

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 16 March 2023 in Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Wharton (Chair), Harris, M. Lloyd Jones, J. Lowe, T. McInerney, Nelson, Nolan, Thompson and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Young, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner and A. Jones

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
EXB86 MINUTES	

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB87 PENSIONS DISCRETIONS STATEMENT 2023/24	
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The Board received the annual Pensions Discretions Statement for 2023-24 for Halton Borough Council.

The Council was required to publish a Pension Discretion Statement annually, to advise the discretions it intended to exercise under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – this was appended to the report.

It was reported that the Pensions Discretion Statement for 2023-24 was based upon the statement for 2022-23, which was approved by Executive Board in February 2022. It was noted that no new discretions had been added.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the Pensions Discretions Statement for 2023-24.

EXB88 THE CORPORATE PLAN: INTERIM APPROACH AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Board considered a report which outlined the approach to producing an interim Corporate Plan for the Council. In order to progress the initial work, North West Employers had facilitated and supported a session with members of the Board and Management Team on 6 December 2022. Following the session, it was agreed that an interim Plan with a Statement of Intent would be in place by March 2024 and a Corporate Plan would be produced from April 2024. The report set out the key themes for Halton, timeline and engagement with the public (the 'Big Conversation').

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) agree on the interim approach outlined and the way forward culminating in a new Council Corporate Plan being launched on 1 April 2024;
- 2) the report be noted;
- 3) approves the Statement of Intent for publication on 1 April 2023; and
- 4) endorses the approach to facilitate the 'Big Conversation'.

Operational
Director Policy,
People,
Performance and
Efficiency

EXB89 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director, Finance which presented two applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The report outlined details of the applications from Widnes Gymnastics Academy and Runcorn Amateur Boxing Club in respect of their premises and the potential annual cost to the Council of granting discretionary rate relief to each organisation.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the application for 15% discretionary rate relief from Widnes Gymnastics Academy with effect from 14 July 2022, be approved; and
- 2) the application for 90% discretionary rate relief from Runcorn Amateur Boxing Club with effect from 1 June

Operational
Director - Finance

2022, be approved.

EXB90 REVIEW OF COUNCIL WIDE FEES AND CHARGES

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the review of the Council wide fees and charges for 2023/24 for services provided by the Council's Directorates.

The Board was advised that, as part of the budget preparations for 2023/24, a review of fees and charges had been carried out. The aim in setting fees and charges was to ensure that the Council fully recovered the cost incurred in providing the service, although this was dependent on a number of factors outside of the agreed charge. These were detailed in the report and noted as including demand, which could change year on year and be affected by weather, economy, regional and national events and demographics; competition, where there may be a strong competitive market; and a statutory element, where some charges were outside the control of the Council and there was no discretion to what could be charged.

Attached at Appendix A was the proposed schedule of statutory fees for 2023/24 and the chargeable rates for The Brindley Theatre and the Registrar's Service were attached at Appendix B and C respectively, for 2023/24.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A attached to the report and for 2023/24 as set out in Appendices B and C attached to the report, be approved.

Operational
Director - Finance

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB91 HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL AND NHS CHESHIRE & MERSEYSIDE: JOINT WORKING AGREEMENT (BETTER CARE (POOLED) FUND)

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which presented for approval the Joint Working Agreement (JWA) between the Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (CM), which would take effect from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The Agreement would replace the current JWA which was due to expire on 31 March 2023, the draft Agreement was attached as Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the contents of the report and associated Appendix; and
- 2) approve the Agreement, with delegated authority to the Executive Director Adult Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, to finalise the new Joint Working Agreement.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

EXB92 HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adults, which described the various grants that had been issued by Central Government to support rough sleepers and people who were, or were likely to become, homeless. It also made proposals for the allocation of these grants.

Government confirmed the allocation of a key element of the overall investment in funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, which was available to local authorities in 2023-24 to support and deliver services to prevent and tackle homelessness. Members were advised that from this funding Halton had been allocated £369,085 for 2023/24. It was noted that the funding grant allocation would be ring fenced to ensure the Local Authority had the resources to take action to prevent homelessness and utilise the funding to continue to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The proposals for the allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant were presented in Appendix 1, Repossession Notice Activity in Appendix 2 and the proposals for the allocation of the Rough Sleepers Initiative Grant were presented in Appendix 3.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) note and consider the contents of this report; and
- 2) approve the recommendations for expenditure against the grants, as described in Appendices 1 and 3.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB93 NHS HEALTH CHECK PROGRAM

The Board considered a report of the Director of Public Health, which sought approval by virtue of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v), to waive part 3.1

and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders to renew current public health services provided by GP Practices, specifically the NHS Health Check Program (NHSHealthCheck), for a three year period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026, with the potential to be extended on an annual basis for a further two years until 31 March 2028.

The award of the contract via a waiver was sought on the following basis:

- The NHSHealthCheck is a clinical service that can only be delivered by organisations that satisfied the requisite clinical and regulatory requirement;
- Only General Practices holding a contract with the NHS for provision of healthcare were entitled to keep, maintain and access a registered patient list. Access to confidential patient data contained within this list, was essential to fulfil obligations to deliver the NHSHealthCheck program; and
- It would prevent disruption to the delivery of important and mandated services.

