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EXECUTIVE BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 16 June 2022 in the Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, S. Young, M. Vasic, M. Reaney, E. Dawson, S. Wallace-Bonner and A. Jones

Also in attendance: One member of the press

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER POWERS AND DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
EXB1	MINUTES	
	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2022 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
	LEADER'S PORTFOLIO	
EXB2	URGENT DECISIONS	
	<p>The Executive Board received a report from the Chief Executive, which provided information on the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Board.</p> <p>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 Operational Director Finance and/or the Operational Director Legal and Democratic Services, where necessary.</p> <p>Two urgent decisions had been made since the last meeting of the Board and full details were published on the Council's website.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.</p>	

EXB3 DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF APPLICATIONS

The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented three applications for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, for consideration.

It was noted that under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council was able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer. This relief had previously only been available to organisations that were a registered charity, a community amateur sports club or a not for profit organisation.

The report outlined details of the applications from Feeding Britain, Halton Citizens Advice Bureau and Power in Partnership, in relation to their respective addresses. Appended to the report was the potential annual cost to the Council of granting the discretionary rate relief.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the application for discretionary rate relief for Feeding Britain, in relation to 21 Queens Avenue, Widnes, WA8 8HR, be approved at 15%;
- 2) the application for discretionary rate relief for Halton Citizens Advice Bureau, in relation to units 1-2 Runcorn Shopping Centre, Runcorn, WA7 2BS, be approved at 15%; and
- 3) the application for discretionary rate relief for Power in Partnership, in relation to 5 Queens Avenue, Widnes, WA8 8HR and 108a Royal Avenue, Widnes, WA8 8HN, be approved at 90%.

Operational
Director - Finance

EXB4 2021/22 REVENUE AND CAPITAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Finance, advising of the Council's overall revenue and capital net spending outturn position for the year 2021/22.

It was reported that the final accounts for 2021/22 were nearing completion. The revenue spending position for each Department was shown in Appendix one; which presented a summary of spending against the operational revenue budget and costs relating to Covid; Appendix two provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In

overall terms, the outturn position for the year showed that operational net spend was over the approved budget by £1.195m; this excluded unfunded Covid cost of £1.118m, the costs of which had been met directly from earmarked reserves. Appendix 3 contained the Capital Programme for each Directorate as at 31 March 2022.

The outturn position was a significant improvement on the forecast overspend of £2.998m reported at the end of quarter 3. There were a number of reasons for the improved financial position; these were detailed in the report. The key budget variances for the quarter were outlined for the Board, from the following Departments:

- Children and Families Department;
- Adult Social Care Department;
- Education, Inclusion and Provision;
- Public Health and Public Protection;
- Finance;
- Policy, Planning and Transportation; and
- Community and Environment.

Members were also advised of the financial impact of Covid-19 and a summary of the general Government funding made available to the Council to date was given.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EXB5 DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR Q4 2021/22

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Policy, People, Performance and Efficiency, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the fourth quarter period to 31 March 2022, for the People Directorate (Children and Young People; and Adult Social Care and Health); and the Enterprise, Community and Resources Directorate.

The Board was advised that the Directorate Performance Overview Report provided a strategic summary of key issues arising from the relevant quarter for each Directorate and was aligned to Council priorities or functional areas. The Board noted that such information was key to the Council's performance management arrangements and Executive Board had a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability. Performance Management would continue to be important in the demonstration of value for money and strengthening accountability.

RESOLVED: That the report, progress and performance information be noted.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE PORTFOLIO

EXB6 REFURBISHMENT OF HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL CARE HOMES - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – People, which gave details of a proposed refurbishment programme to Halton Borough Council's four care homes.

Halton Council was now the largest care home provider in the Borough for older people, following the acquisitions of Millbrow, St Luke's, St Patrick's and Madeline McKenna Care Homes. The Council was now presented with an opportunity to lead the sector, however to be able to ensure that a high level and quality of care continued to be provided, further significant investment was required.

The report set out the rationale behind the proposals, and their initial costings and funding proposals were set out in paragraph 6.1.

Reason for Decision

A decision was required, as the outcome would result in the Local Authority incurring expenditure. The expenditure will provide valuable services to Halton residents and enhance the care homes estate.

Alternative options considered and rejected

No alternative options were available to support the improvement required to Council owned care homes.

Implementation date

None agreed, subject to procurement procedures.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the proposed refurbishment programme for the Council's four care homes, as outlined in the report, be approved;
- 2) Council be recommended to include the proposed scheme within the capital programme, with a total estimated cost of £4.2m over three years, to be

Strategic Director
- People

funded as outlined in paragraph 6.1; and

- 3) a further report be presented to the Board, to provide details of the proposed refurbishment works, once the scheme has been developed.

EXB7 DEMENTIA FRIENDLY HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (HBC)

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – People, which presented the draft Dementia Friendly Halton Borough Council (HBC) Action Plan for approval.

The report outlined details of the Dementia Friendly Communities Programme from the National Alzheimer's Society that encouraged everyone to share responsibility for ensuring that people with dementia felt understood, valued and able to contribute to their community.

