

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 19 October 2023 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Harris

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, S. Young, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, H. Roberts, S. Wallace-Bonner and K. Butler

Also in attendance: S. Scott, C. Deadman, N. McGrath – Halton Housing Trust

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
EXB37 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
LEADER'S PORTFOLIO	
EXB38 URGENT DECISIONS	
<p>The Executive Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Board.</p>	
<p>It was noted that the Council's Constitution gave authority to the Chief Executive to take urgent decisions, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Operational Director Finance and/or the Operational Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.</p>	
<p>One urgent decision had been made since the last meeting of the Board and full details were published on the Council's website.</p>	
<p>RESOLVED: That the urgent decision taken since</p>	

the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

N.B. Councillor Wright declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as she is a member of Halton Housing Trust Board.

EXB39 HALTON HOUSING TRUST ANNUAL REPORT

The Board received the Halton Housing Trust's (HHT) Annual Report, which provided an update on their activities since the last report to Executive Board.

The Chair welcomed Sam Scott, Group Chief Executive and colleagues Clive Deadman and Neil McGrath, who jointly presented the report to the Board – *Annual Report to HBC Executive Board, October 2023.*

The report outlined the key priorities over the next two years until 2025 and also some of the key achievements over the past year and , which included:

- 20 maintenance technicians had received additional training to enable them to multi skill;
- 853 households had been supported to secure £2m of additional income by providing support to apply for under claimed benefits;
- The hardship fund had delivered over £30k of crisis funds targeting food and fuel poverty;
- Completion of Halton Housings largest development scheme – the independent living scheme (Hazlehurst) in Runcorn; and
- Achieved IIP Investing in People Gold and Investing in Wellbeing Silver.

RESOLVED: That the Board thanked Halton Housing Trust for the presentation and noted the report.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB40 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION INVESTMENT ZONE - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval for Halton to become part of the Liverpool City Region Investment Zone (IZ). The IZ would include a tax site for occupier benefits which would operate for 5 years from April 2024 alongside business rates retention for a period of

25 years. The site would sit within the existing Enterprise Zone and would be used to promote the delivery of the Sci-Tech Daresbury masterplan.

Reason(s) for Decision

A decision is required to enable the Council to enter into the necessary legal agreements to facilitate the Investment Zone and associated Tax Incremental Financing processes.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Consideration was given to Sci-Tech Daresbury remaining an Enterprise Zone and not becoming an Investment Zone. On balance it was felt that the opportunity to access additional grant funding and tax incentives through the Investment Zone was more likely to accelerate the next [phase of delivery and provide potential for future investment and Tax Incremental Finance that could support the requires land acquisition and infrastructure to deliver the masterplan.

Implementation Date

A Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be signed ahead of the commencement of Investment Zone status in April 2024.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report;
- 2) supports the progress made on the Investment Zone and approves the Council entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with LCR Combined Authority as required;
- 3) gives delegated authority to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Major Projects, to take the necessary steps to participate in the LCR Investment Zone;
- 4) approves the sign off of the allocation of Sci-Tech Daresbury as part of the LCR Investment Zone; and
- 5) authorises the Operational Director - Finance to enter into and manage the processes required to facilitate the Business Rates Retention and Tax Increment Financing processes.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB41 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director: Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an update on the progress made within the Council's Transformation Programme. Work had continued to develop the projects set out in Appendix A of the report, as well as the associated delivery plans, which would provide a framework to assess project feasibility.

The Board noted that:

- during September there had been a focus on engaging with employees and a number of workshops had taken place; and
- the recruitment of transformation resources to support the Children's Social Care programme had been undertaken and appointments had been made.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted the contents of the update.

EXB42 RE-TENDERING OF COUNCIL INSURANCE POLICIES

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Finance, which sought approval to commence a procurement process to re-tender the insurance policies that were due to expire. The current contracts were due to expire on 31 March 2024 and based upon current premium levels, the total cost of the services was expected to exceed £1,000,000 over the maximum contract duration of five years.

