughout the inquiry:
 - Ian Loynes – Chief Executive, Spectrum CIL

Introduction and Background

What is an accessible city?

12. The Access City Award is a prize given by the EU every year to cities that work hard to be accessible. They define a city to be accessible when all people can live in it and use all things and services without problems. For example, a city is accessible when all people can easily:
- get the bus or the metro to go to work
 - use ticket machines to buy a ticket
 - go around the streets or get in public buildings like hospitals and town halls
 - get information in ways that they can read and understand.

Why is it important that towns and cities are accessible?

13. Over 1 in 5 people in the UK are disabled. That is over 14 million people in the UK living with a disability. It is a number that has continued to rise as people are living longer and treatments and technology in healthcare improve.²
14. 1 in 4 households are affected by disability, 45% of people aged 65+ have a disability and there are estimated to be at least 4.5m carers in the UK.³
15. Spectrum CIL estimate the number of disabled people living in Southampton to be approximately 37,500. This includes people with physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological, emotional, age related and hidden impairments.
16. Accessibility is key to inclusive cities. If cities are planned and designed poorly disabled people are further excluded. This exclusion means fewer opportunities for education, employment and involvement in community life. By tackling barriers and building inclusive cities it can enable disabled people, and those with access issues, to access services and contribute fully to public life.
17. Making cities accessible can also enable them to benefit from the spending power of disabled people and their household, often referred to

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020>

³ [AccessAble presentation to the Inquiry Panel](#) – 07/10/21

as the purple pound. In the UK this is estimated to be worth £274 billion per year (2020) and this figure continues to rise.⁴

18. The Lord Mayor of Chester effectively summarised the benefits provided by an accessible city when the City of Chester was awarded 2017 EU Access City Award winner:

“Improved accessibility brings not only reassurance and the necessary support to those who struggle with accessibility, but lasting economic and social benefits to the city” – Cllr Angela Claydon, Lord Mayor of Chester

Overarching legislation and strategic context

19. In addition to the benefits associated with an accessible city identified above, there are legal duties that underpin improving accessibility. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against all persons on the grounds of the protected characteristics that are specified in the Act. Disability is one of the specified protected characteristics. Protection from discrimination for disabled people applies to disabled people in a range of circumstances, covering the provision of goods, facilities and services, the exercise of public functions, premises, work, education, and associations.
20. There are legal obligations under the Equality Act for employers and service providers to make reasonable adjustments to improve access for disabled people.
21. In addition to the legal obligations to individual disabled people, public bodies also have a wider Public Sector Equality Duty to actively:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity
 - Foster good relations
22. The Duty requires public bodies to take into account disabled people’s impairments, when making decisions about policies and services, as the law recognises that disabled people’s needs may be different from the needs of non-disabled people. This might mean making reasonable adjustments or treating disabled people better than non-disabled people to meet their needs. Having due regard for advancing equality involves:
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

⁴ <https://wearepurple.org.uk/the-purple-pound-infographic/>

- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

National Disability Strategy

23. To build on the progress that has been made since disability discrimination legislation was introduced more than 25 years ago (now subsumed within the wider Equality Act), the Government, in 2021, published a National Disability Strategy.
24. Whilst it has been criticised by disabled people and representative organisations due to the lack of consultation, the strategy recognises that there have been many improvements in services, access and opportunities for disabled people. The employment gap has narrowed. Levels of understanding and visibility have increased. There have been profound changes in public attitudes towards disability. However, feedback from disabled people has identified that these positive changes, while welcome, are not enough. The vision for the National Disability Strategy is therefore to transform disabled people's everyday lives.
25. The strategy sets out actions that the Government will take on the path towards delivering the stated vision. A number of these actions are linked to making cities more accessible, in particular the focus on housing, transport and public services, and these will be referenced later in this report.

Key ingredients of an accessible city

26. The EU Access City Award recognises the efforts made by cities to become more accessible; promotes equal access to urban life for disabled people and allows local authorities to promote and share their good practice.
27. The award celebrates a city's willingness, ability and efforts to become more accessible, in order to:
 - guarantee equal access to fundamental rights
 - improve the quality of life of its population and ensure that everybody – regardless of age, mobility or ability – has equal access to all the resources and pleasures cities have to offer.
28. The overarching message that the award scheme aims to communicate to the local level is that Europeans have a right to live in urban areas where services and leisure activities should be accessible to all. Cities should therefore strive to improve the quality of life for their citizens by enhancing accessibility.

4 Key areas of accessibility

29. The evaluation criteria utilised for the EU Access City Award identifies four key areas of accessibility:
 - a) The built environment and public spaces
 - b) Transportation and related infrastructures
 - c) Information and communication, including information and communication technologies (ICT)
 - d) Public facilities and services.

Ownership, level of commitment

30. The EU Access City Award also recognises the importance of ownership and commitment by a city's administration to implement accessibility action.
31. The following are key application criteria that an applicant city has to demonstrate:
 - The actions implemented or planned are part of a coherent strategy or policy framework, rather than just ad hoc projects.
 - Accessibility must be mainstreamed in the city's policies and its regulations.

- There is a corporate commitment to accessibility at a high level within the authority.
- Appropriate resources are allocated to implement these policies.

Involvement of disabled people and relevant partners

32. Any applicant city also needs to demonstrate in the planning, implementation and maintenance of city policies, and initiatives aimed at increasing accessibility, the active and clear involvement of disabled people and their representative organisations.
33. Reflecting the relevance of the EU Access City Award objectives to the Accessible Southampton inquiry terms of reference, the inquiry was conducted following the 4 key accessibility criteria utilised in the Access City Award. Separate meetings looking at each criterion were scheduled. The issues of ownership, commitment and the involvement of disabled people were themes that cut across each of the Inquiry Panel meetings.

Accessibility to the built environment and public spaces

The EU Accessible City Award criteria includes the following issues under this heading - City centre design, streets and pavements, parks, squares, monuments and open spaces, work environments, markets, festivals and other outdoor events.

‘66% of disabled people said they had faced discrimination due to physical access issues’ – AccessAble UK Survey, 2018

34. The way places are designed affects our ability to move, see, hear and communicate effectively. If cities are built with accessibility and inclusivity in mind it enables everyone to participate equally, confidently and independently in everyday activities.
35. According to the Inclusive Design Hub, inclusive design is the design of an environment so that it can be accessed and used by as many people as possible, regardless of age, gender and disability. An environment that is designed inclusively is not just relevant to buildings; it also applies to surrounding open spaces, wherever people go about everyday activities. This includes shops, offices, hospitals, leisure facilities, parks and streets.
36. Inclusive design keeps the diversity and uniqueness of each individual in mind. To do this, built environment professionals should involve potential users at all stages of the design process; from the design brief and detailed design through to construction and completion. Where possible, it is important to involve disabled people in the design process.⁵

The Principles of Inclusive Design

37. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) published and promoted the following principles of inclusive design as it relates to the built environment:⁶
 - Inclusive – so everyone can use it safely, easily and with dignity
 - Responsive – taking account of what people say they need/want
 - Flexible – so different people can use it in different ways
 - Convenient – All can use it without too much effort or separation

⁵ <https://inclusivedesign.scot/>

⁶ <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-principles-of-inclusive-design.pdf>

- Accommodating for all people, regardless of their age, gender, mobility, ethnicity or circumstances
- Welcoming – with no disabling barriers that might exclude some people
- Realistic – offering more than one solution to help balance everyone’s needs and recognising that one solution may not work for all.

How accessible is Southampton’s built environment?

38. Feedback provided to the Inquiry Panel, reflecting the discussion at the Spectrum CIL convened Accessible Southampton Focus Group meeting, identified a number of areas where the accessibility of Southampton’s built environment fails to mirror best practice and adhere to the principles of inclusive design. However, before those issues were raised it was recognised that access, particularly in the City Centre, was generally good, and that there are plenty of examples of good design and access, particularly in retail areas.
39. The fact that most shops allow assistance dogs and shops make a lot of effort, and that Audio Loop Systems, when installed and operational, are really making a difference to hearing impaired people [NB: only very few installed/operational in shops and public buildings] were raised as examples of good practice.
40. The areas of concern with regards to the design of the city and accessibility were classified into the following areas:
 - City Design – Getting around the city
 - Buildings and Spaces – Retail & Public
 - Buildings and Spaces – Homes
 - Accessible Toilets
 - Planning and Building Control

City Design – Getting around the city

41. The most common hazards for people getting around the city on foot or in a wheelchair came from a wide variety of street furniture, such as billboards and other displays outside shops, inconveniently placed bollards or rubbish bins, and cafe/restaurant pavement tables. While such hazards cause difficulties for most disabled people, they can be particularly dangerous for people with visual impairments.

42. Problems with pavements causing obstruction or danger were also raised. For example, sudden changes in width or height of the pavement, shortage of dropped kerbs - resulting in people having to go onto the road - or cracked/broken paving, creating a tripping hazard. Examples where the pavement was not defined from the road spaces and the use of cobbles in paving were raised.
43. Poorly designed seating was referenced, and specific challenges faced by particular groups of disabled people - those with mental health conditions or Autism, as well as people who use assistance dogs were highlighted. A crowded city centre can be disorientating, or even hostile, environment for many people in these groups - to the extent that they will often be reluctant to go to the city centre at all.
44. Other issues raised included the lack of accessible signposting around the city for people with visual impairments and poorly phased traffic and pedestrian crossings.

Buildings and Spaces – Retail and Public

45. Various access issues were noted in relation to cafes, bars and restaurants in the city centre. For example, internal steps put in for purely aesthetic reasons - thereby creating an unnecessary access barrier - and the current fashion for high tables and stools in many pubs and cafes, which are also inaccessible.
46. The most common problems with shops include:
 - stepped access at entrances
 - narrow and cluttered aisles or queuing lanes
 - poorly sited or designed displays
 - shortage of accessible lifts
 - poor lighting for people with visual impairments
 - lack of accessible changing cubicles
 - lack of accessible toilets or hearing loop systems - remain even after recent refurbishments
 - even some council owned leisure facilities are not fully accessible.

Building and Spaces - Homes

47. Too few new houses are built to be accessible. Disabled and older people want to visit friends, family and neighbours just as much as

everyone else. If all homes had a basic level of accessibility built in, it would be less costly to adapt as people age or become disabled.

Accessible Toilets / Changing Places Toilets

48. Problems with finding accessible public toilets when out and about in Southampton was highlighted. It was felt that, since the City Council closed many of the public toilets in the city centre, disabled people have to try to find toilets in shops - but these are often inaccessible and/or poorly maintained and designed, even in the modern leisure/retail developments in the city centre.
49. Southampton also has very few Changing Places toilets in comparison to other similar cities (10 as of March 2022⁷). A Changing Places toilet provides sanitary accommodation for people with multiple and complex disabilities. Even though not many exist, they are not widely used because people don't know they exist.

Planning and Building Control

50. Feedback was critical of the City Council's approach to ensuring that new or refurbished buildings in Southampton are accessible from both a Planning and Building Control perspective. Expectations are that Planners should insist that good access is built in at the design phase of new builds. The perception is that guidance is routinely ignored by developers and often no access or bad access is included in new buildings and access is sometimes reduced when buildings are modified. At the Accessible Southampton Focus Group meeting disabled people stated that:

"Access considerations should be put in place, and planning officers should ensure access rights are preserved – but they don't"and..

"Planning officers don't appear to 'police' access requirements"

51. The Building Control Service was identified as a contributor to the lack of access as inaccessible provision is routinely granted permission.
52. A specific criticism related to the lack of support the Council provided to members of the public who wanted to report any access issues they come across when out and about in Southampton.
53. The following contribution from Rebecca Handley, Deputy Executive Director and Operations Director at Go! Southampton, the Business

⁷ <https://www.changing-places.org/find>

Improvement District for the city centre, effectively encapsulates the feedback provided:

'It is currently perceived that accessibility has not been at the forefront of decisions on the built environment, with many barriers still in place for residents and visitors to navigate the city independently and safely.'

A disabled person's perspective – Jemma Brown

54. Many of the issues raised were highlighted in the superb presentation to the Panel from Jemma Brown. Jemma is blind and lives with multiple disabilities, including chronic illness that causes chronic pain and fatigue requiring the part-time use of an electric wheelchair.
55. Jemma was asked to reflect on the challenges that she experiences accessing Southampton's built environment. Below is a summary of the key issues raised by Jemma:

- SCC is failing its citizens with a disability, we are left out of planning decisions and given very little thought when making decisions and planning on how the built environment impacts us.
- SCC are following a medical model of disability that is outdated & harmful, SCC expects me as a disabled person to adapt to force my body to work in environments that it was not designed for.
- The area around the station is one example of poor planning both in terms of traffic management and the impact on disabled people. Decisions to have the road and the pavement in the same colour scheme and have tactile crossing points but not actual crossings put pedestrians at risk - The pavement should be a space where I am safe but around the station this is not the case.
- SCC is investing in its road network but I have to tell you that in doing this they have not considered the accessibility implications. In many cases the level of the road has been dropped and the difference in level has not been fixed when it comes to dropped curbs meaning that in some cases what looks like a dropped curb is actually a step. This is the case for many of the roads along Hill Lane between Atherley Bowling Club and Taunton's College. It is incredibly difficult to get between the roads mentioned.
- Sadly, there are many shops and businesses in Southampton that are not wheelchair accessible and are also not offering reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled people meaning that there are areas that are totally no go.

- With a guide dog I have been asked to leave shops in the city centre.
- For me the biggest problem is there is no easy way of reporting accessibility issues like a broken dropped curb, there are no policies or programs in place. It is really difficult to report issues.
- When West Quay South was built I raised with both Guide Dogs, sensory services, and West Quay that the steps are incredibly dangerous there were no tactile markings and they are curved quite frankly it scared me, one wrong step and there would be a serious accident. West Quay and its contractors did nothing... it was about a year later the tactile markings were retrofitted but even these have been fitted not following best practice.
- I believe SCC should be holding the designers of planned works accountable where a public building is designed and proposed at a planning level SCC should be prioritising accessibility and where reasonable (e.g. public buildings) refusing planning applications that go against best practice.
- Right now it takes me, an unpaid individual, to affect change and put quite simply it is often too late by the time I flag it.
- SCC needs to be pushing for inclusion and equality with a joined-up approach - SCC needs to implement new systems of reporting accessibility issues.
- Gosport where I grew up has an accessibility forum, that just looks at the high street area disabled people can anonymously report issues and it can then be followed up by the forum. If no action is taken the forum have the power to then raise it with the local council who will then ensure the issue is resolved.
- My choices are limited by decisions made - lack of infrastructure and joined up thinking and to be honest I am fed up of this.
- I feel SCC should be employing disabled people to test accessibility features and review potential problems, this member of staff can also start an access forum for the city centre, my dream would be for this to become something city wide.

