

Independent Inquiry into the Sheffield Street Trees Dispute

Independent Chair: Sir Mark Lowcock KCB

Announcement: 15 December 2022

As set out in my March 2022 terms of reference, the Inquiry will notify individuals and organisations who are referred to in the conclusions of its report and provide them with an opportunity to respond to any significant criticism proposed for inclusion. This is a normal feature of inquiries, often referred to as Maxwellisation or the representations process.

Any person or organisation in scope of this process will be sent a letter via email on the 4 January 2023 notifying them and asking them to sign an Undertaking to maintain confidentiality. Replies will be due by the 16 January 2023. If they do not return the signed Undertaking they will not be given information about the significant criticisms in the conclusions relating to them, which will still appear within the report. All people and organisations who have returned a signed Undertaking will receive further information on the 18 January 2023. Information received by the 8 February 2023 will be considered by the Inquiry. The dates given here are provisional.

I will make a further announcement if this timeline needs to be changed.

This process will give individuals and organisations a set period in which to provide evidence which they think corrects or mitigates criticisms. I will consider any evidence presented by the individuals and organisations involved. I will then decide what to say in the Inquiry's report.

This process does not bring into scope people or organisations who are not subject to significant criticism by the Inquiry in the conclusions of the report.

I said in my terms of reference that the full report of the Inquiry will be made available at the same time to all stakeholders (including Sheffield City Council) by publication on the Council's website. This means that those involved in the process above will only have access to limited information describing criticisms the Inquiry is considering including.

All people and organisations in scope for this process will be notified at the same time. The process will apply in the same way to each. Unless there are wholly exceptional circumstances, there will be no extensions to the timetable for the process.

The Inquiry is not currently expecting to hold further public hearings. Further announcements will be made if that changes.

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