RESOLVED: That the Board

Director of Public Health

- 1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- 2) give approval to the recommendation that the contract with GP Practices be extended for a further three year period, with the potential for two one year extensions, without going through the Procurement process, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4(v) (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000) seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL & CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIOS

EXB94 ZERO WASTE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Board received a report of the Operational Director – Community and Greenspace, which provided details on the progress in developing a Liverpool City Region Zero Waste Strategic Framework in co-ordination with partner Liverpool City Region (LCR) local authorities. The report sought approval to adopt the key principles set out in the LCR Zero Waste 2040 Strategic Framework, to minimise waste related carbon emissions through actions to prevent, reduce, recycle and re-use waste. A copy of the

Strategic Framework document was attached as Appendix 1.

The Strategy would provide the strategic link between the partnership work being undertaken across the LCR to tackle waste and also the collective commitment to achieve the Halton's net zero ambitions.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) approve the principles set out in the LCR Zero Waste 2040 Strategic Framework (attached as Appendix 1) to reduce waste related carbon emissions; and
- 2) approve continued partnership working with Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) and the other LCR local authorities to deliver action to meet our individual and collective climate targets and objectives.

Operational
Director
Community
Green Space

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EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO

EXB95 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING – GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2023/24

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which presented the Voluntary Sector Funding Grant allocations for 2023/24.

Halton Borough Council had been awarding direct grants to local voluntary and charitable organisations for a number of years. The opportunity to receive a grant was advertised on the Council website and applications were invited. Applications were then assessed against key criteria, as set out in the report. Recommendations were agreed by a panel consisting of the Executive Board Member with Portfolio responsibility for the Voluntary Sector and Officers.

Following the panel's assessment, the recommendations for allocations were presented in paragraph 3.3, from an available budget of £226,640.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the grant allocations as outlined in the report.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

EXB96 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB97 FORMER BUS DEPOT MOOR LANE, WIDNES

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director - Economy, Enterprise and Property, which provided an update on the negotiations regarding the Moor Lane Bus depot. The report sought approval to declare the asset surplus to requirements and to place the building on the Council's disposal list.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board approves the placing of the asset on the Council's Asset Disposal register;
- 2) approval is given to the Operational Director - Economy, Enterprise and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Deputy Leader – Major

Operational
Director
Economy,
Enterprise
&
Property

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Projects, to place the property on the open market for sale; and

- 3) authorises the Operational Director - Economy, Enterprise and Property, to arrange for all required documentation for the transactions to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Deputy Leader – Major Projects.

EXB98 57-59 HIGH STREET, RUNCORN

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property, which sought approval for the construction of new assets and subsequent lease of 57-59 High Street, Runcorn. The site would be used for the new build of a youth centre on the plot of 57 High Street and the refurbishment/repurposing of 59 High Street as a winter garden as part of the youth centre. The plan also included an internet style cafe and a training kitchen with outside garden suitable for growing vegetables.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board

- 1) approves the construction of new assets and subsequent least of 57-59 on the terms reported in section 3.4; and
- 2) authorises the Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange for all required documentation for the construction and lease to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Deputy Leader – Major Projects.

Operational
Director
-
Economy,
Enterprise
&
Property

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB99 LILYCROSS CARE CENTRE - CARE BEDS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which sought a waiver of Procurement Standing Orders for the granting of an extension to the current contract for the provision of 10 Transitional Beds (Residential and Nursing) at Lilycross Care Centre, Widnes by Catalyst Management Services for the period from 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the contents of the report; and
- 2) in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v), a waiver of Part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders be approved for the granting of an extension to the current contract with Catalyst Management Services, for the provision of Care Beds at Lilycross Care Centre for the period from 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

EXB100 CARE PROVIDER CONTRACT UPLIFT 2023/24

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adult Services, which advised on the outcome of the consultation with domiciliary care, direct payments, supported living and care home providers within Halton, in respect of the Care Provider Contract Uplift for 2023/24.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board note the contents of the report;
- 2) the Board considers the recommendations and risks; and
- 3) approval to be given to offer the recommended uplift to care providers for 2023/24.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB101 FOUNDRY LANE RESIDENTIAL

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director - Economy, Enterprise and Property, which provided an update on the Foundry Lane Residential Scheme and requested additional funding to meet the liabilities from the land transfer agreement and bridge the funding gap left by pre-Grant Funding Agreement expenditure.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board recommends to Full Council that funding is sought for the additional costs to be funded through an amendment to the Capital Programme to ensure that the Foundry Lane Residential Scheme is delivered.

Operational
Director
-
Economy,
Enterprise
&
Property

EXB102 SCI-TECH DARESBURY MASTERPLAN UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Operational Director - Economy, Enterprise and Property, which provided an update on the delivery of the Sci-Tech Daresbury Masterplan and land acquisition requirements.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, is authorised to commission preparatory work and finalise discussions as detailed in Paragraphs 2.2.1 and 2.2.2.

Operational
Director, Legal
and Democratic
Services

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB103 CONTRACT FOR ADVOCACY SERVICE

The Board received a report of the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, which sought a request to waive Procurement Standing Orders to allow the renewal of a contract with 7 Harrington Street Chambers to provide advocacy and legal services on behalf of the Council, for a period of one year from 1 April 2023 with an option to renew for a further 2 years thereafter. The report set out the anticipated cost of the contract and the risk to the Council should the contract renewal not be agreed.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approve that the contract with 7 Harrington Street Chambers be renewed for twelve months, with an option to extend for a further 2 years, in pursuance of Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders.

Operational
Director, Legal
and Democratic
Services

MINUTES ISSUED: 21 March 2023

CALL-IN: 28 March 2023 at 5.00 pm.

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 28 March 2023.

Meeting ended at 3.05 p.m.