

COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 18 October 2023 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Abbott, Ball, Baker, Begg, Bevan, J. Bradshaw, Bramwell, Cargill, Dennett, Davidson, Fry, Garner, Gilligan, Goodall, S. Hill, V. Hill, Jones, Leck, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, Logan, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, Philbin, Polhill, N. Plumpton Walsh, Stockton, Stretch, Skinner, Teeling, Thompson, Thornton, Wainwright, Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Woolfall and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Carlin, Dourley, Harris, Hutchinson, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, L. Nolan, P. Nolan, C. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe, Rowe and Ryan

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, S. Wallace-Bonner, S. Young, G. Ferguson, W. Rourke and Z. Fearon

Also in attendance: None

Action

COU28 COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 19 July 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

COU29 THE MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcement:-

- A Christmas bingo would be held on 28 November and a Christmas Party on 18 December, both at the Halton Stadium, to raise money for the Mayor's Fund.

COU30 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader reported on the following issues since the last meeting of the Council:

- he provided an update on Local Government finance;
- Appointments Committee had met and Zoe Fearon had been appointed as the Director of Children's Services. The Leader welcomed Zoe to the meeting; and
- he outlined the impact of the Government's decision to cancel the HS2 section between Birmingham and

Manchester.

COU31 URGENT DECISIONS

The Council considered a report of the Chief Executive, on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Council note the report.

COU32 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Executive Board meetings on 13 July 2023 and 14 September 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU33 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Council considered the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 5 July 2023.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

COU34 QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

It was noted that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order No. 8.

COU35 2023/24 SPENDING AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

The Council considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which sought approval for the Council's 2023/24 to 2025/26 Capital Programme.

Operational
Director - Finance

RESOLVED: That the 2023/24 to 2025/26 Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 3.18 of the report and Appendix 3, be approved.

COU36 CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE HEALTH AND CARE PARTNERSHIP

The Council considered a report of the Operational Director – Legal and Democratic Services, that sought authority for the Council to become a member of the new statutory Integrated Care Partnership for Cheshire & Merseyside, to be known as the Cheshire & Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (C&M HCP).

Operational
Director, Legal
and Democratic
Services

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council become a member of the Cheshire & Merseyside Health & Care Partnership;
- 2) the terms of reference of the Cheshire & Merseyside Health & Care Partnership, set out at Appendix 1, be adopted and that the Operational Director – Legal & Democratic in consultation with the Portfolio Holder – Health and Wellbeing, be authorised to make minor changes to the final version if necessary;
- 3) the Portfolio Holder - Health and Wellbeing be nominated to be the Council's representative on the Cheshire & Merseyside Health and Care Partnership; and
- 4) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to nominate an Executive Director / Director of Public Health to be a member of the Committee if considered appropriate.

COU37 MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARDS AND THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE BOARD

The Council considered the reports of the following Boards in the period since the meeting of Council on 19 July 2023:-

- Children, Young People and Families;
- Employment, Learning and Skills and Community;
- Health;
- Safer;
- Environment and Urban Renewal;
- Corporate Services; and
- Audit and Governance Board.

COU38 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Council considered the reports of the following Committees in the period since the meeting of Council on 19 July 2023:-

- Development Management;
- Appointments; and
- Regulatory Sub Committee

COU39 NOTICE OF MOTION - PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted in

accordance with Standing Order No. 6.

The following Motion was proposed by Councillor Bevan and seconded by Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh:-

PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

This Council agrees that it is committed to challenging all forms domestic abuse and to promoting a culture in which people can be protected and the victims of domestic abuse be supported.

Council notes that in March, on International Women's Day, Jess Phillips M.P read out names in the House of Commons of 109 women and girls who had lost their lives in cases where a male perpetrator had either been charged or convicted of their killing. Of the names read out 2 were unnamed, unknown women. The youngest victim was 15 and the oldest was 92 years of age. This list does not include women who have survived attempts on their life or those deaths in which cases never see anyone charged. We believe that this illustrates the scale of the problem, and Council agrees to commit to taking action to challenge domestic abuse.

Council agrees to:

- 1) Take steps to prepare an Action Plan to submit the Council as a candidate for White Ribbon accreditation, so that the Council can proactively engage in a range of actions to tackle the causes, and effects of domestic abuse, and to promote support for victims, and to challenge the behaviour of perpetrators.
- 2) We will proactively promote awareness and an end of domestic abuse with local schools, and through the operation of Council services, where we can do so.
- 3) We will make available to all Council Members and staff, the means for them to undertake an awareness course on domestic abuse, so that the early signs of it can be identified, and staff and members made aware of how to react to incidents.
- 4) We will hold an annual awareness event in conjunction with White Ribbon Day annually in

November, the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women, to encourage men and boys to pledge never to take part in, condone or stay silent about violence against women.

- 5) We will take steps to ensure awareness for women who are experiencing violence to know where to get help through effective promotion of services available.
- 6) We will continue to promote the Safer Streets Campaign raising awareness of how both Men and Women can play their part in making Halton's streets safer in partnership with Cheshire Police.

The motion was put and carried.

RESOLVED: That the motion be approved.

COU40 NOTICE OF MOTION - SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order No. 6.

The following Motion was proposed by Councillor Abbott and seconded by Councillor Dennett:-

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

This Council continues to recognise its commitment to equality and diversity and to handling all people, fairly and equally in its dealings, both as an employer, and in deliver of public services.

Council has proudly maintained for many years its commitment to challenge discrimination and meet with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, Council is now mindful that the Social Mobility Commission has now recommended to Government that it act to also recognise that socio-economic status (class) be treated as a protected characteristic, and we note the strong commitment made to supporting this by Mayor Rotheram, of the Liverpool City Region.

Council notes that "class" or socio-economic status is not currently a protected characteristic under equality law in the UK. That makes the UK an outlier in Europe, where in 20 out of 35 countries provide protection from discrimination on grounds of socio-economic status. It is still the case that in the UK your socio-economic background has an impact on your opportunities in life.

Council agrees that:

- 1) it supports efforts to define socio-economic status as a protected characteristic and we call upon Government to take steps to recognise this need, as have many other states within the EU;
- 2) we pledge to show regard to socio-economic status in the Council's dealings, including a commitment not to discriminate persons from use or access to services based on their socio-economic status (class); and
- 3) it will work where possible with the LCR, and Government to support efforts to recognise the impact a person's socio-economic status may have on their opportunities in life.

The motion was put and carried.

RESOLVED: That the motion be approved.

Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.