

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 19 July 2018 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: A. Scott, D. Parr, I. Leivesley, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, G. Cook, T. Coffey and S. Wallace-Bonner

Also in attendance: None

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

#### EXB16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### **CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO**

#### EXB17 CARE HOME PROVISION - BELVEDERE DEVELOPMENT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which sought approval to develop Belvedere as a care home for older people.

The current availability of care homes in Halton was limited, and the recent closure of Cartref Care Home had placed additional pressure on the system. It was reported that the Local Authority were working closely with key stakeholders to secure the future sustainability of the sector. To prevent closure, two care homes in the Borough had recently been purchased but it was still necessary to increase available capacity within the market.

Members were advised that Belvedere, located in

*Action*

Runcorn and in Council ownership, had previously been used as accommodation for homeless people and had been empty for four years. Substantial refurbishment would be required to adapt it for such use and work was underway to establish the full extent of the renovation required.

It was further noted that other options to increase capacity were at an early stage and this included the former care home at Lilycross. The work would be undertaken in collaboration with partners in the social care and health sectors.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Director of Adult Social Services develop a costed proposal for the development of Belvedere; and
- 2) a further report be brought back to Executive Board, setting out other potential options to increase capacity within this sector and associated partnership agreements and models of delivery, for approval.

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#### EXB18 LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (LSCB) ARRANGEMENTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which highlighted the key changes to Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB).

The Board was advised that legislative changes, introduced through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, made a number of recommendations that would enable a revised framework to be developed locally and sub-regionally. However, it was noted that it was no longer a statutory requirement for the LSCB to exist.

The report set out a proposal for future arrangements built on existing pan-Cheshire arrangements, which included Halton, Cheshire East and Warrington. In addition, the report also made recommendations for the scrutiny of safeguarding practice in Warrington to be strengthened.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) in principle, work continues across the four areas to develop a model which enhances the current

Strategic Director  
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Pan-Cheshire approach to safeguarding children;

- 2) these developments are considered within a framework of strategy, policy and practice;
- 3) each area uses these themes to ensure that robust arrangements remain in place to quality assure and scrutinise strategy, policy and practice at local level;
- 4) building on initial discussions, partners develop a clear operating model for monitoring future safeguarding arrangements, which includes governance, financial arrangements and sub-groups, including the Child Death Overview Panel, both local and Pan-Cheshire level;
- 5) existing funding arrangements remain in place for an agreed minimum period (2020/2021), whilst funding is reviewed, recognising that this would require the agreement of all existing funding partners across current LSCB arrangements; and
- 6) Executive Board receive an update report with firm recommendations in December 2018 following this period of consultation at local and sub-regional levels.

## **CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB19 EVERYONE EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2018-2021**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, People, which presented the new Everyone Early Help Strategy (the Strategy) which combined services for children, adults and public health.

Members were advised that this transformation in thinking was about undertaking a whole system review of the approach to Early Help and Prevention, with a focus on increasing the resilience of communities and their potential to help themselves. This would be supported by a planned prioritisation of resources, integration, collaboration and understanding the benefits that Early Help could have on a

wide range of longer term outcomes for everyone involved.

The report detailed Halton's approach and long-standing commitment to Early Help and Prevention across all agencies and strategic partners. It was reported that within the Strategy were five key aims and three priorities, where all agencies would need to work towards helping embed Early Help principles. These principles were noted as being:-

- The right early help in the right place, at the right time;
- Ensuring a whole system approach to early help with strong partnership working; and
- Empowering local people and communities to build capacity and resilience, to enable people and communities to do more for themselves.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the comments on the Strategy content be noted; and
- 2) the Board supports the implementation of the Strategy.

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## **RESOURCES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB20 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, which presented the Treasury Management Annual Report 2017/18.

The report updated the Board on activities undertaken on the money market as required by the Treasury Management Policy. It provided supporting information on the economic outlook, interest rate forecast, short term borrowing rates, long term borrowing rates, borrowing and investments, budget monitoring, new long term borrowing and treasury management indicators. It was noted that no debt rescheduling had been undertaken during 2017/18.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

### **EXB21 COUNCIL TAX SECTION 13A DISCOUNT POLICY**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, proposing

amendments to the Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy (the Policy).

The Board was advised that, at a meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Board on 5 June 2018, the Board had considered a report regarding two proposed changes to the Policy in respect of Care Leavers.

It was reported that since April 2018, Halton's Care Leavers received 100% council tax discount, which was introduced to support Care Leavers with their transition into adulthood and to help them avoid falling into financial hardship. However, following discussions with neighbouring authorities, two potential anomalies within Halton's Policy had been identified, and the report sought to rectify them.

The amendments to the Policy as proposed, would help to ensure that the Policy remained equitable and provided a consistent approach to that adopted by other North West Councils. The amended Policy was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the two amendments to the Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy, outlined in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.6 of the report, be approved; and
- 2) the updated Council Tax Section 13A Discount Policy presented with Appendix 1 attached to the report, be approved.