56. Jemma's full written statement provided to the Panel is available here:

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/documents/s53904/Jemma%20Brown%20-%20Written%20evidence.pdf>

What is happening in Southampton to improve the accessibility of the built environment?

57. At the Inquiry Panel meeting the Panel received representations from the City Council and Go! Southampton, informing them about developments planned or proposed that could address some of the accessibility challenges identified in the previous section.

Planning/Building Control - Southampton City Vision Local Plan

58. Southampton's current planning policies relating to accessibility date from 2006. SDP 11 - Accessibility and Movement, states that Planning permission will only be granted for development which contributes to an attractive network of public routes and spaces for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles; secures adequate access for all pedestrians including people with mobility and sensory difficulties such as elderly people, disabled people, the very young and those using prams and wheelchairs.
59. For all Major development (10 dwellings/1,000sq.m) and new dwellings in Conservation Areas there is a requirement to produce Design & Access Statements that set out the applicant's case.
60. Officers at the meeting recognised that there is plenty of evidence that this in itself doesn't deliver accessible development.
61. Building Regulation applications are checked against Part M minimum standards (building regulations in England to ensure that people are able to access and use buildings and their facilities) at plan approval stage and via site inspection at completion stage prior to occupation.
62. Higher standards can be applied by the Council subject to planning conditions and policy. Officers recognised that most developers will work to minimum accessibility standards unless required to do otherwise.
63. There is scope for planning policy as it relates to accessibility to be updated and reset. Southampton City Council is currently refreshing the Local Plan that sets out the vision for future development in the city, identifies what areas should be developed, and what requirements and standards developers should meet in their proposals. This provides an opportunity to secure higher accessibility standards for future developments which require planning permission.

64. Whilst the new 'Southampton City Vision Local Plan' is being developed there is an opportunity to add to the existing policy to include embedding an accessibility checklist.

The Public Realm

65. The Panel were informed that the Council has recently increased its funding for footway repairs. The footway budget is £1.5m until the end of 2022/23 (previous years circa £500k per annum). It was recognised that this could help improve accessibility.
66. In Southampton the design of the public realm is guided by the Streetscape Toolkit, and relevant Department for Transport guidelines. The Streetscape Toolkit was last updated in 2013 and a refresh is due to commence shortly.
67. The refresh of the Streetscape Toolkit provides an opportunity to incorporate best practice with regards to accessibility in the Council's highways design standards moving forward.

Go! Southampton

68. The City Centre Business Improvement District (BID), that represents over 630 businesses, has an ambition for Southampton to be an accessible and inclusive city that is designed with accessibility in mind, that listens to and understands its community.
69. Following the BID ballot in November 2021, Go! Southampton have been developing a new five year business plan. A new Inclusive City workstream will commence in April 2022 where the BID will be investing in initiatives that improve inclusivity across the city.
70. The BID is committed to working with businesses to make premises more accessible through interventions such as hearing loops and training for businesses to be more accessible and understanding of visitors' requirements. This reflects the view presented by Spectrum CIL at a Panel meeting that it doesn't matter how good or bad provision is, if customer service is wrong.
71. Go! Southampton is working with Spectrum CIL on the accessible premises initiative and is passionate about decluttering the city centre to make it easier to navigate. It is keen to work with the City Council to deliver this and to tackle the various barriers identified in the Spectrum CIL access audit commissioned by Go! Southampton.⁸

⁸ [Access Southampton – Spectrum CIL, 2020](#)

Lets Loop Southampton

72. Lets Loop Southampton is a voluntary organisation that aims to make Southampton the first city in England to have a hearing loop in every public space. Information presented to the Panel indicated that currently only 4% of shops have loop systems installed.
73. Lets Loop Southampton has a grant fund available to meet the cost of installing a loop system (they cost about £200). The initiative is supported by the City Council and Go! Southampton.

Accessible built environment - What cities are getting this right?

74. Good practice from the following cities was presented to the Panel

Chester

75. Named EU Access City Award winner in 2017, the only UK winner. Chester is an historic city with ancient walls. Where full access is not possible the principle of least restrictive access is applied in the design of the public realm making the walls as accessible as possible for people.
76. The Council is aiming to ensure that the most severely disabled people can visit and enjoy the city's leisure, heritage and cultural facilities. Examples of good practice include:
 - Storyhouse Cultural Centre – Accessibility is at the forefront of the design of the building. The facility is fully inclusive and includes a Changing Place toilet, gender neutral toilets and removable seating to enable people to sit together if a member of a party is in a wheelchair.
 - Access guides and interpretation panels show wheelchair access points for the historic city walls.
 - There are currently at least 15 Changing Places across the Borough of Cheshire West and Chester with more planned.
77. During the Panel's discussion with Cheshire West and Chester's former Senior Access Officer the following critical success factors were identified:
 - Improving access has been a corporate priority since the mid 1990's and is embedded in the culture of the organisation.
 - The One City Plan strategy which guides the future regeneration of Chester. The Plan puts accessibility high on the agenda.

- The Corporate Disability Access Forum (CDAF) set up in 2013 ensures effective engagement and input from disabled people. The Forum works with developers and architects to ensure that the needs of disabled people are considered and that, wherever possible, minimum standards are exceeded.
 - A dedicated Access Officer works across the Council and its private sector partners on all aspects of access improvement. The Access Officer co-ordinates the CDAF, investigates and responds to all access related complaints received by the Council and works with internal and external partners to implement changes to buildings, facilities and practices. This role ensures that accessibility is at the heart of planning.
78. The approach to accessibility employed in Chester has a positive financial impact on the city. In 2015 the average amount spent in Chester by Shopmobility customers was £79 per visit. Shopmobility customers alone spent approximately £237,000 annually in Chester.

Liverpool

79. Reflecting Liverpool's long-standing commitment to accessibility, the city has strong planning policies in relation to accessibility. Urban Design 4 requires all new developments to meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion. The Access Officer employed by the Council can insist on BS 8300 standards rather than minimum standards. Hotel rooms with ceiling hoists in Liverpool are an example of this.
80. Liverpool's Accessible Housing Policy is the most ambitious in UK. All new housing must be at least M4(2), accessible or adaptable housing, with 10% M4(3), wheelchair accessible. This will increase the supply of accessible and adaptable homes meaning that disabled people can remain in their homes, reducing the need for expensive social care packages & improving the sustainability of communities.
81. Liverpool has a Corporate Access Forum similar to Chester. The forum plays a key role in the design of new developments, this includes the new Everton FC stadium which will be the most accessible in the UK. The stadium will include 14 gender neutral toilets and 3 Changing Places.
82. As of December 2021, Liverpool had 37 Changing Places with 8 more planned for the city.

Recommendations to improve the accessibility of the built environment and public spaces in Southampton

83. Having identified that in Southampton accessibility has not been at the forefront of decisions on the built environment, with many barriers still in place for residents and visitors to navigate the city independently and safely, it is clear that opportunities exist to address the impediments identified.
84. As Go! Southampton's written evidence to the Inquiry Panel stated:
'If you design a city with accessibility in mind, you can remove barriers and enable everyone to experience the city in a positive way and bring significant environmental, economic and social benefits..... Southampton has the potential to learn from best practice across the UK and Europe..... It is critical to understand and listen to the needs of our community, to reflect on their perceptions of accessibility in the city and co-create solutions that bring meaningful value.'
85. Information presented to the Panel from Cheshire West and Chester Council identified that the average cost to the NHS of a trip or fall where an ambulance is required is £14,000. Given this figure, and the value of the purple pound (see paragraph 17), it is likely that, as stated by the City Council's Executive Director of Wellbeing (Health & Adults), investment in infrastructure to make it accessible will deliver a financial return to the city.
86. To improve the accessibility of Southampton's built environment the following actions are recommended:
- i. Enshrine the principles of accessibility and inclusion within the Southampton City Vision Local Plan - The Local Plan presents an opportunity for the city to enshrine within its development principles an overarching commitment to make accessibility and inclusion central to future development. Development standards should include -
 - Requiring all new development to meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion.
 - Requiring all new housing to be at least accessible or adaptable housing, with a minimum of 10% wheelchair accessible.
 - ii. Whilst the new Southampton City Vision Local Plan is being developed embed an accessibility checklist within existing planning policy.

- iii. Update the Streetscene Toolkit to reflect available best practice with regards to accessibility of the public realm.
- iv. Establish a Southampton Disability Access Forum – Following the approach employed in [Chester](#), the Council should work with Go! Southampton, transport partners and local disability organisations to set-up and facilitate a cross-sector access forum. The forum, building on an existing Spectrum CIL led forum, would play a key role in designing and planning future developments as well as monitoring access across the city.
- v. Employ an Access Officer (potential for this post to work across Hampshire authorities) – This post would work across the Council and its private sector partners on all aspects of access improvement and would be, alongside the Access Forum, a focus for all built environment access related complaints received by the Council.
- vi. Changing Places toilets – Building Regulations have been updated requiring Changing Places toilets to be a condition of new developments that meet certain criteria. To support publicly accessible facilities the Council should apply for funding if the Government announces a new round of grants to develop the provision of Changing Places.
- vii. Work in partnership with Go! Southampton to deliver their ambition for Southampton to be an accessible and inclusive city.

Accessibility to transportation and related infrastructures

The EU Accessible City Award criteria includes the following issues under this heading - measures related to the car parks, airports, railway stations and bus stations, taxis, trains, buses and trams, proximity, interconnectivity of public transport and journey information availability.

“The world is different. You have to book if you want to use a bus; you have to book if you want to get a train. [Spontaneity] ... is a luxury.”⁹

87. Transport has the ability to open doors, to unlock potential and to increase confidence. It enables people to see family and friends as well as seek and access employment. It can make the difference between feeling socially isolated and feeling socially included.
88. Transport can however also be one of the biggest barriers faced by disabled people. In 2019 Scope surveyed 2,000 people about how difficulties around using public transport affects their ability to lead independent, confident and connected lives. The research found that two thirds of disabled people had experienced problems using public transport in the last year and 30 percent of disabled people said that difficulties with public transport had reduced their independence.¹⁰
89. In 2018 the Government published an Inclusive Transport Strategy. The strategy sets out the Government’s plans to make our transport system more inclusive, and to make travel easier for disabled people.
90. The stated ambition is for disabled people to have the same access to transport as everyone else, and to be able to travel confidently, easily and without extra cost. By 2030 the Government envisages equal access for disabled people using the transport system, with assistance if physical infrastructure remains a barrier.

General principles for travel

91. In his presentation to the Panel, Ian Loynes - Chief Executive at Spectrum CIL, outlined some general principles that should be followed by a city that has the ambition to have an inclusive transport system:

⁹ [National Disability Strategy](#) – Quote from Jessica, p39, 2021

¹⁰ [Travel-Fair-report \(1\).pdf](#)

- Good access should be built in at the design phase. Ask disabled people as co-production is cost effective.
- Public transport should include all, segregated transport is not the answer (Dial-a-Ride) as it is expensive and exclusionary.
- Consider the whole experience - Booking / tickets, getting to the public transport destination, interchanges (car-taxi-bus-train).
- Proper consideration of pedestrians, particularly those who have impaired senses.
- It doesn't matter how good/bad provision is if customer service is wrong.

How accessible is Southampton's public transport and related infrastructure?

92. The Inquiry Panel received information from transport operators in Southampton and City Council officers. This information, considered alongside the feedback provided to the Inquiry Panel following the discussion at the Spectrum CIL convened Accessible Southampton Focus Group meeting, provided an overview of the accessibility of Southampton's public transport system and related infrastructure.

Buses

93. There has been considerable investment in the bus infrastructure to improve the accessibility of the fleet and related elements. As a result:
- 230+ buses operate in Southampton, all buses can 'kneel' to meet raised kerbs at bus stops making it quicker and simpler for wheelchair users and those with mobility impairments to access.
 - Buses have at least 1 designated wheelchair space where wheelchair users have priority over other users.
 - Onboard the buses 86% have 'next stop' audio and visual bus stops – the remaining buses are being upgraded by operators.
 - Local bus operators provide large format printed timetables for the visually impaired – these are available from travel shops.
 - Bus Stops – The City Council uses the Transport for London (TfL) guidance for bus stop design which is considered to be over and above national guidance. A local 'Basis of Design' is being developed for bus stops.

- Bus operators participate in a number of schemes to improve the accessibility of buses. First are signatories to the RNIB charter to assist passengers with visual impairments – stopping at bus stops if there is someone waiting and talking to passengers about the route; Bluestar run Helping Hand Scheme using a card that provides information on any assistance they may require.
94. Key concerns raised by the Accessible Southampton Focus Group related to buses only having one designated space for wheelchair users limiting the ability of wheelchair users to travel together.

Trains

95. There are eight railway stations in Southampton – Southampton Central plus seven suburban stations. Of the eight, only Southampton Central is fully accessible with lifts to all platforms, hearing loops, digital displays, available staff etc. The remaining stations are partially or not accessible.
96. Reflecting this, feedback from the Focus Group was that accessibility is generally good at Southampton Central and that most rail staff tended to be happy to help. However, as disabled people are expected to book tickets at least 24 hours in advance the lack of spontaneity or flexibility is a barrier to travel.

Ferries

97. Red Funnel employ customer service staff to provide assistance before, during and after a voyage for disabled people.
98. They work closely with blind/visually impaired groups in Southampton and the Isle of Wight to make recommendations on how to improve the journey experience and they provide disability awareness training to all customer facing staff.

Taxis

99. The number of hackney carriages in Southampton is fixed at 283 with plates 214-283 required to be Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV). Should any plate from 001 to 213 become available as a new licence it will also have to be a WAV. Therefore, approximately 25% of Southampton's hackney carriages are currently required to be wheelchair accessible.
100. There are currently 1,029 licensed Private Hire Vehicles operating in Southampton. Of these only 48 (4.6%) are WAVs.

