

COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 18 October 2017 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors A. Lowe, Abbott, S. Baker, M. Bradshaw, J. Bradshaw, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Cassidy, Cole, Dennett, Edge, Fry, C. Gerrard, Gilligan, Harris, P. Hignett, R. Hignett, S. Hill, V. Hill, Horabin, Howard, Jones, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, Logan, J. Lowe, MacManus, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, Parker, Polhill, C. Plumpton Walsh, N. Plumpton Walsh, Joe Roberts, June Roberts, Rowe, Sinnott, G. Stockton, J. Stockton, Thompson, Wall, Wharton, Woolfall, Wright and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Morley, Nolan, Osborne, Philbin, Wainwright and Wallace

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Parr, I. Leivesley, M. Vasic, M. Reaney and A. Scott

Also in attendance: Nine members of the public

Action

COU29 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 12 July 2017, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be confirmed and adopted.

COU30 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:-

- The Mayor and Mayoress hosted a visit of two delegates from the City of Ústí Nad Labem in the Czech Republic, one of Halton's Twin Towns, on Friday 25 August 2017. The visitors met the Mayor and Mayoress in the Catalyst Science Discovery Centre, where they viewed the Mersey Gateway Bridge and exchanged gifts.

COU31 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader made the following announcements:-

- He had attended the opening of the new Mersey Gateway Bridge on 14 October 2017 and wished to record his thanks to all those that had been involved in the project which was delivered on time and within budget;
- A Community Day would be held on Saturday 21 October 2017 for residents and visitors which would feature free bus tours across the bridge and new road infrastructure with celebrations at Halton Stadium and The Brindley; and
- Halton Borough Council had supported National Hate Crime Awareness Week (14-21 October 2017).

(N.B. Councillor John Bradshaw and Councillor Marjorie Bradshaw declared a Disclosable Other Interest in Minute EXB 37 as their property was affected by the decision taken)

COU32 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the meetings of Executive Board on 20 July 2017 and 21 September 2017.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU33 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board on 5 July 2017.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU34 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

COU35 2017/18 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME (MINUTE EXB40 REFERS)

The Council considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the 2017/18 Revised Capital Programme.

The Capital Programme had been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding, as schemes had developed and which were listed in the report.

RESOLVED: That the revisions to the Council's 2017/18 Capital Programme set out in paragraph 3.2 of the

Operational
Director - Finance

report, be approved.

COU36 MURDISHAW REGENERATION (MINUTE EXB 44 REFERS)

The Council considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on an amendment to the Capital Programme to allow for funding for the improvement of the Murdishaw area of Runcorn.

RESOLVED: That the amendment to the Capital Programme to include £46,000 for the Murdishaw Estate Regeneration programme to provide the Council's contribution to the actions and activities outlined in the report, to be funded from the Capital Receipt received for the Jolly Brewer Pub, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

COU37 MERSEY GATEWAY/SILVER JUBILEE BRIDGE RUCSO

The Council considered a report of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, on the Mersey Gateway Bridge and the Silver Jubilee Bridge Road User Charging Scheme Order (RUCSO).

RESOLVED: That Council note the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services delegated decision to:-

Operational
Director, Legal
and Democratic
Services

- 1) Lift the suspension of RUCSO except in relation to the Silver Jubilee Bridge;
- 2) Thereby bring the RUCSO back into effect in relation to the Mersey Gateway Bridge;
- 3) Impose the charging scheme from the Permission to Use Date; and
- 4) In doing so, confirm the charges to be levied for use of the Mersey Gateway Bridge by different use classes of vehicles.

COU38 TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH – CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT REGULATIONS

The Council considered a report of the Chief Executive on the draft regulations to establish Transport for the North (TfN) as a Sub-National Transport Body under the Local Transport Act 2008.

RESOLVED: That the Council formally consents under Section 102J of the Local Transport Act 2008, to the making by the Secretary of State of regulations to establish Transport for the North as a Sub-National Transport Body

Chief Executive

and giving TfN concurrent highway powers as set out in the draft regulations supplied to the Council entitled 'Sub-national Transport Body (Transport for the North) Regulations 2017'.

(N.B. Councillor Joe Roberts declared a Disclosable Other Interest in Minute BEB 18 of the Business Efficiency Board, as he was a Governor of Ditton Primary School)

COU39 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

The Council considered the reports of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of Council on 12 July 2017:-

- Children, Young People and Families;
- Employment, Learning and Skills and Community;
- Health;
- Safer;
- Environment and Urban Renewal;
- Corporate; and
- Business Efficiency.

COU40 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of Council on 12 July 2017:-

- Development Control;
- Regulatory; and
- Appeals Panel.

(N.B. The following Councillors declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business for the reasons stated: Councillor Charlotte Gerrard as she was a public sector worker in a neighbouring local authority; Councillor Cassidy as she was a householder who worked in the public sector; Councillor Horabin as she had relatives employed by the Council)

COU41 NOTICE OF MOTION - PUBLIC SECTOR PAY

PUBLIC SECTOR PAY

Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order number 6.

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Thompson and seconded by Councillor Chris Loftus:-

“This Council believes that all public sector workers, including Halton Council staff, should be paid a fair wage that reflects the valuable role they play in serving our communities in Halton.

Since 2010, the Government’s pay cap has seen either no annual increase or a limited pay rise for public sector workers, meaning NHS staff, emergency services and local government workers in Halton have faced diminishing incomes when considered alongside the cost of living.

Council believes the pay cap is grossly unfair and affects the morale of public sector workers who serve the public, often in difficult and challenging circumstances.

