

EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 16 November 2017 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chair), D. Cargill, Harris, R. Hignett, S. Hill, Jones, T. McInerney, Nelson, Wharton and Wright

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Parr, I. Leivesley, M. Vasic, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, E. O'Meara, T. Gibbs, S. Wallace-Bonner, G. Cook and A. Scott

Also in attendance: Two members of the public and Richard Strachan, Independent Chair of the Halton Local Safeguarding Children Board

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

EXB60 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 URGENT BUSINESS

The Board was advised that a matter had arisen which required immediate attention by the Board (Minute EXB 73 refers), therefore, pursuant to Section 100 B (4) and 100 E and in view of the provider's decision to close Millbrow Care Home earlier than planned (i.e. in December 2017), and a proposed strategy to prevent this was presented to the Board, ruled that this item would be considered at this meeting.

EXB61 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

In respect of Minute EXB 58, which was deferred for further consideration, the Board had had the opportunity to consider a revised Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) proposal, which was made available to the public. Following consideration of the revised report and an amendment to the cartographic error on the Kingsway site

Action

which would be corrected on the consultation version,
it was:-

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the draft DALP be approved for the purposes of a minimum of a six week period of public consultation;
- 2) the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Physical Environment, be delegated powers to approve editorial and technical amendments that do not materially affect the overarching development strategy as currently set out in the document; and
- 3) the results of the public consultation exercise be reported back to the Executive Board.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO

EXB62 HALTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

The Board considered a report of the Independent Chair, Halton Safeguarding Children Board, on the Halton Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2016/17.

Richard Strachan, Chair of the LSCB, attended the meeting and described how organisations and individuals across all sectors were working together to safeguard children and young people. The Annual Report provided a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The report included details on lessons from learning and improvement activity within the reporting period, including Serious Case Reviews, Practice Learning Reviews and Child Death Reviews and audits. In addition, it listed contributions made to the LSCB by partners as well as details of its expenditure.

It was noted that since November 2013, the LSCB had become subject to review of their effectiveness. In 2014, the LSCB was reviewed by Ofsted, alongside the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, looked after children and care leavers.

A summary of the report's content was set out for Members' information. It was reported that the Children and Social Work Act 2017 would abolish LSCBs from 2019. There was an expectation that key safeguarding partners such as the Local Authority, the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group, would establish multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding children processes and practice.

Mr Strachan dealt with Members' questions and was thanked for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report and associated Annual Report, attached at Appendix 1, be noted.

EXB63 SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA 2018/19 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on the introduction of a National Funding Formula (NFF) for schools and high needs.

The Board was advised that in July 2017, the Secretary of State confirmed the introduction of the national funding formula and announced an increase in per pupil funding and a minimum per pupil funding level for primary and secondary school pupils in 2018/19. It was reported that local authorities were advised that the minimum funding rates would be used by the Department for Education to determine the total allocation of funding to each authority.

On 11 October 2017, Schools Forum received a report which highlighted the key changes to the funding of schools. Following the release of indicative budgets a consultation paper was sent to all schools in the Borough setting out three options for their consideration. The consultation also addressed the issue of Halton's previous financial commitments for High Needs against the key budget headings as well as its current commitments. Details of other key changes to funding the Schools Block were detailed in the report and a copy of the consultation responses were attached at Appendix B.

It was proposed that during the two year transitional phase, Halton move to an interim formula so as to retain the primary lump sum, and to follow the principles of the transitional national funding formula in all other factors. It was further noted that to address the budget shortfall in High Needs a transfer of 0.5% of the Schools Block budget would

be required.

Reason(s) for Decision

To ensure that there was a fair distribution of resources across schools in the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Consideration was given to either retaining the existing funding formula with uplift for the increase; however, this was not an option supported by the schools. Implementation of the transitional NFF was considered but this would have an impact on the smaller schools.

Implementation Date

1 April 2018.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) an interim funding formula for 2018/19 and 2019/20 be approved, to allow the retention of the primary lump sum at 2017/18 levels to support small schools within the Authority; and
- 2) the decision to transfer 0.5% from the Schools Block to High Needs Block be noted.

Strategic Director
- People

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB64 ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MODEL FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVIDER SERVICES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which sought approval to develop an alternative delivery model for some Adult Social Care Provider Services.

The Board was advised that Sefton Council had approached Halton and Knowsley Councils to explore the opportunity of expanding Sefton's range of care services. Currently, Sefton was a sole shareholder in Sefton New Directions (SND) which provided a range of care services including day services re-ablement, intermediate care, respite services and supported living. With investment from Halton and Knowsley Councils to expand the current organisation, this would in effect be a shareholder agreement with SND.