101. Taxi operators have difficulty fulfilling wheelchair work because of the lack of vehicles, particularly at school run times when the vehicles are required for pupil transport.
102. Perhaps reflecting the lack of WAVs, the Focus Group feedback raised the issue of wheelchair users having to book in advance, except at Southampton Central, and questioned why all hackney carriages are not required to be wheelchair accessible.

Parking

103. On street disabled parking is widely distributed in locations across the city centre, district centres and resident parking zones.
104. 143 disabled bays are available in City Council off-street car parks in the city centre and in district centres.
105. Level access and lifts to street level and walkways are available in all Council multi-storey car parks and surface car parks do not carry a charge for Blue Badge holders.
106. For new developments City Council Parking Standards set out the minimum number of disabled parking spaces required and design standards that must be adhered to.
107. Feedback from the Accessible Southampton Focus Group referenced the difficulty finding suitable accessible parking spaces, even outside of busy times and, reflecting a lack of engagement with disabled people, the lack of consideration of the real needs of disabled drivers in the design and placement of parking spaces and car parks.
108. Facilities need to reflect the variety of car designs with appropriate signage to reflect usage. Design challenges identified included:
 - Car park barriers are not usable by many disabled drivers simply because they cannot reach the buttons without leaving the vehicle, even asking for help needs a button to be pressed.
 - Car parks, and parking bays, are commonly not designed for bigger vans, most wheelchair accessible vans are bigger.
 - On street parking space restrictions make parking for people who need to exit at the rear, or side, of their vehicles difficult.
 - Not all on street spaces for disabled people have drop kerbs.
109. The Civic Centre disabled bays were identified as the best spaces in the city for wheelchair users however, currently, if there's an event going on, the Civic Centre car park is often closed.

ShopMobility

110. In Southampton ShopMobility services are provided at West Quay Shopping Centre and in the city centre. The city centre ShopMobility scheme had almost 3,000 hires last year and information presented to the Panel by Spectrum CIL estimated that over a third of customers using the scheme spend over £50 per city centre visit.
111. The Focus Group raised the need for ShopMobility schemes in other shopping areas of the city.

Signage

112. There are 130 directional signs in Southampton. The original design of the signs was subject to a DDA audit which recommended high tonal contrast.
113. Feedback from disabled people identified that some colours used are not good for visually impaired people and that signage could be improved to make it fully accessible to all disabled people.

What is happening that may improve the accessibility of public transport and related infrastructure in Southampton?

114. Developments planned or proposed that could address some of the accessibility challenges identified in the previous section were presented to the Inquiry Panel.

Buses

115. Under the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000, buses and coaches designed to carry over 22 passengers, and which are used on local and scheduled services in the UK, must incorporate at least one wheelchair space.
116. The National Disability Strategy recognises needs and expectations of disabled people have changed in the last 20 years and includes a commitment that the DfT will review the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000, starting with research in 2022.
117. In 2021 the City Council published a Bus Service Improvement Plan. The Plan, developed jointly with bus operators, includes a vision that buses are inclusive and provide value for money.
118. The Plan includes a request for DfT funding to deliver upgrades to all bus stops in Southampton to meet TfL accessibility standards; Accessibility audits to bus stops; Work with user groups to develop

assistive technologies; Continue Independent Travel Training; Innovative and capped fares.

Trains

119. The National Disability Strategy references a suite of accessibility reforms for train travel. These include a duty on Great British Railways to improve accessibility and the development and implementation of a national accessibility strategy for the railways.
120. The strategy also commits the DfT to conduct a network-wide accessibility audit of station facilities at all 2,565 mainline railway stations in Great Britain to inform future investment decisions. In Southampton future improvements are being developed through updated Station Travel Plans.
121. All Aboard Project - In April 2020 Rose Road Association was awarded a grant from South Western Railway to address some of the barriers to rail travel for young people with severe disabilities.
122. The project has included the development of step-by-step guides using PCS (Picture Communication System) to travelling by train. The project finished in March 2022 and information is still being collected but the feedback that has been received to date has been largely positive.
123. South Western Railway staff have had training on the issues raised and are taking the issue seriously.

Taxis

124. The Council is scheduled to undertake the next taxi unmet demand survey in April/May 2022. Through the survey the Council's Licensing Team have been requested to look at the issue of wheelchair accessible vehicles in more detail.

Ferries

125. Red Funnel have plans for 2022 to improve the accessibility of vessels by upgrading lifts, toilets, seating and safety communications.

Southampton Airport

126. In 2021 Southampton Airport established an Accessibility Forum and is in the process of making improvements to the accessibility of the airport.

Transport infrastructure improvements

127. The Council is designing two transport interchanges, a rail / bus interchange, and a bus interchange. This presents an opportunity to reflect best practice in the design of these facilities and to engage disabled people.
128. As part of the Council's funding bid to the DfT under the Active Travel Fund, the Council has applied for £100k capital funding for Accessibility Improvements. If the bid is successful a governance framework will be set up to allocate the £100k. The Council is keen to engage disabled people fully in this process. The application was for funding for the 2022/23 financial year, and Council is waiting for an announcement from Government.

Inclusive Transport Strategy

129. To support the objectives in Connected Southampton - the Council's Local Transport Plan, and the emerging City Vision Local Plan, the City Council will be developing a number of plans. These include an Inclusive Transport Strategy.

Accessible public transport and related infrastructure – What cities are getting this right?

130. Good practice from the following cities was presented to the Panel.

Derby

131. Derby were one of the first cities to insist that as a condition of license all hackney carriages must be wheelchair accessible. Derby had to go to court twice over this but were successful on both occasions.
132. The National Inclusive Transport Strategy (2018) identifies 53 local authorities where 100% of the hackney carriage fleet is wheelchair accessible. This includes Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council and Rushmoor Borough Council both located in Hampshire.¹¹
133. Representatives from Cheshire West and Chester Council and Liverpool City Council informed the Panel that they require all hackney carriages to be wheelchair accessible. In these authorities

¹¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728547/inclusive-transport-strategy.pdf - P67

the accessible fleet contributes to home to school transport and accessing day care provision.

Chester

134. Chester's Bus interchange was awarded 2018 Accessible Transport Project of the Year. Designers followed best practice outlined in BS 8300 - 'Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment'.
135. The Corporate Disability Access Forum (CDAF) was consulted on the plans on 2-3 occasions, and this led to the designs being enhanced following the feedback received.
136. The interchange includes a direct phone line to Shopmobility, a 'map for all', a Changing Place toilet, tactile paving to enable visually impaired to navigate the bus station, and bins with yellow tops that are visible for partially sighted people.
137. The Access Officer was also a key consultee and worked closely with the project design team on the designs.
138. Cheshire West and Chester Council have also recently updated their signage strategy to reflect best practice.



The Map for All – Chester Bus Interchange

Merseyside

139. Merseyside has 40 new trains that are accessible including level access from train to platform. There is no requirement for disabled people to book in advance for these services.

Recommendations to improve the accessibility of public transport and related infrastructure in Southampton

140. Southampton's transportation and related infrastructure provides a number of examples where action has been taken to make travel easier for disabled people.
141. Challenges still exist for disabled people to access all aspects of the transportation system in Southampton, and it is unlikely that, even with the proposed initiatives identified, the ambition within the Government's Inclusive Transport Strategy of a transport system offering equal access for disabled people by 2030 will be achieved in the city.
142. The ability to be spontaneous with regards to travel plans remains a challenge for disabled people.
143. Southampton has the potential to learn from best practice. Infrastructure, provision and end to end journeys can be designed with accessibility in mind, thereby removing barriers and enabling everyone to access the various modes of transport available.
144. To improve the accessibility of Southampton's public transport and related infrastructure the following actions are recommended:
 - i. Utilising best practice guidance, and the proposed Southampton Disability Access Forum, ensure that good access is built in at the design phase of transport infrastructure schemes, including parking.
 - ii. Analyse the findings from the taxi unmet needs survey and explore opportunities to move to 100% wheelchair accessible hackney carriages and to increase the number of wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles in Southampton.
 - iii. With disabled people, review signage in Southampton, including the Legible Cities signage, to make it more accessible to disabled people.
 - iv. Explore opportunities to establish ShopMobility schemes in Southampton's district centres.
 - v. Recognise the importance to disabled people of the disabled parking spaces in the Civic Centre Car Park when planning events in Southampton City Centre.

Accessibility to information and communication

The EU Accessible City Award criteria includes the following issues under this heading - measures related to access to the city authorities' official information. For instance: accessibility of promotional multimedia information of the municipality, advice and citizen feedback procedures on the accessibility of the website, online information provision in arts, culture, entertainment, sport facilities, signage and guidance in public places, outdoor or indoor, tourist information, accessibility of the public information kiosks, provision of assistive technology and inclusive ICT resources for the whole community in public libraries and online centres.

'Over 3 quarters of disabled people haven't visited somewhere they wanted to go because they could not find the information they needed.' - AccessAble UK Survey, 2018

145. In her presentation to the Inquiry Panel, Anna Nelson, Chief Executive at AccessAble, outlined the importance of information provision, identifying it as one of the 3 key facets of accessibility, alongside the welcome and the physical space itself.
146. Information about accessibility has the power to make decisions. 76% of people that responded to an AccessAble survey in 2018 stated that they have not visited a venue because of a lack of information about access.¹²
147. Information provided not only needs to be available it needs to be accessible and inclusive. Millions of people across the United Kingdom have communication difficulties and 1 in 5 people in the UK will experience a communication difficulty at some point in their lives.¹³
148. Communication difficulties can occur for a range of reasons. If accessible and inclusive information and communications are not provided it can deny individuals with communication difficulties equality of access and opportunity.

General principles for accessible information & communications

¹² Accessibility and You Survey – AccessAble 2018

¹³ [Communication Access UK – Inclusive communication for all \(communication-access.co.uk\)](http://communication-access.co.uk)

149. In his presentation to the Panel, Ian Loynes - Chief Executive at Spectrum CIL, outlined some general principles for accessible information and communication that should be followed:

- Information and communication should be written to be understandable to the audience in question
- If information or communication is aimed at the 'general public' then it needs to ensure that it will be accessible and understandable to all equality groups (including disabled people)
- Consider if all the intended audience will be able to access your chosen communication method
- Use plain English
- Make it easy for staff to get it right
- Provision of accessible info should not be a cost issue

How accessible is information and communication in Southampton?

150. As the EU Accessible City Award criteria focusses on access to the city authorities' official information, the emphasis of the Panel's discussion was on Southampton City Council's information and communication. Discussion with the Council's Head of Customer and Communications provided the following overview.

151. The City Council has adopted accessibility standards that should be followed:

- Always start with the user/customer
- Give people options
- Design for the user who will find it the hardest
- Plain English is critical
- Keep it simple
- Listen to feedback and review regularly

152. The Council does not have set information standards but guidelines for written communication are as follows:

- Guidance outlines key considerations:
- Plain English
- Minimum size 12 font
- Use Ariel

- Make accessible versions available
- Use the corporate template

153. The Council has a contract in place with a translation service and British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters and where there is a demonstrable need the Council will translate printed materials – The Council have recently run some Facebook campaigns in 10 different languages.

154. The accessibility of the Council's website has increased significantly following the introduction of various template changes enabled by a new Content Management System. 99.2% of the content now conforms with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA, the statutory level, an increase from 67% at start of January 2021. 91.3% of content conforms to level AAA, the highest level and further improvements are planned.

155. The Council is seeking to increase digital inclusion in Southampton through public access computers in libraries, working with the Barclays Digital Eagles initiative and engaging with community partners.

Feedback from the Accessible Southampton Focus Group

156. Whilst recognising that progress has been made in certain areas, the discussion at the Spectrum CIL convened Accessible Southampton Focus Group meeting raised a number of concerns about the accessibility of the Council's information and communication.

157. Feedback identified that whilst guidelines exist for information standards they are not being followed uniformly across the Council. Some services regularly send out information that is not in plain English, is not understandable to the recipients, and is not in the accessible format the customer has previously requested.

158. The Focus Group raised the inconsistent use of language by public services in Southampton. Words to describe disabled people, that are offensive to disabled people, such as 'handicapped' or 'bed/house Bound' are still routinely used. Words are important.

159. The Focus Group expressed concern that at times the only way to access a service or information is via the internet. There was support for services and information remaining available through a variety of channels.

160. Another important issue raised was that too many public meetings in Southampton are still inaccessible to disabled people either because of physical access, equipment such as a hearing loop or microphone not being installed or working, or through there being no access to BSL.

161. A number of these issues were recognised by the Head of Customer and Communications. In his presentation he identified that, as a large organisation with numerous departments and systems, and without a single customer recording system for client information, consistently applying good practice presents a challenge for the Council. He also recognised that more needs to be done to engage with customers, including disabled people at the start of a process.

Access Guides

162. As previously identified, information about accessibility has the power to make decisions. A number of organisations work with venues, local authorities and other public bodies to, following an audit of premises, produce access guides that enable people to understand all the essential information they need about a location prior to arrival.

163. In Southampton both the University of Southampton and University Hospital Southampton (UHS) have published access guides in partnership with AccessAble. UHS launched their new site on 3rd December 2021.¹⁴

164. In comparison to other UK cities there are few access guides for venues in Southampton.

What is happening that may improve the accessibility of information and communication in Southampton?

165. At the Inquiry Panel meeting the Panel received information about developments planned or proposed that could address some of the accessible information and communication challenges identified in the previous section.

Southampton City Council Customer Access Strategy

166. In December 2021 the Council adopted a new Customer Access Strategy. The strategy's vision is:

¹⁴ <https://www.accessable.co.uk/university-hospital-southampton-nhs-foundation-trust/access-guides/centre-block-southampton-general-hospital>

'We want to put all of our customers at the heart of everything we do, reflecting their feedback in the design and delivery of services, and to provide appropriate support to those who need it ensuring that customer experiences are easy, effective and convenient.'

167. Acknowledging this is a journey requiring ongoing effort to continuously improve, the strategy sets the principles and ambitions for where the Council wants to be.
168. Key to delivering this is the Council's Customer Experience Programme which is making improvements to digital channels; setting standards and redesigning services with a customer focus; delivering customer service and related training to all council staff; and, coordinating activity to support digitally excluded customers.
169. The Council is also seeking to link key customer IT systems to better understand the individual needs of each customer.

