

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 17 March 2022 in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Nolan

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Parr, M. Vasic, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner, A. Jones and M. Allen

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB78 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2022 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB79 PENSIONS DISCRETIONS STATEMENT 2022/23

The Board received the annual Pensions Discretions Statement for 2022-23 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 2022-23 was based upon the statement for 2021-22, which was approved by Executive Board in February 2021. It was noted that no new discretions had been added and one discretion had been removed for 2022-23 as described in the report.

Action

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the Pensions Discretions Statement for 2022-23.

Community and Resources

EXB80 MOOR LANE BUS DEPOT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which advised of two offers that had been received for the former bus depot on Moor Lane.

Members were advised that in November 2020, the Council commissioned Thornber and Walker, a quantity surveyor consultancy to carry out a high level feasibility study to ascertain the potential costs of refurbishing the Moor Lane Bus Depot to provide commercial space. They estimated that the cost of refurbishment would be in the region of £5m. Since the report was commissioned however, construction costs had increased and the building had been designated a Grade 2 listing by Historic England.

It was noted that the listing would have a bearing on any future use of the building, because the listing also related to the interior of the building. The Board was presented with four potential options for the future use of the building. They were also advised of two offers that had been made from local businesses (referred to as X and Y) and the recommendations from officers following these.

RESOLVED: That the Board authorise officers to progress more detailed discussions with Company Y, which would culminate in Company Y being granted a lease for the building.

Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community and Resources

EXB81 REVIEW OF COUNCIL WIDE FEES AND CHARGES

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources, which presented the proposed fees and charges for 2022-23, for services provided by both of the Council's Directorates.

The review of fees and charges had been carried out as part of the budget preparations for 2022-23; these were presented in the schedules shown in Appendix A, B and C appended to the report.

The general aim in setting fees and charges was to ensure that the Council fully recovered the cost incurred in providing the service. In a number of cases this was achieved by breaking down the cost of providing a service on a unit basis, but given the volume of services the Council

provided, it was not always feasible on a case by case basis. Estimated costs would be reviewed at individual service level and budgeted income targets set to ensure the Council fully recovered the cost of providing that service. It was noted that recovery of the full costs of services throughout the year was dependent on a number of other factors outside the agreed charge, such as demand, competition and statutory elements.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges for 2022-23, as set out in Appendix A and for 2023-24 as set out in Appendices B and C, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB82 HOMELESSNESS FUNDING GRANT ALLOCATION - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – People, 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 proposal for the allocation of these grants.

Government confirmed the allocation of a key element of the overall investment of £315.8m in funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, which was available to local authorities in 2022-23 to support and deliver services to prevent and tackle homelessness. Members were advised that from this funding Halton had been allocated £344,829 for 2022-23, with an additional £11,338 for domestic abuse burdens. 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 report discussed the proposed funding allocations, rough sleepers initiative funding and winter funding enhancement for 2021-22. The proposals for the allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant were presented in Appendix 1 and the proposals for the allocation of the Rough Sleepers Initiative Grant were presented in Appendix 2. The Board was advised of an error in Appendix 1 – Support Officer ‘Columba’, should read Support Officer ‘Next Steps Accommodation Project (NSAP)’.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

Strategic Director
- People

- 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 2.

EXB83 ADULT SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL REPORT (LOCAL ACCOUNT) 2020-21

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – People, requesting agreement of the Adult Social Care Annual Report (Local Account) for 2020-21, which was appended to the report.

The Adult Social Care Annual Report was now an embedded part of the reporting cycle for Halton Borough Council and whilst not a mandatory requirement, it remained supported as good practice by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS).

The Board was advised that the format of the report for Halton was refreshed a couple of years ago in both its look and focus, making it more straightforward and therefore more accessible. The report included information on the successes and achievements across Adult Social Care, details of progress against performance metrics, some of the challenges faced, how we responded to community needs and details of future activities to be further developed.

It was also noted that the Annual Report, also known as the ‘Local Account’, served as a review mechanism for Adult Social Care to consider as part of ongoing continuous service improvement measures.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) agree for the Adult Social Care Annual Report 2020-21 to be published and shared with partners and stakeholder organisations; and
- 2) acknowledges the achievements across Adult Social Care during the height of the pandemic.

Strategic Director
- People

EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO

EXB84 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING – GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2022/23 - KEY DECISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – People, which presented the Voluntary Sector funding

Grant allocations for 2022/23.

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 from the People Directorate.

Following the panel's assessment, the recommendations for allocations were presented in paragraph 4.1, from an available budget of £226,640.

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

Strategic Director
- People

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB85 HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES - VEHICULAR ACCESS POLICY

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community and Resources, which provided information in respect of Halton's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and requested approval of the proposed changes to the current HWRC Access Policy and associated Vehicle Permit Scheme.

The proposed changes to the current scheme were considered by the Environment and Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on 17 November 2021. It was resolved by them that a report be presented to the Executive Board recommending the approval of a number of changes to the current policy.

The report outlined the reasons for the proposals being made and the revised Household Waste Recycling Centre Access Policy was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centre booking system, as currently operating and as detailed within the report, be adopted as a replacement for the Vehicle Permit Scheme;

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

- 2) the number of visits that can be made to the council's Household Waste Recycling Centres in a commercial type vehicle, van or a large trailer be limited to one per week; and
- 3) the revised Household Waste Recycling Centre Access Policy, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted.

EXB86 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 items 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.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB87 CARE PROVIDER CONTRACT UPLIFT 2022/23

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director -

People, informing of the proposed annual uplift for domiciliary care, direct payments, supported living and care home providers within Halton for 2022/23.

The Care Act 2014 required local authorities to ensure that the care market as a whole remained viable and sustainable. When commissioning services, local authorities must have regard to the cost effectiveness and value for money that the services offered for public funds. It was noted however, that authorities must not undertake any actions which may threaten the sustainability of the market and must ensure that remuneration for staff must be at least sufficient to comply with national minimum wage legislation, and that there was a fair price paid for care.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board note the contents of the report; and
- 2) approve the recommended uplift in fees for 2022/23.

Strategic Director
- People

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB88 WOODEND, FORMER UNIT 10 CATALYST TRADING ESTATE, WIDNES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval to lease Woodend, Former Unit 10 at Catalyst Trading Estate, Widnes.

The report provided the Board with background information in relation to the site and presented three options for its future use, as recommended by the Council's external consultants.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) authorises the Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property to arrange for all required documentation for the lease to be completed to the satisfaction of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services;
- 2) approves the lease on the terms reported in paragraph 3.6; and
- 3) Council be recommended to include the required funding for the scheme in the Capital Programme, as

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

outlined in paragraph 3.8.

MINUTES ISSUED: 22 March 2022

CALL- IN: 29 March 2022 at 5.00 pm

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 29 March 2022.

Meeting ended at 2.30 p.m.