The report set out a list of advantages for Halton of such a partnership, for Members to consider. It was proposed that Halton would look to incorporate In-house Learning Disability Services and recently purchased Care Homes. To ensure full consideration of the impact of the proposal on Halton services, it was proposed that a local Halton Operation Steering Group and a Member Steering Board be established.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Strategic Director, People, enters into further discussions with Sefton and Knowsley Councils to explore the opportunities for Halton to develop an alternative delivery model for some Adult Social Care Provider Services; and
- 2) a further report be brought back to Executive Board.

Strategic Director
- People

EXB65 0 - 19 HEALTHY CHILD SERVICE TENDER

The Board considered a report of the Director of Public Health which sought approval of the award of a contract to deliver the 0-19 Healthy Child Service.

The Board was advised that, following the advertisement of a tender opportunity for the commissioning of a 0-19 Healthy Child Service (the Service), an evaluation exercise was carried out on 14 November 2017. It was noted that the Service would support the Council in meeting its statutory duties with regards to public health services for children and young people.

Executive Board were advised verbally of the outcome of the process.

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Standing Order 2.10.2, the Director of Public Health be authorised to enter into a contract with the preferred supplier for a 0-19 Healthy Child Service, and award a contract for a period of five years with the option of two additional one year contracts.

Director of Public
Health

RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

EXB66 2017/18 QUARTER 2 SPENDING

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which reported on the 2017/18 Quarter 2 spending as at 30 September 2017.

A summary of spending against the revenue budget up to 30 September 2017 was attached to the report at Appendix 1. This provided individual statements for each department. The Board was advised that, in overall terms, revenue expenditure was £1.939m above the budget profile at this stage. It was reported that over the last quarter, the position had worsened and increased by £1.131m. If current spending patterns continued, projections showed that the Council would be overspent by approximately £4m by year-end if no corrective action was taken.

It was further noted that the main budget pressure facing the Council continued to be within the Children and Families Department, with Out of Borough Residential Places and Out of Borough Fostering dominating the overspend position. In addition, the Complex Care Pool Budget with Halton Clinical Commissioning Group was over budget at 30 September 2017, with financial pressures within the Service for health and social care services covering Residential and Domiciliary Care, Direct Payments and Day Care.

The Capital Programme had been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding as schemes had developed and these were detailed in Appendix 3.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) all spending continues to be limited to the absolutely essential;
- 2) Strategic Directors continue to take appropriate action to contain overall spending within their total operational budget by year-end; and
- 3) Council be recommended to approve the revised Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 3.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB67 TREASURY MANAGEMENT HALF YEAR REPORT 2017-18

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which updated Members on the activities undertaken on the money market, as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

The report provided supporting information on the economic background, interest rate forecast, short term

borrowing rates, longer term borrowing rates, borrowing/investments, budget monitoring, new long term borrowing, policy guidelines and treasury management indicators. It was noted that no debt rescheduling had been undertaken during the quarter.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EXB68 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2018/19 to 2020/21.

The Board was advised that the MTFS set out a three year projection of resources and spending based on information currently available.

The projections in the forecast showed there was a need to make a significant level of savings over the next three years. This was the effect of projections of public spending through to 2020 which resulted from the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review. The MTFS took account of:

- The Comprehensive Spending Review 2015;
- The Local Government Finance Settlement 2017/18 dated 21 February 2017;
- The Budget 2017 announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 8 March 2017; and
- The announcement of the Government's final position on the schools national funding formula and high needs formula dated 14 September 2017.

The MTFS provided initial guidance to the Council on its financial position into the medium term. Revenue savings of approximately £5.6m, £13.2m and £3.3m would be required over the next three years. It was noted that as a result, a total of £22.1m would need to be removed from the Council's budget which represented 21.4% of the net budget.

The Board was advised that the MTFS had a number of objectives, as listed in the report. The Council would need to consider these objectives when balancing its

budget over the next three years. The report also set out the Council's budget strategy, with budget savings proposals and areas identified for further savings. The report contained details of the Council's Capital Strategy for the management of assets such as land and buildings in Council ownership.

Reason(s) for the Decision

To seek approval for the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19 to 2020/21.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The alternative option of not maintaining a MTFS had been considered. However, this would not follow good financial management practice, as the MTFS was a key element in informing the Council's financial planning and budget setting processes.

Implementation Date

The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/21 would be implemented from 1 April 2018.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved;
- 2) the 2018/19 base budget be prepared on the basis of the underlying assumptions set out in the Strategy;
- 3) the Budget Strategy and Capital Strategy be approved;
- 4) the Reserves and Balances Strategy be approved;
- 5) the award of Council Tax Support for 2018/19 remains at the 2017/18 level of 21.55%; and
- 6) the Council's 2018/19 Council Tax Support grant is not shared with the Parish Councils.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB69 DETERMINATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2018/19 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the requirement for the Council to determine the Tax Base for its area and the Tax Base for

each of the Parishes.