Communication Access Symbol

170. Communication Access UK is an initiative developed in partnership by charities that share a vision to improve the lives of people with communication difficulties.



171. There has not been an over-arching symbol for communication access in the UK until now. Communication Access UK have developed the Communication Access Symbol, a new disability access symbol underpinned by a free training package and standards.
172. Anyone can sign up to Communication Access UK and complete the training package. Individuals will receive certificates confirming that they have completed the training, while organisations will receive accreditation as Communication Accessible once they have committed to deliver the training and adhere to the standards.
173. Organisations will then be placed on a national directory and can display the Communication Access Symbol. Both certificates and accreditation are valid for 12 months and need to be renewed annually.
174. At the time of writing the Communication Access Symbol has not been seen anywhere in Southampton and no County/Unitary/District Council has been awarded the symbol.

SO:Let's Connect

175. This project commenced in 2020 in response to services moving on-line during the lockdown. The service loans digital devices to people in Southampton, thereby helping residents become digitally connected. The pilot project has identified how important digital access is and funding is currently being assembled to enable the project to continue.

Accessible information and communication – What cities are getting this right?

176. Good practice from the following cities was presented to the Panel.

Sheffield

177. AccessAble identified Sheffield City Council as an example of good practice with regards to providing information. Through the Accessible Sheffield project they are working on a citywide scale with AccessAble, Disability Sheffield and Nimbus Disability to support the ambitions of Sheffield to become an accessible and fairer city for all.

178. Access guides from AccessAble have detailed access information for over 2,000 venues in Sheffield, including shops, community halls, places of worship, Council buildings, hospitals, universities, bus and train stations, hotels, and more.

179. Each access guide includes information about a venue's facilities, including wheelchair access, automatic doors, accessible changing rooms, large print, sign language, and parking.

Derby

180. To support the principle that all individuals in Derby have a right to access and understand accurate and timely information in a way appropriate to their needs under the Equality Act 2010, Derby City Council has adopted an Accessible Communications Protocol.¹⁵

181. This Protocol is one of a set of policies around equality and diversity. The main aim of this Protocol is to provide a consistent accessible approach in how the Council communicates with people.

182. The Protocol outlines the support that will be provided by the Council, such as BSL interpreters, language interpreters, translations in various languages and formats, lip speakers, note takers, Deaf Relay

¹⁵ [accessible-communication-protocol.pdf \(derby.gov.uk\)](https://www.derby.gov.uk/accessible-communication-protocol.pdf)

interpreters, Easy Read information, BSL videos, Braille, large print etc to enable people to access and understand information.

183. The Council also works with disabled people to check whether the protocol is being applied consistently.

Recommendations to improve the accessibility of information and communication in Southampton

184. The accessibility of the Council's information and communication has improved, particularly the accessibility of the website content.

185. The Customer Access Strategy outlines a direction of travel that incorporates elements of best practice identified and if implemented will, through initiatives such as the Customer Experience Programme, lead to better access for disabled people.

186. However, challenges still exist for disabled people to access all aspects of the Council's information and communication and to locate accurate information on the accessibility of venues in the city.

187. To improve the accessibility of Southampton's information and communication the following actions are recommended:

- i. To improve consistency in how the City Council communicates with residents the Council should adopt an accessible information standard. To support this approach Spectrum CIL has identified information standards that reflect best practice.
- ii. To help ensure that Council officers use appropriate language when communicating with disabled people, incorporate, within the customer service training that is proposed for council staff via the Customer Experience Programme, an element on the 'language of disability'. Once again, to support this, guidelines have been developed by Spectrum CIL.
- iii. Develop a checklist to ensure that meetings for the general public are accessible.
- iv. To make Southampton more accessible, and improve the lives of people with communication difficulties, adopt the standards underpinning the Community Access Symbol and seek to encourage citywide take up and accreditation of the initiative.
- v. To improve choice, control, independence and inclusivity, work with Go! Southampton and Spectrum CIL on proposals to produce access guides on a city-wide scale for Southampton, mirroring the approach followed in Sheffield.

Accessibility to public facilities and services

The EU Accessible City Award criteria asks applicant cities to identify how accessibility is considered and integrated in the public services provided within their city.

'28% of disabled people had difficulty accessing public buildings 'all the time' or 'often' – UK Disability Survey, 2021

188. As identified in the introduction to this inquiry there are legal duties that underpin improving accessibility. These include legal obligations for employers and service providers to make reasonable adjustments to improve access for disabled people and a requirement for all public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity between different groups, including people with and without disabilities.

189. Guidelines for accessible public facilities and services were presented to the Panel by the Chief Executive of Spectrum CIL. A number of the aspects have already been considered in this report:

- Services need to be easy to get to – Publicised in places that reach the target audience; Adjacent car parking and served by public transport; Venue well signposted
- Buildings need to be accessible for disabled people - Entrance / reception, meeting rooms, toilets, food / drinks
- Information provided needs to be in accessible formats
- Staff training & culture - Ensure properly trained staff that understand needs of disabled people.

How accessible are public facilities and services in Southampton?

190. Perhaps reflecting the lack of access guides for public facilities in Southampton, particularly City Council premises, the Panel did not consider in detail the accessibility of specific public buildings or services in the city. The Accessible Southampton Focus Group discussion did however, reflecting the guidelines above, identify a number of general issues relating to the accessibility of public facilities and services in Southampton.

Service information

191. Many disabled people do not know what services there are in Southampton and the information directory that is supposed to provide this information needs to be updated to ensure that accurate information is available and is user friendly.

Accessible public buildings

192. Feedback provided identified that access to public buildings was a challenge in Southampton. Facilities are rarely designed to be fully inclusive, although Gateway was recognised as an accessible building. Disabled people raised the point that even some council owned leisure facilities are not fully accessible. Guidance is available to support the creation of accessible and inclusive buildings.

Equality Impact Assessments

193. The Public Sector Disability Equality Duty 2011 requires that public authorities have an anticipatory duty to consider and think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. This includes disabled people. This duty is commonly delivered via Equality Impact Assessments.

194. The City Council undertakes Equality and Safety Impact Assessments (ESIAs) for all significant proposals and policies/strategies. Oversight of the process is provided by the Strategy and Policy Team.

195. Feedback from disabled people indicated that the process could be more rigorous, including engaging with disabled people where decisions are likely to impact them.

'Equality Impact Statements - Should be completed by people from different equality groups themselves, not just done by an officer that may, or not, know the issues that these groups experience.' – Ian Loynes presentation, 18 November 2021 Inquiry Panel meeting

What is happening that may improve the accessibility of public facilities and services in Southampton?

Southampton Information Directory

196. In recognition that the Southampton Local Information Directory (SID), the City Council's online offer, was not performing the role it was designed to do, Southampton City Council is developing the SID following the principles of no wrong door and many routes to information.

197. The new SID will seek to have the best available advice and information from national and local sources, it will be structured to avoid users getting lost, and will be easy to update.

Accessible public facilities and services – What cities are getting this right?

198. Good practice from the following city was presented to the Panel.

Chester

199. In Chester new public facilities and services are designed to be fully inclusive. The vast majority of public buildings have been adapted over many years. Grosvenor Museum has platform lifts at entrances, an accessible WC and a hearing loop system. The city's Forum Customer Service Centre offers a 'one stop shop' for all enquiries relating to council services. The centre's entrance has powered doors, low-level counters and is equipped with a hearing loop.

200. iConnect video kiosks have been installed at 12 Libraries across Cheshire West and Chester enabling people to speak face-to-face to Council customer service staff.

201. Cheshire West and Chester Council undertake robust Equality Impact Assessments and engagement with disabled people through the Corporate Disability Access Forum is expected.

Recommendations to improve the accessibility of public facilities and services in Southampton

202. Challenges still exist for disabled people to access all public services and facilities in Southampton.

203. To improve the accessibility of Southampton's public facilities and services the following actions are recommended:

- i. Engage disabled people, potentially through the proposed Southampton Disability Access Forum, in the development of Equality Impact Assessments when it is expected that a new policy, development or decision will have an impact on disabled people.
- ii. Through the proposed access guides, undertake access audits of the City Council's public buildings and take recommended action to improve the accessibility of the buildings where practical and reasonable. All new public facilities should be fully accessible.

Ownership, level of commitment and involvement of disabled people

The EU Accessible City Award recognises the importance of ownership and commitment by a city's administration to implement accessibility action.

Any applicant city also needs to demonstrate in the planning, implementation and maintenance of city policies, and initiatives aimed at increasing accessibility, the active and clear involvement of disabled people and their representative organisations.

'Accessibility plays a key role in removing the barriers disabled people still face in their daily lives. Accessibility thrives when there is a political will to make it happen and when policy makers actively engage in dialogue with experts and disabled people' - Marianne Thyssen, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility¹⁶

204. Reflecting the importance of ownership, leadership and involvement, the National Disability Strategy commits the Government to ensure disability is well understood by UK government departments and that the needs and experiences of disabled people are central to policy making and always taken into account by frontline staff.¹⁷

205. The EU Access City Award expects these features to be prominent in accessible cities. Local authorities are therefore expected to demonstrate:

- That accessibility is delivered via a coherent strategy or policy framework, rather than just ad hoc projects.
- Accessibility is mainstreamed in policies and regulations.
- There is a corporate commitment to accessibility at a high level within the authority.
- Appropriate resources are allocated to implement these policies.
- That there is active and clear involvement of disabled people and their representative organisations in the planning, implementation and maintenance of city policies, and initiatives aimed at increasing accessibility.

¹⁶ EU Access City Award 2017 - Examples of best practice in making EU cities more accessible p2

¹⁷ [National Disability Strategy](#) – p21

206. Another key criterion that has emerged from the inquiry meetings that local authorities should be measured against, is the use of the Public Sector Equality Duty to promote equality, reduce discrimination and overcome barriers to accessibility.

207. When these collective features are evident in an authority it is likely that a Council is demonstrating a culture of accessibility & inclusivity.

Southampton - Ownership, level of commitment and involvement of disabled people

208. The issues of ownership, leadership and engaging disabled people were raised at every meeting of the inquiry. Feedback from these discussions, and input from the Accessible Southampton Focus Group, has enabled the findings below to emerge.

Coherent Strategy/Policy framework

209. To guide the Council's approach to accessibility the City Council does have an Equalities Policy and an Equalities Action Plan. These documents were however drafted in 2013 and need updating.

210. A number of connected policies were identified that support accessible services including the previously mentioned Customer Access Strategy; the Special Educational Needs and Disability Action Plan (linked to the Children and Young People's Strategy); the Disabled Adaption Procedure; the Disabled Parking Bay Procedure; and the Disabled Adaptions Financial Assistance Policy.

211. Accessible / inclusive services are not referenced in the Council Plan and, as shown in the approach to taxi licensing, there is limited evidence that accessibility is mainstreamed in the city's policies and regulations.

Corporate commitment at a high level

212. Southampton Council has formally adopted the social model of disability rather than the medical model. The social model identifies the problems faced by disabled people as a consequence of external factors and seeks to remove barriers for disabled people, promoting inclusion, rather than disabled people having to 'fit in' with inaccessible and sometimes hostile environments.

213. Whether this commitment is being actioned has been questioned during this inquiry, notably by Jemma Brown in her contribution summarised in paragraph 55:

'SCC are following a medical model of disability that is outdated & harmful, SCC expects me as a disabled person to adapt to force my body to work in environments that it was not designed for.'

214. Currently, the Leader of the Council has responsibility for diversity and inclusion within his portfolio.

Resources

215. There is not a lead officer for equality/diversity or accessibility at the Council that has an external, citywide focus. Go! Southampton, in their presentation to the Panel identified that a lead officer at the City Council would help the BID co-ordinate activity with the Council.

216. Feedback from AccessAble and Spectrum CIL outlined the importance of properly trained staff who understand the needs of disabled people and are comfortable and confident about their engagement with disabled customers.

217. Training resources for Council employees on accessibility /equality & diversity has up to this point been limited, or for many non-existent.

218. The lack of training up to now possibly explains the view expressed by Ian Loynes at the inaugural meeting of the inquiry that the City Council was not a 'learning council':

'The City Council does not 'learn' – people come and go within the Council who have or gain expertise with respect to access. But that knowledge is lost when that person leaves. The City Council needs to acquire knowledge and standards and PASS this on to new staff.'

Use of the Public Sector Equality Duty to promote equality, reduce discrimination and overcome barriers to accessibility

219. Council's do not police the Equality Act but have a duty to use the Public Sector Equality Duty to promote equality, remove discrimination and overcome barriers to accessibility.

220. It would appear that many venue owners and operators in the city are unaware of their obligations under the Equality Act. As outlined in previous sections, many shops, hospitality venues and premises in Southampton are still not accessible, much to the frustration of disabled people who do not think enough has been done to make venue owners and operators aware of their legal obligations.¹⁸

¹⁸ Accessibility and You Survey – AccessAble 2018 - 88% of disabled people responded 'no' when asked do you think that that enough has been done to make venue owners and operators aware of their obligations under the Equality Act.

221. Feedback from an Accessible Southampton Focus Group meeting, presented by Ian Loynes to the 5th meeting of the Inquiry Panel, encapsulated the views about the role being played by the Council:

'The Council should be an ally to disabled people trying to resolve this, not a barrier.'

222. As noted previously, there is no lead officer for equality/diversity or accessibility at the Council that has an external, citywide focus that can champion the use of the Public Sector Equality Duty to promote equality, remove discrimination, and address barriers to access experienced by residents and visitors to Southampton.

Involvement of disabled people

223. Throughout the inquiry it has been evident that the involvement of disabled people and their representative organisations in the planning, implementation and maintenance of city policies, and initiatives aimed at increasing accessibility is ad hoc at best.

224. The Spectrum CIL Access Audit, when giving examples of best practice, stated that:

*'All of the cities that are noted as exemplars of accessibility take a co-production approach to access, with Disabled People and their organisations fully involved in design, planning, awareness raising and evaluation and monitoring.'*¹⁹

225. The Chief Executive of Spectrum CIL had a simple message for the Inquiry Panel at the inaugural meeting:

'Ask the Disabled People of Southampton – They have a lifetimes experience – much better than any 'Expert' - There are 37,500 Experts by Experience in Southampton.'

