

COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 1 February 2023 in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Ball, Baker, Begg, Bevan, J. Bradshaw, M. Bradshaw, Bramwell, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Carlin, Dennett, Davidson, Dourley, Fry, Garner, Gilligan, Goodall, Harris, S. Hill, V. Hill, Hutchinson, Jones, Leck, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, Loftus, Logan, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, Nolan, Nolan, Polhill, N. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe, Rowe, G. Stockton, Stretch, Skinner, Teeling, Thompson, Thornton, Wainwright, Wall, Wharton, Woolfall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Abbott, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh and Wallace

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Vasic, M. Reaney, S. Wallace-Bonner, S. Young, E. Dawson and G. Ferguson

Also in attendance: 9 members of the public

Action

COU52 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24 TO 2025/26

The Council considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which set out revenue budget savings proposals and the implementation of a Transformation Programme for the three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) reported to Executive Board on 17 November 2022, forecast significant revenue budget funding gaps for the Council over the next three years. Subsequently, Officers had continued to assess all the factors impacting upon the financial forecast and the MTFS had been updated as further information became available.

On 19 December 2022, the provisional Local Government Grant Settlement was announced, which provided a marginal improvement in Halton's funding provision. However, with continuing inflationary increases and service demand pressures, the latest MTFS still forecast a total budget funding gap of around £25m over the next three years, with a gap of £17m for 2023/24.

During the past year the Budget Working Group had led a process to review the budgets of all Council services and savings proposals of £6.881m over a three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26 had been identified, these were presented in Appendix 1.

In order to identify sufficient savings to bridge the forecast budget gaps, a more fundamental approach was required to transform service delivery via the implementation of a three year Transformation Programme. The report outlined details of the Programme and the one-off delivery costs.

In accordance with Standing Order 16 (3), a recorded vote was taken.

The following Members voted FOR the motion:

Councillors Ball, Baker, Begg, Bevan, J. Bradshaw, M. Bradshaw, Bramwell, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Carlin, Davidson, Dennett, Dourley, Fry, Garner, Gilligan, Goodall, Harris, S. Hill, V. Hill, Hutchinson, Jones, Leck, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, K. Loftus, Logan, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, L. Nolan, P. Nolan, N. Plumpton Walsh, Polhill, Ratcliffe, Rowe, Skinner, G. Stockton, T. Stretch, Angela Teeling, Thompson, Thornton, Wainwright, Wall, Wharton, Woolfall, and Wright.

There were no abstentions.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council's latest financial position and forecast budget gaps, as outlined within section three of the report, be noted;
- 2) the budget savings proposals for 2023/24 to 2025/26 presented in Appendix 1 be approved; and
- 3) the three year transformation programme and funding arrangements, as outlined within section five of the report be approved.

Operational
Director - Finance

Meeting ended at 6.56 p.m.