The Council was required to notify the Tax Base figure to the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Environment Agency by 31 January 2018. In addition, the Council was required to calculate and advise the Parish Councils of their relevant Tax Bases.

The Board was advised that the Tax Base was the measure used for calculating Council Tax and was used by both the billing authority (the Council) and the major precepting authorities (Cheshire Fire Authority and the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner), in the calculation of their Council Tax requirements. It was arrived at in accordance with a prescribed formula which represented the estimated full year number of chargeable dwellings in the Borough expressed in terms of the equivalent Band "D" dwellings. Taking account of all the relevant information and applying a 97% collection rate, the calculation for 2018/19 gave a base figure of 34,435 for the Borough as a whole.

It was noted that since 2013/14 the tax base calculation had included an element for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (the replacement for Council Tax Benefit).

Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the 2018/19 Council Tax Base for the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There is no alternative option, as unless the Council Tax Base is approved it would not be possible to set the level of Council Tax to be charged for 2018/19.

Implementation Date

The 2018/19 Council Tax Base will be implemented from 1st April 2018.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve

- 1) the Council Tax Base for 2018/19 be set at 34,435 for the Borough, and that the Cheshire Fire Authority, the Cheshire Police and Crime

Operational
Director - Finance

Commissioner and the Environment Agency be so notified; and

- 2) the Council Tax Base for each of the Parishes be as follows:

Parish	Tax Base
Hale	665
Halebank	529
Daresbury	172
Moore	328
Preston Brook	338
Sandymoor	1,112

(N.B. Councillor Ron Hignett declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as he was a member of the Daresbury Public Sector Joint Venture Board)

EXB70 INITIAL BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which presented the revenue budget proposals for 2018/19.

The Board was advised that the Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast potential revenue budget funding gaps of £22m over the next three years. This figure assumed that the Council would apply a general council tax increase of 1.9% in each year with a levy of 3% social care precept in 2018/19. It was reported that the gap for 2018/19 was £5.6m.

Appendix 1 presented the first set of proposals totalling £2.2m and it was proposed to implement these immediately in order to achieve a part-year saving in 2017/18. This would assist in keeping the Council's overall spending in line with budget. In addition, a number of proposals would take time to implement and therefore commencing this process as soon as possible would assist with ensuring they were fully implemented from 1 April 2018.

It was reported that a second set of budget saving proposals currently under consideration by the Budget Working Group, would be recommended to Council on 7 March 2018, in order to deliver a balanced budget for 2018/19.

Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the initial set of revenue budget proposals for 2018/19.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There is no alternative option, as failure to set a balanced budget would put the Council in breach of statutory requirements.

Implementation Date

The 2018/19 revenue budget will be implemented from 1st April 2018.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the budget proposals for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix 1, attached to the report.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB71 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 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 paragraphs 3 and 5 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 paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO,
TRANSPORTATION PORTFOLIO AND RESOURCES
PORTFOLIO**

EXB72 FORMER CASTAWAY SITE - LAND DISPOSAL

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on the disposal of the former Castaway Site, Widnes.

The Board was advised that, following negotiations, heads of terms had been agreed in principle for the Council to sell the land as indicated on the plan appended to the report. Details of the proposed use of the land were set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That disposal of part of the former Castaway Site, as shown edged blue on the plan attached to the report, for the sum stated in the report, be approved.

Strategic Director
- Enterprise,
Community and
Resources

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB73 CLOSURE OF MILLBROW CARE HOME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which provided an update in respect of the closure of Millbrow Care Home and a proposed strategy to prevent this.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report be noted and the proposal to acquire the freehold interest in Millbrow, Widnes, in line with the associated risks, be approved and the Chief Executive be asked to use his emergency powers in consultation to make any necessary amendment to the Capital Programme and report the outcome to the next meeting of Council; and
- 2) the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, be authorised to carry out the legal formalities and to take all necessary steps incidental or ancillary to these actions; and

Strategic Director
- People

- 3) Council be asked to approve the inclusion of this scheme in the 2017/18 Capital Programme, the costs and funding of which are set out in section 5 of the report.

MINUTES ISSUED: 21 November 2017

CALL-IN: 28 November 2017

With the exception of Minute EXB 73, which is exempt due to the urgent nature of the decision, any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00 pm on 28 November 2017.

Meeting ended at 2.54 p.m.