What is happening that may improve the ownership, commitment, and involvement of disabled in Southampton?

226. The Inquiry Panel were informed of a number of developments within the Council that may help promote greater ownership of the principles of accessibility.

Diversity and Inclusion Pledge and Diversity & Inclusion Lead

227. At the Council meeting in November 2021 the Council adopted a Diversity and Inclusion Pledge. The pledge commits the Council as

¹⁹ [Access Southampton – Spectrum CIL](#), 2020, p8

a colleague, an employer and partner to exceed our responsibilities under the legislation and to ensure we support all those that work for and with the Council. This is in keeping with the goal to be the most diverse and inclusive employer that the Council can be.

228. To support the delivery of the pledge, and associated action plan, the Council has appointed a temporary Diversity and Inclusion Lead. This appointment, and the pledge, whilst internally focused, demonstrate the Council is recognising the importance of inclusion and equality.

Diversity and Inclusion Training

229. The Council's Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan includes diversity and inclusion training. Sessions started on 5th April 2022 and there will be two sessions a month.

230. The action plan also proposes an update to the Diversity and Inclusion e-learning package to make it more relevant and appropriate, and to make it mandatory for all employees, agency workers and councillors. As well as face to face training on diversity and inclusion topics for new starters and refreshers for existing staff.

231. To support the training and to increase ownership the Council is looking to identify Executive Management Team and Councillor Diversity and Inclusion Champions.

Ownership, commitment, and inclusion of disabled people – What cities are getting this right?

232. Good practice from the following cities was presented to the Panel.

Derby

233. At Derby City Council the Chief Executive has overall leadership of Equality and Diversity along with the Senior Leadership Team. The Council work to an Equality, Dignity and Respect Policy and have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan to make it real.

234. From the early 90's Derby City Council have adopted the social model of disability rather than the medical model. This means that right from the start they are looking at removing barriers for disabled people and promoting inclusion.

235. Derby follows the mantra of 'nothing about us without us' and involve their Equality Hubs, Forums and employee networks right from the start of projects and in EIAs.

236. Derby are proactive in using the Public Sector Equality Duty to promote equality and remove discrimination. The Lead on Equality and Diversity acts as a facilitator, champion and enabler to help deliver this and receives support from managers and politicians.

237. To eliminate barriers for disabled people during Covid the Council:

- wrote to shops to give them tips on how not to discriminate against disabled people when they put in Covid restrictions
- challenged high street businesses about their mask policies.

238. The lead officer is proactive in ensuring public spaces are accessible and is consulted on urban design proposals and on requests for pavement licenses to ensure that they do not limit accessibility.

239. Derby work with partners to encourage them to promote accessibility. Through the lead officer the Derby Centre changed their brand new parking machine when disabled people told them it was too high. Derby also work closely with their BID, and, as an example of this they did a walk around with visually impaired people who advised on where to put planters around the city.



Rams all over the city - but the Council checked with visually impaired people first.

240. To ensure staff are aware of the Council's policies and approaches the Lead on Equality and Diversity does face to face training on equality and diversity with Derby City Council employees, on-line training is provided and the lead officer promotes awareness at various team meetings.

Liverpool

241. Liverpool has had a strong commitment to accessibility for a long time. Liverpool City Council has an Accessible and Inclusive City Cabinet Member to ensure that these issues are mainstreamed across the Council.

242. Liverpool's City Plan has an aim that - 'All residents live in safe, inclusive and welcoming neighbourhoods', a priority for this is to - 'Create and maintain safe and accessible public places, local facilities and green infrastructure, in partnership with our communities'.

243. As identified previously, these aims have been cascaded into the Council's planning policies where all new developments are required to meet the highest accessibility standards and the Accessible Housing Policy is the most ambitious in the UK for accessibility.

Recommendations to improve the ownership, commitment, and involvement of disabled in Southampton?

244. In the opening presentation of the inquiry, the Council's Executive Director for Wellbeing (Health & Adults) stated that:

'Everyone in the Council has a responsibility for accessibility at some level. Work needs to be done to create a culture of accessibility and inclusivity.'

245. Cities such as Derby demonstrate what can be achieved when key ingredients are in place to create an inclusive culture that values accessibility.

246. The Council is taking steps to become more inclusive and that is to be welcomed. The creation of a Southampton Disability Access Forum has been proposed to help improve the involvement of disabled people. To improve the ownership and culture of accessibility the following actions are recommended:

- i. Include a commitment to accessible services and facilities in the next iteration of the Council Plan and adopt, for the city, the simple but strong statement that Southampton aims to be the UK's most accessible city by 2040.
- ii. Update the Council's Equality Policy and re-confirm the commitment to the social model of disability.
- iii. Ensure that disability equality training is incorporated within the Council's diversity and inclusion training.
- iv. Appoint a permanent Diversity and Inclusion Lead who has an internal and external focus, enabling them to be proactive and to advocate for equality and diversity in Southampton and raise awareness of accessibility obligations under the Equality Act.
- v. To promote good practice and to raise awareness of accessibility issues across the city, work with Go! Southampton and Spectrum CIL to establish an annual Accessible Southampton Awards.

Conclusion and recommendations

247. A summary of the key evidence presented at each of the inquiry meetings is attached as Appendix 3. All the reports, presentations and minutes from the inquiry meetings can be found here:

[Browse meetings - Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Accessible Southampton | Southampton City Council](#)

Conclusions

248. Accessibility is key to inclusive cities. By tackling barriers and building inclusive cities it can enable disabled people, and those with access issues, to access services and contribute fully to public life.

249. Whilst recognising that Southampton is more accessible than many cities, and that improvements have been made, evidence presented to the Panel has proved that Southampton is not a city where all people can live in it and use all things and services without problems.

250. Cities such as Chester, Liverpool and Derby have shown what can be achieved when a city prioritises accessibility and develops a culture that helps to facilitate this. Southampton has the opportunity to learn from the good practice identified and use this to inform and guide plans for improving accessibility in Southampton.

251. To make citywide changes to accessibility requires a culture of continuous improvement, leadership and continual engagement with disabled people. It is critical to understand and listen to the needs of our community, to reflect on their perceptions of accessibility and to co-create solutions that bring meaningful changes.

252. A number of timely developments mean that this is an opportune moment to make the leap forward this city requires to become more accessible. The most significant of these being the refresh of the Local Plan and the opportunity it presents to commit to making accessibility and inclusion central to future development in Southampton.

253. Improving accessibility helps all residents and visitors, not just older and disabled people, and can deliver significant environmental, economic and social benefits.

254. GO! Southampton have recently outlined their ambition for Southampton to be an inclusive city that is accessible and welcoming to all. As a City Council we have a moral, financial and legal obligation to the approximately 37,500 disabled people in Southampton to work with them, and others, to make this ambition a reality.

Recommendations

255. In this report recommendations have been identified against each of the EU Access City Award key areas of accessibility. In summary, reflecting the key findings and conclusions the following actions are recommended to improve accessibility in Southampton:

256. **To improve the accessibility of Southampton's built environment:**

1. Enshrine the principles of accessibility and inclusion within the Southampton City Vision Local Plan - The Local Plan presents an opportunity for the city to enshrine within its development principles an overarching commitment to make accessibility and inclusion central to future development. Development standards should include -
 - Requiring all new development to meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion.
 - Requiring all new housing to be at least accessible or adaptable housing, with a minimum of 10% wheelchair accessible.
2. Whilst the new Southampton City Vision Local Plan is being developed embed an accessibility checklist within existing planning policy.
3. Update the Streetscene Toolkit to reflect available best practice with regards to accessibility of the public realm.
4. Establish a Southampton Disability Access Forum – Following the approach employed in [Chester](#), the Council should work with Go! Southampton, transport partners and local disability organisations to set-up and facilitate a cross-sector access forum. The forum, building on an existing Spectrum CIL led forum, would play a key role in designing and planning future developments as well as monitoring access across the city.
5. Employ an Access Officer (potential for this post to work across Hampshire authorities) – This post would work across the Council and its private sector partners on all aspects of access improvement and would be, alongside the Access Forum, a focus for all built environment access related complaints received by the Council.
6. Changing Places toilets – Building Regulations have been updated requiring Changing Places toilets to be a condition of new developments that meet certain criteria. To support publicly

accessible facilities the Council should apply for funding if the Government announces a new round of grants to develop the provision of Changing Places.

7. Work in partnership with Go! Southampton to deliver their ambition for Southampton to be an accessible and inclusive city.

257. To improve the accessibility of Southampton's public transport and related infrastructure:

8. Utilising best practice guidance, and the proposed Southampton Disability Access Forum, ensure that good access is built in at the design phase of transport infrastructure schemes, including parking.
9. Analyse the findings from the taxi unmet needs survey and explore opportunities to move to 100% wheelchair accessible hackney carriages and to increase the number of wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles in Southampton.
10. With disabled people, review signage in Southampton, including the Legible Cities signage, to make it more accessible to disabled people.
11. Explore opportunities to establish ShopMobility schemes in Southampton's district centres.
12. Recognise the importance to disabled people of the disabled parking spaces in the Civic Centre Car Park when planning events in Southampton City Centre.

258. To improve the accessibility of Southampton's information and communication:

13. Adopt an accessible information standard. To support this approach Spectrum CIL has identified information standards that reflect best practice.
14. Incorporate, within the customer service training that is proposed for council staff via the Customer Experience Programme, an element on the 'language of disability'. This will help ensure that Council officers use appropriate language when communicating with disabled people. Once again, to support this, guidelines have been developed by Spectrum CIL.
15. Develop a checklist to ensure that meetings for the general public are accessible.
16. Adopt the standards underpinning the Community Access Symbol to make Southampton more accessible, and improve the

lives of people with communication difficulties, and seek to encourage citywide take up and accreditation of the initiative.

17. Work with Go! Southampton and Spectrum CIL on proposals to produce access guides on a city-wide scale for Southampton, mirroring the approach followed in Sheffield. This will help to improve choice, control, independence and inclusivity.

259. To improve the accessibility of Southampton's public facilities and services:

18. Engage disabled people, potentially through the proposed Southampton Disability Access Forum, in the development of Equality Impact Assessments when it is expected that a new policy, development or decision will have an impact on disabled people.
19. Through the proposed access guides, undertake access audits of the City Council's public buildings and take recommended action to improve the accessibility of the buildings where practical and reasonable. All new public facilities should be fully accessible.

260. To improve the ownership and culture of accessibility:

20. Include a commitment to accessible services and facilities in the next iteration of the Council Plan and adopt, for the city, the simple but strong statement that Southampton aims to be the UK's most accessible city by 2040.
21. Update the Council's Equality Policy and re-confirm the commitment to the social model of disability.
22. Ensure that disability equality training is incorporated within the Council's diversity and inclusion training.
23. Appoint a permanent Diversity and Inclusion Lead who has an internal and external focus, enabling them to be proactive and to advocate for equality and diversity in Southampton and raise awareness of accessibility obligations under the Equality Act.
24. To promote good practice and to raise awareness of accessibility issues across the city, work with Go! Southampton and Spectrum CIL to establish an annual Accessible Southampton Awards.

Appendices

Appendix 1 –Inquiry Terms of Reference

Appendix 2 – Inquiry Plan

Appendix 3 – Summary of Key Evidence

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

Accessible Southampton Scrutiny Inquiry

1. Scrutiny Panel membership:

Councillor Vaughan
Councillor Coombs
Councillor Guest
Councillor Rayment
Councillor Streets

2. Purpose:

To identify whether the physical infrastructure of the city creates barriers for disabled people to access all that Southampton has to offer, and, if so, to determine what we can do as a city to address this.

2. Background:

- In the UK 14.1 million people are living with a disability, that is over 1 in 5 of the population. It is a number that has continued to rise as people are living longer and treatments and technology in healthcare improve.²⁰
- If national data is extrapolated to reflect the city's population, over 50,000 residents of Southampton are living with a disability.
- The Government has recently published a National Disability Strategy. The vision outlined within the strategy is to transform the everyday lives of disabled people. The Foreword from the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and Minister for Disabled People states that:
'Whoever you are, wherever you live, whatever your background, whether or not you have a disability – either visible or hidden – everyone should be able to participate fully, safely and free from prejudice in everyday life, enjoying all the freedoms and opportunities that entails.'
- In recognition that everybody should be able to participate fully in everyday life, the European Union has been running an Access City Award since 2010. The scheme recognises that disabled

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020>

people and older people may not be able to take a full and active part in the community and will be left out if cities are not accessible.

- The Access City Award scheme identifies an accessible city to be one where all people can live in it and use all things and services without problems. The criteria used for the EU Access City Awards are as follows:
 - a. Accessibility to the built environment and public spaces
 - b. Accessibility to transportation and related infrastructures
 - c. Accessibility to information and communication, including information and communication technologies
 - d. Accessibility to public facilities and services.²¹
- Across the UK and Europe there are examples of local approaches that are improving the accessibility of cities and transforming the lives of residents.

3. Objectives:

- a. To identify whether the physical infrastructure of the city creates barriers for disabled people to access all Southampton has to offer.
- b. To identify good practice being employed to improve the accessibility of towns and cities elsewhere.
- c. To identify what initiatives and approaches could work well in Southampton to improve the accessibility of the city.

4. Methodology:

- a. Seek the views of disabled people and stakeholders
- b. Undertake desktop research
- c. Identify best practice

5. Proposed Timetable:

Six meetings between October 2021 and April 2022.

