

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 17 April 2025 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: E. Dawson, Z. Fearon, G. Ferguson, W. Rourke, D. Cooke, L. Crampton and P. Preston

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EXB117 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2025, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB118 URGENT DECISIONS

The Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on two urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Board.

It was noted that the Council's Constitution gave authority to the Chief Executive to take urgent decisions, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director Finance and/or the Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.

Two urgent decisions had been made since the last meeting of the Board and full details were published on the Council's website.

RESOLVED: That the two urgent decision taken since the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

DEPUTY LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

EXB119 WIDNES TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION FRAMEWORK - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Environment and Regeneration, that presented the Regeneration Framework for Widnes Town Centre for approval. The Framework set out nine spatial strategies and deliverables to drive the future of Widnes Town Centre. It summarised the evolution of the Town Centre over the years and some of the challenges that would need to be overcome, before setting out where the development opportunities would lie.

Consultation on developing the Framework had taken place with the Widnes Town Centre Panel, Council staff, Council website, pop up events held in the Town Centre, major landowners and a workshop with students from Cronton College.

The Framework was supported by the following two evidence-based documents which had been composed by industry specialists to inform the special strategies and projects:

- Widnes Town Centre, Active Travel and Movement Study; and
- Widnes Town Centre Engagement Feedback Report.

Reason(s) for Decision

The Framework has the potential to impact the wider Halton Community.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

N/A

Implementation Date

Subject to obtaining the necessary permissions and securing funding, the period from 2025 to 2035.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve

- 1) the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework, the spatial strategies and projects outlined within it be supported and approved;

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

- 2) the next steps to delivery as outlined in section 7 of the Framework;
- 3) delegated authority being given to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Major Projects and Climate Change, to pursue further investigations into identified project areas as opportunities come forward;
- 4) the move towards establishing a Widnes Town Centre Strategic Board comprising relevant public and private sector partners, to have direct oversight of the delivery of projects; and
- 5) the Widnes Town Centre Regeneration Framework and its two supporting documents be published on the Council website.

CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO

EXB120 TAXI LICENSING MATTER

The Board considered a report of the Director Legal and Democratic Services, which outlined recommendations from the Regulatory Committee in relation to amendments to the Councils existing Hackney Carriage Stands Order. Details of the current taxi rank provisions, and the proposed amendments along with the consultation exercise undertaken with Halton Taxi Trade, Cheshire Police and members of the public were detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board approve proposals detailed in Appendix A of the Regulatory report (see Appendix 1) dated 12 March 2025 in respect of stands 11, 13, 17 and 19; and
- 2) the Director Legal and Democratic Services, be authorised to fulfil all procedural requirements in accordance with Section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and to make the taxi stands order accordingly.

Director, Legal and Democratic Services

EXB121 ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION 2025

The Board received a report of the Director Legal and Democratic Services, which sought the approval of Council to a number of changes to the Constitution.

The revised version of the Constitution picked up the changes to the Council's working arrangements that had taken place during the year, as well as other changes which were intended to assist the Council to operate more effectively.

Members were referred to Appendix one where the proposed amendments were listed; these had been considered by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, in accordance with Article 16.02.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board recommends Council to approve the changes to the Constitution including the matters set out in Appendix one.

Director, Legal
and Democratic
Services

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

EXB122 RECRUITMENT OF TWO SPECIALIST FOSTER CARERS

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children's Services, which sought approval to the invest to save proposal of recruiting 2 Specialist Foster Carer's as an additional care option for our Children and Young People with complex needs in Care. The report set out the benefits to the child and to the Council of a Specialist Foster Carers Scheme.

RESOLVED: The Board approve the recruitment of 2 Specialist Foster Carers as part of a scheme that aims to move children and/or young people from high cost residential placements into a foster care, family environment.

Executive Director
of Children's
Services

EXB123 HALTON PROVISION OF INTERNAL SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children's Services, that outlined the background and current position of the supported accommodation contract and proposed options around re-procurement of the Service.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted and options appraised;
- 2) approval is granted to the recommendation that the contract with People, Potential, Possibilities (P3) should be extended for a further twelve months without going through the Procurement Standing

Executive Director
of Adult Services

Order 1.14.4 (non-emergency procedures – exceeding a value threshold of £100,000), seeking to waive part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders;

- 3) a 12 month extension of the internal Supported Accommodation Contract, inclusive of the inflationary uplift be approved;
- 4) permission is granted for the Head of Commissioning and Placement, and the Head of Children in Care and Care Leavers, to implement the building transfer; and
- 5) the re-commissioning of the service, via open competitive tender by March 2026, and delegation of responsibility to the Head of Commissioning to undertake any further necessary steps be approved.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB124 HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATION

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director Adults Services, which described the Council's annual Homelessness Funding Grant Award from Government and allocated spend for 2025/26 to tackle and prevent homelessness.

Government confirmed the allocation of a key element of the overall investment in funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, which was available to local authorities in 2025/26 to support and deliver services to prevent and tackle homelessness. Members were advised that from this funding Halton had been allocated £547,706 for 2025/26. 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 proposals for the allocation of the Homelessness Prevention Grant were presented in Appendix 1, Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding Grant in Appendix 1a, Winter Pressures Grant Funding in Appendix 1b, CAB Cost Savings in Appendix 2, Repossession Referrals in Appendix 2a, Repossession Notice Activity in Appendix 2b and case studies were presented in Appendix 3.

RESOLVED: That the Board approve the recommendations for expenditure against the grants, as

Executive Director
of Adult Services

described in Appendices 1 and 3.

EXB125 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 item of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) 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 that in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Section 100A (4) 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.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIOS

N.B. Councillor Wharton declared a Other Registrable Interest in the following item of business as he has a family member with connections to Park House.

EXB126 ANN STREET WEST / GRANGEWAY COURT BUSINESS CASE

The Board considered a report which highlighted the need for greater sufficiency in respect of:

- Emergency accommodation for those vulnerable individuals and families who are fleeing domestic abuse;
- Independent self-contained supported accommodation for young people and care leavers, who are prepared for, and able to live more independently; and
- Provision to relieve homelessness pressures.

The proposed accommodation model across both areas would meet the needs of vulnerable families and the needs of young people, providing financial benefit in relation to reducing the amount of external resources and external supported accommodation currently commissioned.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves:

Executive Director
of Adult Services

- 1) the use of the remaining three accommodation blocks / 12 units at Grangeway Court be granted to, and developed by, Community Safety & Protection, within the proposed plan, for the sole use as emergency accommodation under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, fulfilling our statutory duty;
- 2) Council be asked to approve inclusion in the 2025/26 capital programme, of the capital works at Grangeway Court as outlined in paragraph 3.7;
- 3) the use of 1 Ann Street West (known as Maya Court) be granted to Children Services to pursue a new lease arrangement with Riverside, for the sole use as Supported Accommodation, under the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023, fulfilling our statutory duty; and
- 4) the commissioning of the Supported Accommodation contracts across the sites will be set out in a future report to enable options to be explored.

MINUTES ISSUED: 23 April 2025

CALL-IN: 30 April 2025 at 5.00 pm.

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 30 April 2025.

Meeting ended at 2.55 p.m.