The Board noted that prior to the procurement process, a review of the Council's insurance programme would be completed, and relevant alternatives considered to establish the most appropriate programme for the Council. This would include reviewing components such as extent of cover, levels of self-insurance and indemnity limits.

It was proposed that the procurement would be undertaken by accessing a framework agreement for insurance services managed by the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation. The Council's insurance broker would support the tender evaluation process by completing a comprehensive evaluation of tender submissions on behalf of the Council and make recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

Operational
Director - Finance

- 1) approval be given to commence a procurement exercise for the following Council insurance policies:
 - Combined Liability
 - Medical Malpractice
 - Engineering and inspection
 - Property
 - Motor
 - Computer
- 2) the Operational Director – Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, be delegated to deal with any matters relating to the procurement of this contract.

EXB43 DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF

The Board received 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, for consideration.

It was noted that under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council was able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer. This relief had previously only been available to organisations that were a registered charity, a community amateur sports club or a not for profit organisation.

The report outlined details of the applications from Steve Morgan Foundation and Have a Heart Foundation, in relation to their respective addresses. Appended to the report was the potential annual cost to the Council of granting the discretionary rate relief.

RESOLVED: That

Operational
Director - Finance

- 1) the application for 15% discretionary rate relief from the Steve Morgan Foundation in respect of premises at Bridgemere House, with effect from 1 April 2022, be approved;
- 2) the application for 15% discretionary rate relief from Have a Heart Foundation in respect of premises at 103-104 Chadwick Road, with effect from 1 April 2022, be approved; and
- 3) the application for 15% discretionary rate relief from

Have a Heart Foundation in respect of premises at 110-111 Runcorn Shopping Centre, with effect from 1 April 2022, be approved.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB44 FLOATING SUPPORT SERVICE PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director - Adult Services, that sought approval to commence a new procurement process for the supply of a Floating Support Service. The proposed contract would be for an initial three years (plus 2 x 12 month extension periods) commencing 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2027, in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.3.5. The estimated value of the contract was £1,870,000 over a five year contract.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approves this Preliminary Estimates report to commence a new procurement process for a Floating Support Service in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.3.5.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

EXB45 AMENDED ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adults, which set out amendments to the Property Pool Plus (PPP) Allocations Policy. The aspiration remained that the local authorities would continue to facilitate a single lettings approach for scheme partners and customers when allocating and letting social housing across the city region.

The Board was advised that the participating local authorities and housing associations wanted to ensure that the allocations policy was fit for purpose and supported the strategic city region wide aspirations around social housing and therefore a review of the PPP had been undertaken. The revised policy incorporated a significant number of changes to various elements of the scheme including the qualification, criteria and priority banding system. Full details of the changes, revised scheme and the upgrade to the IT system, were outlined in the report.

Due to the scale of the change and the required preparatory work, it was requested that the scheme would

be closed to new applications for a period of one month before the launch of the revised scheme. It was also recommended that there would be a pause in property advertising for a two-week period prior to the launch to allow partner Housing Association landlords time to update property shortlists under the scheme rules.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approve the amended Property Pool Plus Allocations Policy.

Executive Director
of Adult Services

COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

EXB46 REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT SERVICE CONTRACT

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

EXB47 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.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB48 DISPOSAL OF LAND LOWLANDS ROAD RUNCORN

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval to the revised disposal price for the disused trumpet loop land in Runcorn.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) the reconsidered valuation figure be approved;
- 2) the disposal of the freehold interest in disused land behind Picow Engineering that was once busway/trumpet loop road in Runcorn Station Quarter be approved; and
- 3) the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration be authorised 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 for Corporate Services.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

MINUTES ISSUED: 26 October 2023

CALL-IN: 2 November 2023 at 5.00 pm.

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 2 November 2023.

Meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.