6. Draft Inquiry Plan (subject to the availability of speakers)

Meeting 1: 7 October 2021

²¹ <https://op.europa.eu/s/pDUr>

- Introduction, context and background
 - The key features of an accessible city
 - An overview of accessibility challenges experienced by disabled people in Southampton as a result of the physical infrastructure of the city

To be invited:

- Anna Nelson, Chief Executive, AccessAble
- Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living
- Guy Van-Dichele, Executive Director Wellbeing (Adults & Health), SCC

Meeting 2: 18 November 2021

- Accessibility to the built environment and public spaces

(EU Access City Award Criteria - City centre design, streets and pavements, parks, squares, monuments and open spaces, work environments, markets, festivals and other outdoor events.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- Disabled people

Meeting 3: 2 December 2021

- Accessibility to transportation and related infrastructures

(EU Access City Award criteria - measures related to the car parks, airports, railway stations and bus stations, taxis, trains, buses and trams, proximity, interconnectivity of public transport and journey information availability.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- Disabled people

Meeting 4: 20 January 2022

- Accessibility to information and communication, including information and communication technologies

(EU Access City Award criteria - measures related to access to the city authorities' official information. For instance: accessibility of promotional multimedia information of the municipality, advice and citizen feedback procedures on the accessibility of the website, online information provision in arts, culture, entertainment, sport facilities, signage and guidance in public places, outdoor or indoor, tourist/visitor information, accessibility of the public information kiosks, provision of assistive technology and inclusive ICT resources for the whole community in public libraries and online centres.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- Disabled people
- James Marshall – Customer Access Strategy

Meeting 5: 24 February 2022

- Accessibility to public facilities and services

(EU Access City Award criteria - How accessibility is considered and integrated in the public services provided by your city - eg services provided in multimodal way and by different channels.)

To be invited:

- To be confirmed
- Disabled people

Meeting 6: 21 April 2022

To approve the final report of the inquiry and recommendations

Appendix 2 - Inquiry Plan

DATE	MEETING THEME	EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY
07/10/21	Agree Terms of Reference and introduction to the inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guy Van Dichele, Executive Director of Wellbeing (Health & Adults), SCC • Anna Nelson, Chief Executive, AccessAble • David Livermore, Director of Business Development, AccessAble • Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living
18/11/21	Accessibility to the built environment and public spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living • Jemma Brown • Mark Pirnie, Scrutiny Manager, SCC • Rebecca Handley, Deputy Executive Director and Operations Director at Go! Southampton • Amber Trueman, Strategic Planning Manager, SCC • Stephen Harrison, Service Manager, Development, SCC • Wade Holmes, Transport Delivery Team Leader, SCC • Cheshire West and Chester Council
02/12/21	Accessibility to public transport and related infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living • Graham Garnett, Inclusive Design Officer, Liverpool City Council & former Senior Access Officer at Cheshire West & Chester Council • Emma Hurst, Project Co-ordinator, Rose Road Association • Pete Boustred, Divisional Head of Green City and Infrastructure, SCC • Wade Holmes, Transport Delivery Team Leader SCC

DATE	MEETING THEME	EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Bates, Licensing Manager, Southampton and Eastleigh Licensing Partnership • Red Funnel; First Hampshire, Dorset and Berkshire; Go South Coast; Taxi operators; Southampton Airport
20/01/22	Accessibility to information & communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living • Rosie Dowty, Lead Speech & Language Therapist, Southampton Community Learning Disability Service, Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust • Kate Dench, Learning Disability Joint Commissioning Manager at the Integrated Commissioning Unit • James Marshall, Head of Customer and Communications, SCC • SO:Let's Connect • Southampton Library Service
24/02/22	Accessibility to public facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living • Ann Webster, Lead on Equality and Diversity at Derby City Council • Mark Pirnie, Scrutiny Manager, SCC • Rebecca Handley, Deputy Executive Director/Operations Director at GO! Southampton Business Improvement District • Sheffield City Council
28/04/21	Agree final report	

The minutes for each meeting, the evidence submitted to the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel and presentations delivered at each meeting is available at:

- [Browse meetings - Scrutiny Inquiry Panel - Accessible Southampton | Southampton City Council](#)

Appendix 3 – Summary of key evidence

Key evidence provided to the Inquiry Panel at each meeting can be accessed via the following link:

[Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – Accessible Southampton](#)

Accessible Southampton Inquiry - Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusions

Accessibility is key to inclusive cities. By tackling barriers and building inclusive cities it can enable disabled people, and those with access issues, to access services and contribute fully to public life.

Whilst recognising that Southampton is more accessible than many cities, and that improvements have been made, evidence presented to the Panel has proved that Southampton is not a city where all people can live in it and use all things and services without problems.

Cities such as Chester, Liverpool and Derby have shown what can be achieved when a city prioritises accessibility and develops a culture that helps to facilitate this. Southampton has the opportunity to learn from the good practice identified and use this to inform and guide plans for improving accessibility in Southampton.

To make citywide changes to accessibility requires a culture of continuous improvement, leadership and continual engagement with disabled people. It is critical to understand and listen to the needs of our community, to reflect on their perceptions of accessibility and to co-create solutions that bring meaningful changes.

A number of timely developments mean that this is an opportune moment to make the leap forward this city requires to become more accessible. The most significant of these being the refresh of the Local Plan and the opportunity it presents to commit to making accessibility and inclusion central to future development in Southampton.

Improving accessibility helps all residents and visitors, not just older and disabled people, and can deliver significant environmental, economic and social benefits.

GO! Southampton have recently outlined their ambition for Southampton to be an inclusive city that is accessible and welcoming to all. As a City Council we have a moral, financial and legal obligation to the approximately 37,500 disabled people in Southampton to work with them, and others, to make this ambition a reality.

Recommendations

In this report recommendations have been identified against each of the EU Access City Award key areas of accessibility. In summary, reflecting the key findings and conclusions the following actions are recommended to improve accessibility in Southampton.

To improve the accessibility of Southampton's built environment:

1. Enshrine the principles of accessibility and inclusion within the Southampton City Vision Local Plan - The Local Plan presents an opportunity for the city to enshrine within its development principles an overarching commitment to make accessibility and inclusion central to future development. Development standards should include -
 - Requiring all new development to meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion.
 - Requiring all new housing to be at least accessible or adaptable housing, with a minimum of 10% wheelchair accessible.
2. Whilst the new Southampton City Vision Local Plan is being developed embed an accessibility checklist within existing planning policy.
3. Update the Streetscene Toolkit to reflect available best practice with regards to accessibility of the public realm.
4. Establish a Southampton Disability Access Forum – Following the approach employed in [Chester](#), the Council should work with Go! Southampton, transport partners and local disability organisations to set-up and facilitate a cross-sector access forum. The forum, building on an existing Spectrum CIL led forum, would play a key role in designing and planning future developments as well as monitoring access across the city.
5. Employ an Access Officer (potential for this post to work across Hampshire authorities) – This post would work across the Council and its private sector partners on all aspects of access improvement and would be, alongside the Access Forum, a focus for all built environment access related complaints received by the Council.
6. Changing Places toilets – Building Regulations have been updated requiring Changing Places toilets to be a condition of new developments that meet certain criteria. To support publicly accessible facilities the Council should apply for funding if the Government announces a new round of grants to develop the provision of Changing Places.
7. Work in partnership with Go! Southampton to deliver their ambition for Southampton to be an accessible and inclusive city.

To improve the accessibility of Southampton's public transport and related infrastructure:

8. Utilising best practice guidance, and the proposed Southampton Disability Access Forum, ensure that good access is built in at the design phase of transport infrastructure schemes, including parking.

9. Analyse the findings from the taxi unmet needs survey and explore opportunities to move to 100% wheelchair accessible hackney carriages and to increase the number of wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles in Southampton.
10. With disabled people, review signage in Southampton, including the Legible Cities signage, to make it more accessible to disabled people.
11. Explore opportunities to establish ShopMobility schemes in Southampton's district centres.
12. Recognise the importance to disabled people of the disabled parking spaces in the Civic Centre Car Park when planning events in Southampton City Centre.

To improve the accessibility of Southampton's information and communication:

13. Adopt an accessible information standard. To support this approach Spectrum CIL has identified information standards that reflect best practice.
14. Incorporate, within the customer service training that is proposed for council staff via the Customer Experience Programme, an element on the 'language of disability'. This will help ensure that Council officers use appropriate language when communicating with disabled people. Once again, to support this, guidelines have been developed by Spectrum CIL.
15. Develop a checklist to ensure that meetings for the general public are accessible.
16. Adopt the standards underpinning the Community Access Symbol to make Southampton more accessible, and improve the lives of people with communication difficulties, and seek to encourage citywide take up and accreditation of the initiative.
17. Work with Go! Southampton and Spectrum CIL on proposals to produce access guides on a city-wide scale for Southampton, mirroring the approach followed in Sheffield. This will help to improve choice, control, independence and inclusivity.

To improve the accessibility of Southampton's public facilities and services:

18. Engage disabled people, potentially through the proposed Southampton Disability Access Forum, in the development of Equality Impact Assessments when it is expected that a new policy, development or decision will have an impact on disabled people.

19. Through the proposed access guides, undertake access audits of the City Council's public buildings and take recommended action to improve the accessibility of the buildings where practical and reasonable. All new public facilities should be fully accessible.

To improve the ownership and culture of accessibility:

20. Include a commitment to accessible services and facilities in the next iteration of the Council Plan and adopt, for the city, the simple but strong statement that Southampton aims to be the UK's most accessible city by 2040.

21. Update the Council's Equality Policy and re-confirm the commitment to the social model of disability.

22. Ensure that disability equality training is incorporated within the Council's diversity and inclusion training.

23. Appoint a permanent Diversity and Inclusion Lead who has an internal and external focus, enabling them to be proactive and to advocate for equality and diversity in Southampton and raise awareness of accessibility obligations under the Equality Act.

24. To promote good practice and to raise awareness of accessibility issues across the city, work with Go! Southampton and Spectrum CIL to establish an annual Accessible Southampton Awards.

Agenda Item 9

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	BUDGET MATTERS – JUNE 2022		
DATE OF DECISION:	14 JUNE 2022		
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND CHANGE		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title:	Executive Director for Finance, Commercialisation & S151 Officer	
	Name:	John Harrison	Tel: 023 8083 4897
	E-mail:	John.Harrison@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title:	Head of Financial Planning & Management	
	Name:	Steve Harrison	Tel: 0739 2864525
	E-mail:	Steve.Harrison@southampton.gov.uk	

BRIEF SUMMARY

This paper identifies that there are options on how the council procures its fleet vehicles, basically through direct purchase or via leasing.

These options are kept under review to ensure whatever option is being used provides the Council with the optimum value for money. This report seeks permission for delegation to take place to decide the best way forward for the council when taking decisions on acquisitions, using a business case to inform which option represents the best value for money.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	Cabinet
i)	Delegates authority to the Executive Director – Finance and Commercialism, to decide on whether purchase or lease arrangements offer the best value for money for procuring council fleet vehicles. This delegation will be exercised following consideration of a business case and after consultation with the Executive Director of Communities, Culture and Homes and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	To ensure the Council obtains the best value for money when acquiring vehicles or any other asset, based on reviewing the options of lease or direct purchase.
----	--

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2.	Not considering the option of leasing vehicles would rule out a route that may provide enhanced value for money and greater operational efficiency.
----	---

DETAIL (including consultation carried out)

3.	The council has within its capital programme expenditure to purchase vehicles for the council to use and operate to deliver a variety of services. Over the next 3 years, around £7.6M has been included and approved (see table below).
----	--

4.	A number of older vehicles within the council fleet have experienced high maintenance costs and reliability issues, being retained for significant periods of time. Hence a replacement programme is essential to both ensure service continuity and reduce overhead costs such as maintenance.
5.	In recent years the council, when it has replaced existing fleet vehicles has operated under an approach of outright purchase of the vehicles. The council finances this via borrowing, as the vehicles are an asset and therefore a capital programme item.
6.	An alternative would be to acquire the vehicles via a finance lease. Currently a business case assessment is being developed to assess if this would provide improved value for money and/or operational advantages across the fleet. For example, lease vehicles tend to run under a 5 year lease deal before replacement and this regular 'turnover' may add to the flexibility and adaptability of the fleet and (for example) ensure a quicker response to electrification of vehicles.
7.	It is proposed that a business case is worked up, comparing acquisition through outright purchase (the current method) with leasing to establish which offers the best value for money to the council. This case will be assessed by the Executive Director – Finance and Commercialism, who has a responsibility to ensure good value for money is obtained, following consultation with the Executive Director of Communities, Culture and Homes and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change. Fleet acquisitions will be kept under regular review via this mechanism.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

8.	The existing programme of vehicle replacement over the three years to 2024/25 is given in the table below, as detailed and agreed in the capital programme agreed at the February 2022 Council meeting.										
9.	<p>TABLE: Existing Capital Programme</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2022/23 Budget £M</th> <th>2023/24 Budget £M</th> <th>2024/25 Budget £M</th> <th>Total Budget £M</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Purchase of vehicles</td> <td>3.61</td> <td>2.00</td> <td>2.00</td> <td>7.61</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2022/23 Budget £M	2023/24 Budget £M	2024/25 Budget £M	Total Budget £M	Purchase of vehicles	3.61	2.00	2.00	7.61
	2022/23 Budget £M	2023/24 Budget £M	2024/25 Budget £M	Total Budget £M							
Purchase of vehicles	3.61	2.00	2.00	7.61							
10	The programme is described as purchase, but direct purchase is not necessary for Council Fleet vehicles. Instead acquiring the vehicles currently planned for, within this agreed amount, can be assessed through a financing lease as an alternative. Going forward the item in the capital programme will be described as fleet vehicle replacement to reflect the different options available.										
11.	The revenue implications, based on the current approach of outright acquisition and the associated capital financing, are given below.										
12	<p>TABLE: Vehicles Acquisition Revenue impact - Current assumed costs within Capital Financing Budget</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2022/23 Budget £M</th> <th>2023/24 Budget £M</th> <th>2024/25 Budget £M</th> <th>2024/25 Budget £M</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Financing Costs</td> <td>0.26</td> <td>0.64</td> <td>0.91</td> <td>1.05</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2022/23 Budget £M	2023/24 Budget £M	2024/25 Budget £M	2024/25 Budget £M	Financing Costs	0.26	0.64	0.91	1.05
	2022/23 Budget £M	2023/24 Budget £M	2024/25 Budget £M	2024/25 Budget £M							
Financing Costs	0.26	0.64	0.91	1.05							

Property/Other

13.	The implications of the approach are around if fleet vehicles will be acquired via the
-----	--

	current outright purchase or via leasing.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
14.	Financial reporting is consistent with the Section 151 Officer's duty to ensure good financial administration within the Council and value for money.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
15.	n/a
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
16.	The agreed vehicle acquisition programme is already seeking to address risks around unreliable and out of date fleet vehicles by ensuring resource exist for fleet replacement. Operating under leasing arrangement is not expected to add any further risks.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
17.	This fits into the aims as outlined in the corporate plan and specifically the agreed aim of 'a council that work for you and with you' by optimising value for money when acquiring assets.

KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
------------------------------------	-----

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	N/A
----	-----

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
2.	

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out?	No
--	----

Privacy Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to be carried out?	No
--	----

Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be
------------------------------	--

	Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
--	-------------------------------------

1.	The Revenue Budget 2022/23, Medium Term Financial Forecast 2022/23 to 2025/26 and Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2026/27 (Council 23 February 2022)	
2.		

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
SUBJECT:	Nitrogen Mitigation Position Statement
DATE OF DECISION:	14 June 2022
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR BOGLE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director Growth	
	Name:	Adam Wilkinson	Tel: 023 82545853
	E-mail	adam.wilkinson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Strategic Planning Manager	
	Name:	Graham Tuck	Tel: 023 8083 4602
	E-mail	graham.tuck@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not Applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

In-order to comply with the Habitat Regulations and to ensure no adverse effect on the internationally protected Solent, the Council needs to ensure that new residential and hotel development achieves 'nitrogen neutrality'. This will enable the Council as local planning authority to continue to support the growth of the city and a greener city, in accordance with the Council's Corporate Plan. The two main approaches to achieving nitrogen neutrality are for developers to purchase nitrogen credits from landowners who are implementing measures to reduce nitrogen discharges on their land or to fund water efficiency measures within the Council's housing stock.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	To note the Nitrogen Mitigation Position Statement for use in the determination of planning applications.
	(ii)	To delegate authority to the Director of Legal & Business Services, in consultation with the Head of Planning and Economic Development, to sign 'section 33' legal agreements with nearby Councils and mitigation providers in-order to implement the Position Statement in accordance with the Habitat Regulations.
	(iii)	To delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Economic Development following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development to make future changes to the specifics of the Position Statement provided this does not affect the overall approach.

	(iv)	To delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Economic Development to make future changes to the technical detail of the approach (e.g. commencement date, data updates, detailed methodology changes, etc) provided that this does not affect the overall approach.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS		
1.	To ensure new development is permitted in accordance with the Habitat Regulations.	
2.	To delegate authority to the appropriate levels to ensure the necessary legal mechanisms are put in place and the specifics / detail of the Position Statement can be updated as required.	
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED		
3.	The alternative is not to put in place a Position Statement. However, the local planning authority must comply with the Habitat Regulations when granting planning permission. Planning permissions issued by the Council could be challenged if no further action is taken.	
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)		
4.	Nitrogen discharges from new development and from agricultural production in South Hampshire are having a likely significant effect on the internationally protected Solent habitat designations. Therefore, in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, mitigation measures need to be put in place to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of these sites.	
5.	It is understood that sensitive farming programmes are being implemented to address discharges from this sector, which account for most of the overall discharges.	
6.	However, given the high nitrogen levels / poor conditions in the Solent, and the 'in combination' effects from all new development, new residential and hotel development must achieve 'nitrogen neutrality' in order to comply with the Habitat Regulations.	
7.	The Position Statement sets out how this can be achieved within Southampton, complementing work undertaken by the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) and its constituent Councils, Defra, Natural England, Southern Water and others. This will also support the review of the Council's 'Green City Charter' and the PfSH 'Greenprint for South Hampshire'.	
8.	The proposed Position Statement has been placed in the members' room and is also available on request from the report author.	

9.	The approach is based on calculating the nitrogen budget for the development and then mitigating the effects of this to achieve nitrogen neutrality. It is based on the latest advice and calculator issued by Natural England (March 2022). The key aspects of Southampton's specific approach as set out in the Position Statement have also been discussed and agreed with Natural England.
10.	<p>The calculator establishes the nitrogen discharges from the development arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste water (based on the number of dwellings / people, water use, and standard of treatment at the waste water treatment works); and • Surface water run-off (based on the type of land use).
11.	Natural England's latest advice continues to use, as a starting point, a 'flat rate' occupancy rate of 2.4 people per dwelling. However, it does now support a 'sliding scale' to reflect variations for smaller / larger dwellings (for planning applications) where there is robust data. The proposed approach for Southampton is to use a 'sliding scale', based on Census data for 1 to 5 bed dwellings. As most development in Southampton is for 1 and 2 bed dwellings which both have an occupancy rate lower than 2.4 people, this will better reflect the lower level of nitrogen discharge and corresponding mitigation required from within the city.
12.	The calculator is based on a precautionary approach, in accordance with case law associated with the Habitat Regulations.
13.	<p>A range of measures can be put in place to achieve nitrogen neutrality. The key measures at present are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-site measures within the development. The effects of these are built into the calculator. Whilst they are often needed to meet other requirements as well, they should also be secured as mitigation. They include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water efficiency measures within the new development. • Land use measures, such as appropriately maintained open space. 2. Off-site measures. These are the measures required to mitigate the remaining nitrogen discharges from the development. They include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to reduce nitrogen discharges from farmland – this approach will be required for most development in the city. Nitrogen credits are secured from landowners who implement measures to reduce nitrogen discharges in the wider River Itchen or Test catchment areas (e.g. by ceasing agricultural production, woodland planting or wetland creation).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofitting water efficiency measures (e.g. within Council properties) – developers can fund additional water efficiency measures in Council properties, and Natural England supports this approach. The Council also has an established on-going programme for its housing stock. The scale of mitigation provided initially would be relatively limited, and so in the first instance, this should be used as mitigation for the Council’s own new development (e.g. the estates regeneration programme). To date Natural England have not supported counting measures which are already taking place under this established programme. However, these are housing programmes so are not already being counted / pursued under the habitat regulations, and only future measures implemented under these programmes would be counted. The Position Statement explains that the potential to count these measures will be considered further.
14.	<p>The Position Statement also references other potential measures which may be used in the future. As the approach evolves the Council will seek, where possible, to increase the use of mitigation measures which provide wider social or environmental benefits, including within the city. There may be other mitigation solutions proposed by developers to achieve nitrogen neutrality outside the scope of the Position Statement and these will be considered on a ‘case by case’ basis. There will also be discussions with Southern Water to explore how waste water treatment processes can provide long-term mitigation.</p>
15.	<p>The measures must deliver the requisite mitigation to achieve nitrogen neutrality for a development, as demonstrated through an ‘appropriate assessment’ of the planning application. They must also be counted solely for that development, implemented prior to occupation, maintained for the duration of the impact of the development (generally taken to be 80 – 125 years), and be enforceable. This will be achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For ‘on site’ measures through planning conditions and/or ‘section 106’ legal agreements; • For farmland measures (e.g. outside of the city) through a ‘section 33’ legal agreement between this Council, the Council within which the land falls and the mitigation provider; and then through a planning condition (or potentially a section 106 legal agreement) on the planning permission for development within the city to ensure the nitrogen credits are purchased by the developer in advance of first occupation; • For the Council’s own programmes (e.g. water efficiency measures) through an audit of the measures implemented for specific developments.
16.	<p>Subject to Cabinet approval, it is intended to seek appropriate mitigation to achieve nitrogen neutrality having regard to the Position Statement as soon as practicable (e.g. once the first ‘section 33’ agreement and supporting</p>

	material is put in place). The Planning pages of the Council's website will be updated to reflect this, and local agents will be informed of the changes.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
17.	There are no direct financial implications on the Council as a result of the Position Statement. The work has been undertaken by existing resources in the Planning team.
18.	Developers will fund the necessary measures to ensure schemes achieve nitrogen neutrality. (The Council could choose to advance purchase credits to sell on to developers and this would be subject to the development of a full business case and separate future decision. It is not a requirement of the recommended approach that the Council does so).
<u>Property/Other</u>	
19.	None – other than that residential or hotel development on Council owned land will be subject to the Position Statement.
20.	The introduction of credits adds a further cost to development within the city, which could affect development viability or the availability of contributions for other measures, but is necessary to meet legislation.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
21.	The Council has a duty as local planning authority and competent authority under the Habitat Regulations to ensure that there is no adverse effect on the integrity of protected sites as a consequence of new development. The Council is empowered to enter into planning and other agreements to facilitate mitigation measures under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1986, section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
22.	None. The position statement has been developed having regard to existing legislation including the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public sector Equality Duty as set out in s.149 of the Act together with all other relevant pervasive legislation.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
23.	The Position Statement ensures the council's decision to grant planning permission for residential and hotel development complies with the Habitat Regulations. It places some additional costs on developers, which is likely to affect to some extent viability or the availability of developer contributions for other measures. Any decision to grant planning permission without properly complying with the Habitat Regulations may be at risk of judicial review.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	

24.	The Position Statement is consistent with the Council's policy framework, including the Council's development plan.
-----	---

KEY DECISION?	Yes
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Nitrogen Mitigation Position Statement

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
----	------

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	Yes
---	------------

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
--	-----------

Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None

(Members Room document)

SOUTHAMPTON NITROGEN MITIGATION POSITION STATEMENT

Summary

In-order to comply with the provisions of the Habitat Regulations to ensure that development does not adversely affect the integrity of a European designation, new development which leads to a net increase in residential or hotel units must be subject to an appropriate assessment to demonstrate how mitigation measures will be implemented to achieve nitrogen neutrality.

The mitigation measures must be implemented and effective at the point of occupation of the development. They must also be legally secured for the duration of the development's effects (based on Natural England's published advice, generally taken to be 80 to 125 years).

The requirement applies to any proposal for:

- Class C use (dwellings, houses in multiple occupation, hotels, residential institutions including student accommodation) and also sui generis houses in multiple occupation.
- Planning applications (full or outline / reserved matters) and prior approvals.
- New development or changes of use.

The requirement for mitigation measures is based on the net increase in the number of dwelling units (or equivalent).

In-order for the council to conduct an appropriate assessment, the applicant must submit a nitrogen budget and provide the necessary information regarding the efficacy of mitigation measures.

Note

This Position Statement is informed by and should be read in conjunction with Natural England's published advice (see below). It is also informed by additional work undertaken by the council. The Statement has been prepared in consultation with Natural England and with the Partnership for South Hampshire. The Statement will be updated if required as Natural England's Advice is updated or as other information becomes available.

(Yellow highlighted text below proposed to be completed under delegated powers)

Introduction

Southampton is a highly sustainable location for appropriate major growth (in accordance with the city's development plan). This maximises the use of sustainable modes of travel (reducing carbon emissions), protects surrounding areas of countryside, and promotes social inclusion and a dynamic city economy. This growth should be delivered whilst protecting the surrounding biodiversity designations. Southampton City Council will continue to work with the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH), the Government, Natural England, the Environment Agency, Southern Water, neighbouring councils and others to ensure this is achieved.

The Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation, the Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site and the Solent and Dorset Coast SPA (the “Solent international designations”) are protected by the Habitats Regulations¹. (The Solent is also protected by the Water Environment Regulations² and by national designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest).

In summary, the Habitat Regulations state that before deciding to grant planning permission for a project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European designation (either alone or in combination with other plans/projects), the council must make an appropriate assessment of the project and ascertain that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European designation having regard to the manner in which it is proposed to be carried out and any conditions to which the permission will be subject.

Case law establishes that this test must be applied using the ‘precautionary principle’, such that there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to the conclusion, including regarding the efficacy of any proposed mitigation measures.

Having carried out an appropriate assessment, the council must consult Natural England as the appropriate nature conservation body and have regard to any representations it makes before reaching a decision. Whilst the council must place considerable weight on the opinion of Natural England, it is entitled to form a different opinion where it has good reason to do so.

Southampton’s adopted development plan includes the amended Core Strategy (2015). In summary, policy CS22 states that the Council will ensure that development does not adversely affect the integrity of international designations, and the necessary mitigation measures are provided.

Natural England’s Advice

Natural England have advised that there are high levels of nutrients in the Solent. These are arising from inputs from agricultural sources, and from the waste water from housing and other developments. These are causing eutrophication, resulting in dense mats of green algae and other effects which are impacting on the Solent’s protected habitats and bird species. Some of the interest features in the Solent designations are in an unfavourable condition due to existing levels of nutrients and are therefore at risk from additional nutrient inputs.

Therefore, Natural England advise that further development is likely to have a significant effect on the Solent international designations. In accordance with the precautionary principle, and in-order to provide the level of certainty required by the Habitat Regulations, relevant new development should achieve nutrient neutrality.

Natural England have published their latest advice on nutrients and a nutrient budget calculator in March 2022. The calculator should be used in association with the council’s occupancy rate calculator (see below). These can be found at this link: [\[Add SCC link, with link to NE guidance\]](#)

The advice sets out the location and type of development affected, the methodology for calculating the nutrient budget, and appropriate mitigation measures. The key points are reflected in this

¹ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

² Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017

position statement. Nitrogen is the principal nutrient from within the city which drives eutrophication, and so the focus is on achieving nitrogen neutrality.

The effect of the Habitat Regulation provisions in respect of nitrates apply to any proposal that will result in a net gain of residential units (this includes dwellings, houses in multiple occupation [small and large], and residential institutions including student accommodation), or a net increase in hotel space. (In other words, the requirement for mitigation measures is based on the net increase in nitrogen discharge from the proposed development). An appropriate assessment will be required for all planning applications (full and outline / reserved matters) and prior approvals, whether for new development or changes of use of existing buildings.

The remainder of this Statement sets out:

- How to calculate the nitrogen budget.
- The mitigation measures that could be used to achieve nitrogen neutrality.
- Implementation mechanisms.

Calculating the Nitrogen Budget

In-order for the Council to conduct an appropriate assessment, the applicant must submit a nitrogen budget and provide the necessary information regarding the efficacy of mitigation measures.

Developers should calculate the nitrogen budget for their proposal. The council's approach is adapted from Natural England's starting point in one respect, to take account of the size of dwellings (see below). Developers should therefore use the council's occupancy rate calculator. This occupancy rate should then be inputted into Natural England's calculator. This includes all the relevant factors, including the application of an overall precautionary buffer of 20%, to calculate the nitrogen budget.

Other relevant developments (e.g. hotels and residential institutions including purpose built student accommodation) should calculate the nitrogen budget based on the same overall approach and using well-evidenced occupancy rates / water use data relevant to the proposal.