Council agrees to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, calling upon Government:

- To recognise that our public sector workers have suffered prolonged reductions in their incomes including staff in our local NHS Trusts, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and Halton Council.
- To remove the pay cap for public sector workers, imposed by Central Government, ensuring pay increases are negotiated in line with any joint union pay claims.
- To fund any agreed increases direct from added Government expenditure so as to ensure that public sector providers do not suffer adverse reductions in budget owing to expenditure”.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be agreed.

Chief Executive

COU42 NOTICE OF MOTION - UNIVERSAL CREDIT

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order number 6.

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Wall and seconded by Councillor Sinnott:-

“This Council expresses its grave concern at the manner in which Universal Credit has been implemented by Government and its consequences for families in Halton.

Council resolves that:

- Many people have already turned to Citizens Advice Halton for help with Universal Credit and the Charity states that the numbers struggling will continue to grow as more people move onto the benefit. Since Universal Credit was introduced in Halton, the Charity has stated that it has already helped 710 people with 1,160 problems with benefit.
- By 2022 Universal Credit will affect more than 15,000 households across Halton. Across the Country, 1 in 4 (28%) working age households will be claiming Universal Credit, more than half of which (54%) will be in employment. The benefit will also be claimed by more than half (52%) of all families with children in the UK and 6 in 10 (58%) households where an adult is disabled or has a long term health condition.
- In a major new report – Delivering on Universal Credit – national Citizens Advice has revealed that the requirement to wait for six weeks to receive any payment means people face serious financial insecurity, with many people being forced into debt.

This Council believes the financial security of many households in Halton is put at risk as applicants are required to wait many weeks for the first payment of Universal Credit. As it stands, many people face uncertainty about how much they will receive and when it will arrive. This insecurity makes it harder to focus on finding work and increases worry about how to manage with the care of their families and fund household essentials.

Council resolves to write to the secretary of State for Work and Pensions, calling upon Government to pause the roll out of Universal Credit whilst it addresses continuing difficulties in the time taken to process applications”.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be agreed.

Chief Executive

COU43 NOTICE OF MOTION - MODERN DAY SLAVERY

MODERN DAY SLAVERY EXISTS IN THE UK AND IT DESTROYS LIVES

Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order number 6.

The following motion was proposed by Councillor

Dave Cargill and seconded by Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh:-

“Halton supports the implementation of the Modern Day Slavery Act 2015.

Modern slavery is an abhorrent abuse of human rights. It exists in the UK and destroys lives. It affects people living and working in Halton as well as across the pan-Cheshire area. It manifests in an appallingly wide range of forms. Adults and children – UK nationals and those from abroad – are exploited in the sex industry, through forced labour, domestic servitude in the home, and forced criminal activity. Nationally, there have been numerous cases of exploitation in factories, fields, construction sites, brothels and houses.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 sets out how modern slavery and human trafficking is dealt with in the UK. Section 54, entitled Transparency in Supply Chains, requires businesses to publish an annual statement on their approach to securing their operations against exploitation.

The Cheshire Anti-Slavery Network is a multi-agency group established in January 2015 to bring together statutory and other sectors. Its commitment is to work together to make Cheshire resilient and hostile to modern slavery and to identify and rescue victims.

Halton is a prominent member of the Cheshire Anti-Slavery Network and the Harmful Practices group into which it reports, and recently wrote a three-year Modern Slavery Strategy and Action Plan on behalf of Cheshire Police and the four local authority areas it covers.

A number of victims had already been identified and supported across the Borough and perpetrators held to account through targeted operations. These operations have been police-led and executed through a strong partnership approach, with support from the community as well as a wide variety of professionals, including experts from Halton Housing, Social Care, Safeguarding, as well as NHS partners and the Fire Service.

This Council is committed to preventing modern slavery and recognises a robust and strategic approach is required. Working across the region with partners including Police, Local Authorities, Health and Faith Sectors amongst others, we intend to continue the good work happening locally and develop our concerted and coordinated approach to prevent, identify, disrupt, stop and eradicate modern day slavery in all

its forms.

In the last year, Officers from Halton have attended training on modern day slavery and this will continue to be offered.

This Council recognises the active role the Faith sector plays in encouraging greater transparency about anti-slavery including the Service to be held in Chester Cathedral on 17 September 2017 highlighting this issue and involving business and civic leaders. The Council also recognises the role played by the Faith sector in encouraging businesses with a lower turnover together with all public, private sector or third sector organisations receiving public funding are encouraged to register their statements on the tiscreport.org.

This Council resolves to:-

- 1) Work towards the eradication of human trafficking and slavery in Halton;
- 2) Raise awareness and continue to provide training on Modern Slavery amongst all Employees, Councillors and Partners; and develop clear systems so that any concerns can be raised and addressed;
- 3) Implement the Transparency in Supply Chain provisions of the Modern Slavery Act to prevent Modern Slavery from occurring in our own supply chain and all corporate activities; pledge to become a Transparent Borough; and pledge to publish an annual Modern Slavery Transparency statement;
- 4) Continue to play a lead role in the Cheshire Anti-Slavery partnership developing a collaborative and collective approach to the issue”.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be agreed.

Chief Executive

COU44 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Council 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 Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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.

COU45 ACQUISITION OF BROSELEY HOUSE, WIDNES (MINUTE EXB 46 REFERS)

The Council considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on the acquisition of the freehold and leasehold interests in the property known as Broseley House, Widnes.

RESOLVED: That Council approve the variation to the Capital Programme of £1.19 million to cover the costs outlined in sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the report.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

Meeting ended at 7.57 p.m.