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## EXB22 BUSINESS RATES ACTION AREAS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on proposed Business Rates Action Areas.

The report set out details of the proposed scheme, which would apply in specific areas, and would encourage private sector investment in high quality commercial buildings and create jobs for local people. It was reported that the proposed geographically focused initiative would not alter or affect the previously agreed Borough-wide discretionary scheme, approved by Executive Board in 2015.

Businesses would be considered for eligibility against a set of criteria, as detailed in the report. A percentage of the

business rates from those businesses assisted, would be ring-fenced after three years to aid regeneration in the Key Impact Area. An annual review of the scheme would determine its effectiveness and impact on the sale of land, the quality of buildings constructed and the number of jobs created.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) approve the scheme; and
- 2) receives a progress report once the scheme has been in operation for twelve months.

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## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB23 EXTERNAL FUNDING TEAM - COST RECOVERY**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on a pilot charging policy for bid-writing services.

The Board was advised that through the External Funding Team, the Council offered a bid-writing and monitoring service to the private sector, the voluntary sector and other Council departments. It was reported that the service had helped to lever in investment into the Borough although it was a non-statutory function.

To make the service more self sufficient in future, the team would look to recover its costs either in full or, in the case of the voluntary sector, by applying a nominal charge. Details were set out in the report of the relevant scale of fees that would apply. It was noted that some neighbouring authorities already applied a charge for similar services and it was proposed that Halton charge a fee for a twelve month pilot period so as to determine the effectiveness and impact on the number and size of funding applications. A report would be brought to the Board on the outcome of the pilot.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) approve the twelve month pilot; and
- 2) receives a further report on the outcomes, six month's after the commencement of the pilot.

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## COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

### EXB24 MODERN SLAVERY ACT TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, which sought approval to publish the Modern Slavery and Transparency Statement for 2017/18.

The Board was advised that the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the Act) consolidated all offences relating to trafficking and slavery. Section 54 of the Act required employers of organisations with an annual turnover in excess of £36m to produce a modern slavery statement for each financial year. This requirement included the Borough Council.

The Board noted that, at its meeting of Council on 17 October 2017, a Motion was passed that supported the implementation of the Act and committed the Council to publishing its own Modern Slavery Transparency Statement. This was attached to the report at Appendix 1. It was noted that Section 54 of the Act encouraged businesses to be more transparent and to increase their accountability for any slavery or trafficking within their business or supply chain(s).

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement, attached to the report, be approved for publication; and
- 2) the oversight of the provision of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking be formally identified within the Community Safety Portfolio.

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### EXB25 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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **RESOURCES PORTFOLIO**

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

### **EXB26 SCI-TECH DARESBUY - PROJECT VIOLET FUNDING - KEY DECISION**

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources, on the next phase of developments at Sci-Tech Daresbury.

The report provided Members with details of the Project Violet and Skills Capital SIF Bid; the Project Violet funding package; the Enterprise Zone Tax Incremental Financing Mechanism; the borrowing potential and affordability; management of the TIF Borrowing Mechanism; a summary of all borrowing; and the procurement process.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

The decision was required to enable the Council to enter into the necessary legal and funding agreements for Project Violet, which included the use of the Enterprise Zone TIF

## Borrowing Mechanism.

A decision was also required to enable the procurement exercise to commence. As the value of the proposed contract would exceed the EU threshold for services of this type, Board approval was sought.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A number of alternative funding arrangements had been explored; however, there was currently no commercial market to fund a speculative development at Sci-Tech Daresbury at this stage.

Grant funding, including European Funding and SIF had been explored but were not appropriate funding mechanisms at this point for a variety of reasons, including timescales and eligibility.

Reflecting its status as a designated Enterprise Zone, it was envisaged that a TIF mechanism, based on Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing against future business rates growth, would play a critical role in addressing barriers to the delivery of the masterplan.

## Implementation Date

Following approval, the funding arrangements and procurement process would commence immediately. The project was anticipated to be delivered during 2019.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Members note the progress on the Skills Capital SIF bid and note that the agreed allocation of £1.1m from the TIF mechanism for Skills Capital match funding is targeted at both capital and revenue skills interventions at Sci-Tech Daresbury;
- 2) authority be given to the Operational Director, Finance, and the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Resources, to conclude the legal and funding arrangements to deliver Project Violet; and
- 3) authority be given to the Operational Director,

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Economy, Enterprise and Property, to enter into a procurement process via The Chest, in support of the Joint Venture's procurement of the Project Violet contract.

**MINUTES ISSUED: 24 July 2018**

**CALL-IN: 31 July 2018**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 31 July 2018**

*Meeting ended at 2.22 p.m.*