

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 5 November 2024 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Philbin (Vice-Chair), V. Hill, Leck, Logan, A. Lowe, N. Plumpton Walsh and Thornton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor McDonough

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, E. Dawson, P. Garnett, C. Hill and M. Reaney

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

| | | <i>Action</i> |
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| CS16 | MINUTES The Minutes from the meeting held on 3 September 2024 were taken as read and signed as a correct record. | |
| CS17 | PUBLIC QUESTION TIME The Board was advised that no public questions had been received. | |
| CS18 | 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 this Board. RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted. | |
| CS19 | CORPORATE ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT 1.4.24 TO 31.8.24 The Board was provided with a report from the Corporate Director – Chief Executive’s Delivery Unit, on the performance of health and safety management within the Authority from 1 April 2024 to 31 August 2024. | |

The report highlighted health and safety incidents that had taken place over the past 4 months and as a result of those incidents proposed actions for the future. The report included information around the number of actual near misses, accidents that had resulted in over seven day absences, together with significant accidents.

In addition, the report contained information on the performance of health and safety management in relation to key performance indicators for the current financial year.

Following discussions it was noted that:

- concerns were raised that if the Protect Duty/Martyn's Law was implemented, the Council would have an obligation to protect its buildings against terrorism and this would be challenging due to a low number of caretakers. It was agreed that once more information became available, this matter would be re-visited;
- a member of the Board said that they did not recall any practice evacuations taking place whilst they were in any of the Council buildings. It was suggested that although many practice evacuations had taken place for staff, it appeared that Members had not been involved. It was agreed that this would be taken into account for future practice evacuations;
- Councillor Philbin reported that he had received some reports of incidents where Council staff had received abuse in Victoria Park when dealing with people walking their dogs off lead, however, this did not seem to be reflected in the figures. It was agreed that this would be investigated and the Board would be updated in due course; and
- the school crossing patrol staff member who had been injured by a mobility scooter, had fully recovered from their injuries.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the contents of the report including the recommendations and actions for 2024/25.

CS20 PROGRESS UPDATES REGARDING THE HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND 1 APRIL 2024 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2024, AND THE LATEST HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2024 - 31 MARCH 2025

The Board received a report from the Director of

Corporate
Director - Chief
Executive's
Delivery Unit

Finance, which updated Members on the final position regarding delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund for the past six months.

Appendix A of the report outlined the Household Support Fund spend for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024. This included expenditure from partner organisations including Halton Citizens Advice Bureau, Runcorn Foodbank, Widnes Foodbank, Affordable Warmth, Holiday Activity Food Programme and Halton Voluntary Action.

A spending plan for 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025 had been prepared and was attached at Appendix B. It was noted that £75,000 had been allocated to the Discretionary Support Scheme within the Benefits Division to process means tested applications.

It was proposed that pensioners who were in receipt of a council tax reduction, would be provided with a one-off award of £130. It was estimated that 4,200 pensioner households would benefit from this award, at a total cost of £546,000.

RESOLVED: That the Board note:

- 1) the final position regarding the Household Support Fund for the period 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024; and
- 2) the spending plan for the Household Support Fund for the period 1 October 2024 – 31 March 2025.

CS21 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2024/25

The Board received the Performance Management Report for Quarter 2 of 2024/25. 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;
- Operational Human Resources Division;
- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services; and
- Property Services.

Members were requested to consider the progress and performance information and highlight any areas of interest and/or concern, where further information could be reported at a future meeting of the Board.

The Board noted the report and following discussions requested some additional information:

- Councillor Logan referred to corporate priority ICT 01 – the delivery of the initial Microsoft M365 E5 platform, and requested if it was possible to use this new platform to provide some data to demonstrate the rise and fall of carbon emissions in the Borough. It was suggested that such data could be incorporated in future Council reports, under climate change implications;
- it was noted that despite best efforts to reduce sickness absences, figures had continued to rise. Councillor Philbin suggested that a staff survey be carried out to try and identify some of the reasons for this, as it had been some time since the last one had been done;
- an update report on agency staff to be presented to a future Board meeting; and
- the number of schools the Council provide a cleaning service to and the costs for this provision.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 2 performance management report for 2024-25 be noted.

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Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

Meeting ended at 7.23 p.m.