

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 6 September 2022 in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Hutchinson, P. Lloyd Jones, A. Lowe, N. Plumpton Walsh, G. Stockton, Wainwright and Wall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Philbin and Thornton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, E. Dawson, G. Ferguson, P. Garnett and R. Rout

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CS10 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 7 June 2022 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CS11 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.

CS12 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.

CS13 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES

The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 10 February 2022.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CS14 HOUSING SUPPORT FUND 2022

The Board considered a report of the Operational

Director – Finance, which provided an update on the progress of the delivery of the £1.3m grant allocation received by the Council for the six month extension to the Government’s Household Support Fund (HSF). Halton’s allocation of grant funding was £1,297,880, for the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022, of which 5% was permitted to provide for the costs of administering the grant. A spending plan had been prepared and was attached as Appendix A to the report. Detailed information relating to spending for the period 1 April to 30 June 2022 was included as Appendix B.

It was noted that the DWP were currently working through the design and governance of the new HSF for the period 1 November 2022 to 31 March 2023. No details of the scheme were as yet available, however one change highlighted was there would be requirement to spend on particular groups of people as stipulated in the current HSF.

It was proposed that once the DWP had issued final guidance for the new HSF the Operational Director – Finance, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board (PPB), would recommend the new HSF scheme for approval by Executive Board. A further progress report would be submitted to the Board at its meeting in November.

RESOLVED: That

1. progress with delivery of the Household Support Fund, as outlined in the report, be noted;
2. a further progress report be brought to the next meeting of the Board; and
3. the Operational Director Finance in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate PPB recommend the new Household Support Fund scheme for approval by Executive Board.

Operational
Director –
Finance

CS15 RESOURCING THE COUNCIL – CURRENT CHALLENGES

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Policy, People, Performance and Efficiency, which provided Members with an overall view of the resourcing challenges currently faced by the Council, their impact, implications and options.

It was noted since the start of 2021/22 financial year, the number of Council service vacancies submitted for advertisement had increased significantly. The rise in

numbers had created a significant challenge as the Council's recruitment service was not resourced at a level sufficient to manage workflow of such volumes. This had created delays in service provision, which remained prevalent. The key reasons for the increase in volume of vacancies were set out in the report. However, in addition to these reasons, there was also a failure to attract candidates to some roles which resulted in re-advertising and repeated recruitment activity.

The Board was also advised that the recruitment service also processed recruitment for schools on a chargeable Service Level Agreement basis. Forty five schools had bought into the service and Members were updated on revised legislation in respect of school recruitment which was introduced in April 2020 and the impact this had on the recruitment service.

Members noted data outlined in the report which showed an upswing in vacancies across both the public and private sectors and in particular across the Liverpool City Region (LCR). All local authorities in the LCR were reporting recruitment issues and certain post types continued to provide the highest level of challenge across the City Region, namely social worker roles, caring posts in the adult care sector, nursing posts in the adult care sector, technical and professional roles across a broad range of service areas and more recently administrative type posts.

In order to address some of the recruitment issues experienced, a revised approach to attracting candidates to Council roles was to be explored. The report detailed the measures which were under consideration as part of this new approach. In addition, the Council was also engaged in a strategic programme of work with the other five LCR Council's headed up by the Chief Executive of the LCR Combined Authority, designed to consider the high level challenge of resourcing the local government sector more generally in the short, medium and long term.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the report and the actions being taken to mitigate the challenges.

CS16 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2022/23

The Board received a report of the Operational Director, Policy, People, Performance and Efficiency, which presented the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 1 of 2022/23.

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;
- Human Resources and Organisational Development;
- ICT and Administrative Support;
- Legal and Democracy;
- Catering, Stadium and Registration Services; and
- Property Services.

Arising from the discussion, the Board:

- requested further information on the Council's financial return on its solar panels and also on solar panel tariffs for the public; and
- requested that Executive Board provide the Board with an opportunity to provide some input into the Market report which is an item on Executive Board - 15 September 2022.

Chief Executive

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring reports be received and noted.

Meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.