Approval was given in 2020 to develop a dementia friendly HBC approach and an initial draft Action Plan was presented to Management Team in late 2021. A number of achievable actions had been identified and formed the Dementia Friendly HBC Action Plan. The three Priority Actions identified were:

- Organisational support and infrastructure to support development of a Dementia Friendly HBC;
- Raising Dementia Awareness across the Council and beyond; and
- Service Area Specific Actions.

The Action Plan, appended to the report, gave the context, rationale and details on how the actions would be delivered.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report and appendix be noted; and
- 2) the Action Plan be approved.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

EXB8 UPDATE ON ONE HALTON PLACE BASED PARTNERSHIP

The Board considered a report which provided an update on One Halton Place Based Partnership development with Cheshire Merseyside Integrated Care

Strategic Director
- People

System (ICS) context.

The Health Policy and Performance Board received reports in November 2021 and February 2022 setting out the requirements for the formation of Integrated Care Systems regionally. This consists of an Integrated Care Board (ICB) and an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), along with at Place level, a Place Based Partnership (PBP). Locally, this was the One Halton Place Based Partnership – these arrangements were set out in NHS Reforms White Paper, Integration and Innovation, published in February 2021.

It was noted that these were the most significant changes to health arrangements in a decade which aimed to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities. The report provided the Board with some context, an overview of progress and the current position.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the report.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

EXB9 WHOLE FAMILY RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT AND SERVICE PROVISION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – People, which gave an overview of a revised approach to delivering specialist domestic abuse support and services in Halton that aligned with the local whole picture approach.

The Halton Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2022-24 adopted the SafeLives Whole Picture approach, which was considered to be best practice when developing effective domestic abuse service models that responded to the needs of the individual, the family, the community and the wider society.

The report outlined these proposals, which over a two year period presented savings for the Council and would bring some service elements into the remit of the Local Authority.

RESOLVED: That Executive Board

- 1) agree to take forward the proposal outlined in the report to ensure a full service offer for victims, children and perpetrators of domestic abuse that is more fit for purpose and would deliver a saving of £39,605, over a two year period;

Strategic Director
- People

- 2) approve the commencement of a procurement exercise for two separate commissions, firstly the Halton Domestic Abuse Specialist Accommodation Service and secondly, a separate Specialist Children and Young Peoples Domestic Abuse Service;
- 3) approve Community Support provision being brought in house; and
- 4) agree that contracts are offered on a two year fixed basis and note that TUPE may apply to all aspects of future service provision.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB10 AMENDMENT TO CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Community and Environment, which provided information on planned landscape and public open space improvement schemes to be undertaken and to ask Members to approve a capital budget allocation and expenditure in order to complete these works.

There were several major landscape improvement schemes planned over the next 2-3 years – the report provided details of these projects, the costings for each, and how they would be funded.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board approves

- 1) the sum of £1,988,342.71, received from Mersey Link for the reinstatement of Mersey Gateway temporary works areas, be added to the Capital Programme;
- 2) that £1m of capital borrowing be added to the Capital Programme to be used as match funding towards the Brindley Green element of Runcorn Town Centre Investment Plan;
- 3) the annual revenue cost of £57k to service the £1m capital borrowing to be funded from the Contingency budget; and
- 4) the Council’s Environment Services Division prepare remedial works plans for the former Mersey Gateway temporary works areas and appoint any necessary consultants and contractors to carry out these works.

Operational
Director -
Community &
Environment

EXB11 EAST RUNCORN CONNECTIVITY SCHEME

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, which sought approval for further feasibility work (Year 2) on the business case for the East Runcorn Connectivity (ERC) Scheme (this follows the Year 1 programme approved by the Board in June 2021).

The full ERC scheme comprised four elements:

- A558 dualling from Pitts Heath Lane to Innovation Way;
- A56 Major Maintenance – Keckwick Lane to M56 junction 11;
- Potential loop road M56 junction 11 to A533; and
- A suite of active and sustainable travel interventions.

Further details of the four elements were discussed in the report, and Appendix one presented the Year 2 outline of programme activity for the ERC for Members approval. It was noted that a Year 2 proposal had been submitted to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) and Halton was now in receipt of an offer letter to support Year 2 with pre-development funding.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board

- 1) approve the further development of the East Runcorn Connectivity business case;
- 2) approve the Year 2 programme as set out in Appendix 1;
- 3) approve the amendment of the Council's Capital Programme to incorporate the Year 2 sum of £2.71m;
- 4) approve the principle of commissioning Mott MacDonald as external consultant for the project via the Merseytravel Consultancy Framework to 2025; and
- 5) delegate power to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to implement the Year 2 works on the East Runcorn Connectivity Scheme, within funding deadlines.

Operational
Director - Policy,
Planning and
Transportation

EXB12 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 Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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 the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A 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.

ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

EXB13 HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT CONTRACT AWARD

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, which made a recommendation for the award of a contract for capital funded highway improvement works.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the award of the ‘Highway Improvement Contract’ as recommended in the report, to commence on 6 August 2022, for three years initially, with a one-year extension option.

Operational
Director - Policy,
Planning and
Transportation

MINUTES ISSUED: 21 June 2022

CALL- IN: 28 June 2022 at 5.00 pm

Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 28 June 2022.

Meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.