

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 4 June 2019
in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Howard, M. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, A. Lowe, N. Plumpton Walsh, Joe Roberts and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors A. McInerney

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, I. Leivesley, G. Ferguson and R. Rout

Also in attendance: One member of the press

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

| | | <i>Action</i> |
|-----|--|---------------|
| CS1 | MINUTES The Minutes from the meeting held on 29 th January 2019 were taken as read and signed as a correct record. | |
| CS2 | PUBLIC QUESTION TIME The Board was advised that no public questions had been received. | |
| CS3 | EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES The Board was presented with the Minutes relating to the Corporate Services Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of the Board. RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted. | |
| CS4 | MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 6 th December 2018. RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted. | |

CS5 CORPORATE ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT 1 APRIL 18
- 31 MARCH 19

The Board was provided with a report from the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented details of health and safety management in relation to key performance indicators for the current financial year, 1 April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

The report highlighted

- There had been a rise in burn injuries within school catering and office areas, slips/trips/falls, manual handling accidents in the care teams and Waste Management plus injuries linked to staff being hit or caught by stationary and moving/flying objects. There had also been a total of 12 near misses;
- Violent incidents were showing a fall in the number of verbal incidents and physical incidents had dropped from 11 to 10. However there had been a rise in both verbal and physical incidents within Halton schools;
- Lone working monitoring system usage data showed a very slight increase in registered users of the system but a decrease in use of the system;
- Display Screen Equipment assessments had risen to 23 throughout 2018 with staff reporting health issues surrounding Musculoskeletal Disorders; and
- Risk Assessments completed on the corporate risk assessment system had risen from 1142 in 2017/18 to 1432 in 2018/19.

Arising from the discussion the Board requested that definitions of the specified injury, >7 day and significant be provided in future reports. In addition, further information on the reported physical incidents in schools would be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS6 GENDER PAY GAP

The Board considered a report which presented information and calculations for the Council in relation to the Gender Pay Gap. From April 2017, Gender pay reporting legislation required all organisations that employed over 250 employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap was between their male and female employees. The gender pay gap was defined as the difference in the average earnings of men and women over

a specified period, regardless of their role or seniority.

Halton Borough Council's information was published on 30th March 2019, in line with the statutory requirement and full details were outlined in the report.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

CS7 HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL UPDATE ON APPRENTICESHIP POLICY/APPRENTICESHIP LEVY AND PUBLIC SECTOR TARGET

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided an update on apprenticeships in the Council, together with a regional and national picture. The apprenticeship programme was the outcome of The Richard Review of Apprenticeships, published in 2012. The Government's key changes were around Standards replacing Frameworks and the introduction of the Apprenticeships Levy from April 2017. The Levy required employers with a wage bill of £3million or more to pay 0.5% of their pay bill to invest in apprenticeship training. For Halton Council this equated to £259,696 per year (2018/19).

It was noted that the development of apprenticeships had been successful with the current number of apprentices at 16 (12 male and 4 female). Since the Levy regime began in April 2017 the number of apprenticeships was 67. Whilst the number of new apprentices who had acquired a permanent position with the Council during the last 2 years was 15. The Council had been innovative in its approach in order to provide the best opportunities to recruit apprentices in areas where it had previously experienced difficulties filling vacant positions.

In addition, within the scope of the Apprenticeship Policy, the Council also planned future development of its existing workforce via the Apprenticeship Levy, again across a diverse range of roles and service areas to meet the growing service demand and to maintain a professional and qualified workforce.

The Board also noted the collaborative work that took place to promote the concept of apprenticeships between the Council and the Liverpool City Region (LCR). The work had proven successful and a proposal was currently being considered for the LCR Chief Executives to extend this additional support until the end of 2019.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS8 ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered a copy of the Annual Report from the Chair of the Corporate Services Board, 2018/19. The Board met four times during the year and the report set out the work carried out and the recommendations throughout the Municipal Year April 2018 to March 2019.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report be noted.

CS9 TOPIC GROUPS 2019-20

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought to develop a work programme of topics for the Board to examine in 2019/20. It was noted that the Board had previously arranged a Topic Group to consider the Discretionary Support Scheme and this had provided significant guidance to Officers and the Executive Board in relation to the delivery of that extremely important service. It was proposed that this Topic Group would continue to meet and consideration would be given to setting up a second Topic Group if required.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Discretionary Support Scheme Topic Group continue to meet; and
2. consideration would be given to setting up a second Topic Group if required.

CS10 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS QTR 4 - 2018-19

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented the Performance Monitoring Reports for Quarter 4 of 2018/19.

The reports related to the following functional areas which reported to the Board and detailed progress against service objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period:

- Finance;
- Human Resources and Organisational Development;

- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Policy and Performance;
- Property Services; and
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services.

Arising from the discussion, the following questions were raised and the responses given:

- How many empty homes are there in the Borough, and how many were paying the empty homes premium? In response it was noted that there were currently 605 long term empty properties in the Borough (empty for 6 months or more) and 150 of the 605 were currently subject to the empty homes premium (having been empty for over 2 years);
- Have the outstanding business rates owed by Castlevue House been paid, and if not what was being done to collect them? It was noted that the company that previously owned Castlevue House (Rally Century Ltd) were registered in the British Virgin Islands. Business rates totalling £550k remain outstanding from November 2015 to April 2017 when it was in their ownership. This debt was subject to liability orders, but as they were registered offshore it was outside the UK Court's jurisdiction and so we cannot enforce the liability orders.
- How many dwellings in Castlevue House were now paying Council tax, and how many were paying the empty homes premium? Members were advised that all 241 properties at Castlevue House were now included in the council tax register and liable for council tax. None were paying the empty homes premium as they must be empty for two years before the premium was levied. As the properties were registered from various dates from April 2018 onwards, the first ones (if any) to incur the premium would be in April 2020.
- Clarification was provided on the figure recovered by the Direct Payments team.

RESOLVED: That the fourth quarter performance monitoring reports be received and noted.

The Board considered:

- 1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- 2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CS12 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS QTR 4 - 2018-19

The Board requested further information on a particular outstanding debt.

RESOLVED: That

1. Members be kept informed of developments; and
2. Copies of the agreement be circulated to the Board.

Meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.