A development's nitrogen discharges arise from two sources, both of which are reflected in the calculator:

1. Waste water discharges

The calculator takes into account the projected number of people living in a dwelling (the occupancy rate) and the water use per person (based on water efficiency standards) in-order to calculate total water use. The nitrogen limit at the relevant waste water treatment works is then applied, in-order to calculate the nitrogen discharge.

The starting point for Natural England's advice is to apply a 'flat rate' occupancy rate of 2.4 persons per dwelling based on national data. However, the advice recognises that councils may apply a different occupancy rate based on local data and dwelling types, where there is robust evidence. For the determination of specific planning applications, the council will apply an occupancy rate for specific sizes of dwellings (based on the number of bedrooms), as set out in Table 1. Therefore, developers should use the council's occupancy rate calculator and input the result into Natural England's calculator. 1 and 2 bed dwellings have occupancy rates which are lower than the 'flat rate' used by Natural England, whereas 3 or more bed dwellings have higher occupancy rates. This

provides a more accurate calculation for the specific development proposed. The council's occupancy rate calculator should be used in all cases. The evidence for the council's figures is set out in Appendix 1.

Table 1: Occupancy Rate by Size of Dwelling

Size of Dwelling	Occupancy Rate (Persons per dwelling)
1 bed	1.41
2 bed	2.13
3 bed	2.74
4 bed	3.43
5 bed	4.09
Average of above	2.4

Natural England's calculator then applies the average water use based on the relevant water efficiency standard and adding an additional 10 litres per person per day (as a precautionary approach). The council will condition new dwellings to achieve a water use of 100 litres per person per day, and so the water use figure to apply in the calculator is 110 litres per person per day.

The occupancy rate is then multiplied by the water use per person to calculate the overall household's water use. Based on the council's calculator, which uses more specific occupancy rates, a household's water use (and hence the dwelling's nitrogen budget) is calculated to be lower for 1 and 2 bed dwellings and higher for 3 or more bed dwellings (compared to Natural England's approach).

2. Surface water discharges

This section follows the Natural England calculator, with no variation. The calculator takes into account changes in the areas dedicated to different land uses within the site, as these result in different levels of nitrogen discharge. These include for example 3 types of urban area ('residential'³, 'commercial/industrial' and 'open urban'), as well as green spaces. Residential urban use results in the highest level of discharge, and green spaces the lowest level of discharge. Changes between land uses will affect the net change in nitrogen discharge.

Where the redevelopment of a previously developed urban site involves the provision of a new area of appropriately managed green space of approximately 0.1 hectares⁴ or more within the new development, the net effect will be a reduction in the amount of nitrogen being discharged from the site as surface water run-off.

Green roofs will only potentially count as green space for the purposes of nitrogen reduction where they meet the size criteria above. Wetlands may achieve further reductions in nitrogen discharge. In both cases, appropriate specialists will need to establish a bespoke design and robustly evidenced calculation to achieve and demonstrate the reduction in nitrogen discharge.

³ Residential includes gardens, roadside verges, small areas of green space (less than 0.1 hectares), driveways and roads

⁴ Green spaces of less than 0.1 hectares are calculated within the 'urban residential' category

The green space or wetland needs to be appropriately managed to ensure nitrogen reduction (e.g. no fertiliser, collection of dog waste, etc.), and this needs to be legally secured for the duration of the development.

The provision of open space within a development will also need to accord with the development plan's overall approach, for example regarding the density of development and provision of green infrastructure.

The calculator will identify the total nitrogen budget generated by the proposal, and hence the level of mitigation required to achieve nitrogen neutrality (if the budget shows a net increase in nitrogen discharge).

Waste Water Treatment Work Upgrades

If waste water treatment work upgrades are undertaken to meet higher nitrogen limits, the consequent reduction in nitrogen discharges will be taken into account in stage 1 above. In May 2021, the Environment Agency confirmed that it will be undertaking a review of waste water treatment work consents where they do not currently have nitrogen permits, including the Portswood treatment works within Southampton.

Mitigation Measures

There are various options for mitigating nitrogen discharges from new development, and in each case the efficacy of the mitigation and its long-term provision will need to be evidenced and secured before planning permission can be granted. Bespoke site-specific mitigation proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The mitigation measures must be implemented and effective at the point of occupation of the development. They must also be secured for the duration of the development's effects (based on Natural England's published advice, generally taken to be 80 to 125 years).

Given the nature of the mitigation measures, a range are likely to be implemented outside of the city. However, where possible, the Council will encourage the implementation of measures within the city and/or measures which contribute to a range of benefits for the city's residents and environment (for example, water efficiency, biodiversity net gain, suitable alternative natural greenspace, and carbon reductions).

Nitrogen Credits

Developers can acquire sufficient nitrogen credits to mitigate their development. These credits can be purchased from landowners who have implemented measures which reduce the nitrogen discharge from their land. This will create a net neutral effect on the Solent international designations. These measures can include for example ceasing agricultural production on the land, or woodland planting / wetland creation. (They can also create wider environmental benefits, for example for biodiversity net gain, carbon reduction or the provision of suitable alternative natural greenspace).

To effectively mitigate the effects of development in Southampton, nitrogen credits must be purchased from schemes which:

- Provide mitigation within the River Test, River Itchen or Bartley Water catchments;
- Will provide the necessary level of mitigation (following consideration of Natural England's advice); and
- Provide the legal certainty that the mitigation will remain in place for the duration of the development's effects (generally 80 to 125 years) (see Implementation section below).

A list of currently available mitigation schemes is available on the PfSH website. [Potential mitigation schemes available to developers - Partnership for South Hampshire \(push.gov.uk\)](#) It is also anticipated that Defra will introduce a pilot trading scheme for nitrogen credits in 2022.

Off Site Water Efficiency Measures

The council can implement a number of measures to achieve nitrogen reduction itself. At present the council as a housing provider has an existing programme of retrofitting water efficiency measures in its own housing stock, for example through repairs and improvements. Although these measures are being carried out anyway regardless of the resulting nitrogen reduction, they are not being carried out in order to meet other Habitat Regulations obligations. Therefore, the council is considering whether future measures implemented under this existing programme can be taken into account as nitrogen mitigation in accordance with the approach set out below.

If they can be counted, the council will count them towards mitigating its own development schemes in the first instance. Water efficiency measures which are implemented from **XXXX** could be counted (i.e. the date that implementation of this Position Statement commenced). This could build up a bank of nitrogen credits to be counted towards and used as mitigation for the council's future development schemes.

The council is also considering the expansion of its water efficiency programme (i.e. an additional programme) to be funded by developer contributions, which would provide the mitigation for those specified wider developments.

The Environment Agency consents for the Millbrook and Woolston waste water treatment works, which serve the majority of the city, have limits on the amount of nitrogen per water volume discharged (mg per litre). Therefore, where water efficiency measures are retrofitted to existing dwellings which are served by either of these waste water treatment works, the reduction in waste water volume leads to a reduction in nitrogen discharged, and the measures can count as mitigation.

The Portswood waste water treatment works does not currently have a nitrogen limit and so water efficiency measures retrofitted to dwellings served by this works will not count as mitigation.

Based on the Council's current water efficiency programme, the retrofitting of showers and dual flush WCs in 2.1 existing applicable dwellings generates a sufficient reduction in waste water nitrogen discharges to support 1 new dwelling. This calculation is set out in Appendix 2. A future bank of nitrate credits will need to be calculated based on the specifics of future water efficiency programmes.

Retrofits in Council housing stock can be counted as mitigation as the Council can ensure the measures are retained in place.

Where housing associations are implementing the same measures, these may also be counted towards their own development schemes provided an appropriate legal agreement is in place to ensure that these measures are secured and retained in accordance with the principles in this position statement.

Other

The council may investigate the use of other potential mitigation measures within the city in due course. These may include for example measures to intercept nitrogen from run off / watercourses, the provision of wetlands, woodland, oyster beds, management of open space and public realm, water recycling, working with the Port, or on site waste water treatment works for very large developments (if these can achieve better nitrogen limits).

Implementation

[To be added under delegated powers: the start date for the Position Statement, which will apply to applications after then]

The effect of the Habitat Regulation provisions in respect of nitrogen apply to any proposal that will result in a net gain of residential units (this includes dwellings, houses in multiple occupation [small and large], and residential institutions including student accommodation), or a net increase in hotel space. An appropriate assessment will be required for all planning applications (full, outline and reserved matters) and prior approvals, whether for new development or changes of use of existing buildings.

In-order to meet the requisite certainty required by the Habitat Regulations, the appropriate assessment must conclude that the mitigation measures will achieve nitrogen neutrality (taking account of Natural England's advice and this position statement), and any required mitigation measures must be:

- Implemented and effective prior to the first occupation of the development;
- Counted solely to that specific development (i.e. not double counted); and
- Secured and monitored over the duration of the development's impact (generally taken to be 80 to 125 years).

In-order to achieve this certainty, the following approaches will be taken.

Where the mitigation measures are 'on site', or the measures are integral to the development scheme proposed, and the nitrogen budget has been calculated on this basis, planning conditions will be used to secure these measures. This will include:

- Water efficiency measures (The council will apply conditions to ensure water efficiency of 100 litres per person per day, consistent with Southern Water's 'Target 100' initiative. Adding the 10 litres per person per day precautionary buffer advised by Natural England means the calculator will be based on 110 litres per person per day); and
- The quantity, type and management of open space provision.

Where the mitigation measures are secured from a 3rd party, for example the purchase of nitrogen credits from landowners, an appropriate legal agreement will be used, in conjunction with planning conditions where required. This will ensure the correct accounting of nitrogen credits to that scheme, the appropriate management and monitoring of the land for the requisite period, and the ability to enforce these provisions, to ensure they are secured over the duration of the development's impact. There is no farmland in the city and therefore another local planning authority will also be party to the legal agreement, in addition to Southampton City Council, the developer and the mitigation land provider. Legal agreements can be secured pursuant to section 33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1986 or section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 depending on the nature of the mitigation and the location of any mitigation land.

Grampian conditions will be used where needed to ensure measures are secured prior to the first occupation of the development. Prior to the grant of planning permission, sufficient information will be required to ensure the measures will provide the necessary mitigation. At the discharge of the condition information will be required to confirm the implementation of the necessary mitigation. For larger development a phased approach to implementation can be taken. The measures required for each phase must be implemented prior to first occupation of that phase of development.

Where the measures are secured from the council rather than a 3rd party, for example by the retrofitting of water efficiency measures in the council's housing stock, appropriate evidence will be required. The council will set up a reporting system to ensure that sufficient applicable water efficiency measures have already been retrofitted prior to first occupation, are available (i.e. have not already been credited to another development), and are secured and monitored over the duration of the development's impact. This reporting system will inform the appropriate assessment for individual developments. The same approach will be taken for other public sector bodies such as housing associations (for which a legal agreement will also be required).

Appendix 1: Occupancy Rates

In-order to calculate the nitrogen discharges from waste water, the average water use per dwelling must be calculated. This depends on the number of people living in a dwelling (the occupancy rate).

Natural England's Advice recommends as a starting point using the national average occupancy rate established by data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) of 2.4 people per dwelling.

However, Natural England's Advice confirms that Councils can use bespoke calculations for the occupancy rate, provided there is evidence to provide sufficient certainty.

The council's occupancy rate calculator employs a bespoke calculation based on the size of dwellings, which will better reflect the nature of a specific development. It is based on ONS Census data of dwelling occupancy rates in Southampton. (The 2011 Census is used and adjusted to the latest 2020 data. The 2021 Census results will shortly be available, and the calculation updated).

The council's calculation is set out as follows.

Table 1 sets out the 2011 Census data on household size by size of dwelling.

Table 1: Southampton: Household size by size of dwelling

	Dwelling Size					
	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5 or more bedrooms	Total
Household size						
1 person	14,690	9,672	7,363	963	553	33,241
2 people	4,702	11,607	12,183	2,034	503	31,029
3 people	834	4,431	7,421	1,532	420	14,638
4 people	221	2,239	6,298	2,387	560	11,705
5 people	42	586	2,298	1,067	853	4,846
6 or more people	39	121	943	693	999	2,795
Total	20,528	28,656	36,506	8,676	3,888	98,254

Source: 2011 Census

From Table 1, the occupancy rate (number of people per dwelling) can be calculated for different sizes of dwellings, as set out in Table 2.

On this basis, based on the 2011 Census, the average occupancy rate across all dwellings is 2.31. More recent 2020 population estimates suggest the occupancy rate could be between 2.35 and 2.42⁵. For now, a standard uplift proportional to the increase from 2.31 to Natural England's 2.4 occupancy rate (i.e. a 3.9% uplift) is applied. This is also set out in Table 2.

⁵ ONS Mid Year Estimate and HCC Small Area Population Forecasts respectively

Table 2: Southampton: Size of dwelling and Occupancy Rate

	Occupancy Rate (Average number of people in household)					
	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5 or more bedrooms	Average
2011 Census	1.36	2.05	2.64	3.30	3.94	2.31
Adjusted to 2020	1.41	2.13	2.74	3.43	4.09	2.40

The Adjusted Occupancy Rates are then applied to the council's occupancy rate calculator accordingly.

A council must apply a consistent approach within its area, either a 'flat rate' or a 'sliding scale'. In Southampton, the council has chosen a 'sliding scale'. This must be applied to all developments within Southampton to ensure that the effects of smaller and larger schemes balance out in a way which will not result in an adverse effect on European designations.

(for members room)

Appendix 2: Calculation for Retrofitting Existing Dwellings with Water Efficiency Measures

WC

Current cistern	litres	9
New cistern	litres	5
Flushes frequency	per person per day	8.5
Savings	litres per person per day	34

Bath to shower

Bath capacity	litres	149
Bath to overflow	litres	140
Average bath fill	litres	120
Shower flow	litres per minute	9
Shower duration	minutes	7.5
Bath frequency	per person per day	0.6
Shower frequency	per person per day	1
Bath water usage	litres per person per day	92
Shower water usage	litres per person per day	67.5
Total bath savings	litres per person per day	24.5

Total

Total Saving	litres per person per day	58.5
Average household	people per household	2.4
Total saving	litres per household per day	140.4

New Dwelling

Total water use	litres per person per day	110
Average household size	people per household	2.4
Total water use use	litres per household per day	264

Retrofits needed for 1 new dwelling

Number of retrofits needed to counteract 1 new house	1.9
with 10% buffer	2.1