

CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on
Tuesday, 24 January 2023 in the Civic Suite - Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chair), Hutchinson, P. Lloyd Jones, A. Lowe,
N. Plumpton Walsh, Teeling and Thornton

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Philbin, Wainwright and Wall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, E. Dawson, P. Garnett and J. Yates

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CS22 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 1 November 2022 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CS23 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

CS24 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

CS25 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP NOTES

The Board considered the minutes of the Member Development Group meeting held on 20 July 2022.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CS26 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND - 1 OCTOBER 2022-31

MARCH 2023

The Board received a report from the Operational Director, Finance, which updated Members on the progress of the delivery of the Government's Household Support Fund from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Operational
Director - Finance

Halton was awarded grant funding of £1,297,880 and any unspent grant as at 31 March 2023 must be returned to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The report outlined the Spending Plan which set out how the grant funding would be utilised via a combination of Council Departments and the Voluntary Sector, to deliver help and assistance to vulnerable households. The Benefits Division would co-ordinate the use of the grant on behalf of the Council in order to maximise the benefit of the grant funding for the Borough and to ensure that it would be fully utilised.

£178,000 was allocated to a Discretionary Support Scheme for individuals or families who needed urgent help to pay for things such as essential food, toiletries, household items or essential fuel bills. During the period 1 October – 31 December 2022, 421 households had received support.

The Household Support Fund was intended to cover a wide range of low income households in need, including families with children, pensioners and people with disabilities. Free school meal vouchers of £12 per week would be issued during school holidays. £100 would be awarded to vulnerable pensioner households in receipt of council tax reduction. By December 2022, 4,181 vulnerable pensioners had been awarded the payment.

Progress on delivery of the Household Support Fund to be continued to be reported to the Board.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) progress with delivery of the latest Household Support Fund be noted; and
- 2) preparations for administration of the extension of the Household Support Fund and the Energy Bills Alternative Funding Scheme be noted.

The Board asked that thanks be noted to the Benefits Team for their work co-ordinating this grant funding.

The Board received a report from the Executive Officer, Chief Executive's Department which provided an update on related activities aimed at reducing the Council's impact on the environment and CO2 emissions from Council activities.

Since it started to measure its carbon emissions in 2006/2007, overall emissions have reduced in the Council's operations from 26,338 tonnes of CO2 to 9,327 tonnes. In 2020/21, emissions were 9,770 tonnes of CO2 and in 2021/22 the overall emissions had reduced a further 4.5% to 9,327 tonnes.

The report outlined a number key projects which had been completed or commenced during 2022 which included:

- Plans to extend the existing Solar Farm at the former St. Michael's Golf Course;
- Electric Vehicle charging infrastructures to be provided at Lower House Lane Depot and Air Source Heat pumps to be installed at the Leisure Centre, which would significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the building;
- Raised awareness of climate change which included an e-learning course for Officers and Members;
- The launch of the Big Halton Forest Project. The aim was to plant an additional 130,000 new trees over the next 7 years; and
- The continuation of the LED street lighting upgrade programme; 90% of the Borough had now been completed.

There was a number of projects that the Council was working on in partnership with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority which included:

- Green Homes Grant;
- Sustainable Warmth Fund;
- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund; and
- Solar Together.

Following discussions, it was agreed that the Council would look into whether any wind turbines could be accommodated and whether solar panels could be installed on school buildings.

RESOLVED: That the report and the ongoing work be noted.

CS28 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS

The Board considered a report which provided a statistical analysis of the Corporate Complaints received during the 2021/22 financial year.

The report outlined the two stage procedure to deal with corporate complaints; a corporate complaints trend analysis from 2021-22; the nature of those complaints received; and outcomes. In addition, the report also provided a summary on complaints and queries that had been received by the Local Government Ombudsman during 2021-22. It was noted that the Ombudsman had made 13 decisions during the year and upheld 3 complaints.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

CS29 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2022/23

The Board received the Performance Management Report for Quarter 2 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.

RESOLVED: That the Quarter 2 Performance Management report be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.