

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Executive Board on Thursday, 13 July 2023 in The Boardroom, Municipal Building*

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

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, W. Rourke, S. Baker and D. Nolan

Also in attendance: One member of the press

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

*Action*

#### EXB12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

#### EXB13 URGENT DECISIONS

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.

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.

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 urgent decisions taken since the last meeting of the Executive Board be noted.

EXB14 PROTOCOL FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN/ALDERWOMEN

The Board considered a report which recommended a new protocol for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen.

The Council's current protocol reflected the law but did not set out any criteria or process of nomination and appointment. In order that clear guidance was provided for future Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and a fair and transparent process was followed, it was recommended that a new protocol was devised setting out both the criteria and procedure for nomination and appointment. Appended to the report at Appendix B was a copy of the suggested new protocol.

RESOLVED: That the Board

Chief Executive

- 1) approve the protocol for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen appended to the report at Appendix B ("the Protocol"); and
- 2) recommend to Council that the Protocol be adopted.

**CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

EXB15 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director: Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an update on the progress made within the Council's Transformation Programme. Work had continued to develop the scope of projects alongside service areas with a view to supporting changes that were designed to optimise operations, align service provision with demand and reduce the cost of service provision.

The Board noted the initial programme structure had been augmented to increase capacity as projects came on stream. The schedule of projects set out in Appendix A to the report had been updated to reflect this.

The programme methodology had also now become embedded and it balanced service involvement and ownership, with project support and challenge. The focus was now on applying the methodology through robust arrangements to identify and realise financial savings and service optimisation.

RESOLVED: That the Board noted the contents of the update.

EXB16 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Board considered a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented the Treasury Management Annual Report 2022/23.

The report updated Members on the activities undertaken on the money market, as required by the Treasury Management Policy.

Information was provided on the economic outlook, interest rate forecast, borrowing and investments, budget monitoring, policy guidelines and treasury management indicators. The Council's approved Treasury and Prudential Indicators for 2022-23 were set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and was attached as Appendix one.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO**

EXB17 THE BRINDLEY THEATRE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which set out the financial position of the Brindley since its opening and requested authority to delegate the full commercial programming of the Brindley Theatre to the Brindley Manager and Leisure Services Divisional Manager.

The Board was advised that the matter had been discussed in detail at the Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board meeting on 19 June 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be approved; and
- 2) the Board delegates the full commercial programming of the Brindley Theatre to the Brindley Manager and Leisure Services Divisional Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Employment, Learning and Skills and Community.

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## ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO

### EXB18 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on improvements to the Borough's Transport Infrastructure and network and sought approval for the next set of transport related projects.

It was reported that Halton's adopted Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) set out the statutory context for investment in infrastructure to 2025/26. In association with the 22 'Primary Transport Strategies' contained in LTP3, there were a number of major schemes and improvement projects that covered road, rail, bus, cycling and walking. The report provided Members with details for each of these projects and advised that many of the schemes had been delivered.

It was noted that, since the adoption of LTP3, there had been a number of changes to the way transport strategy and funding were administered. The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) had been created and new priorities such as Transport for the North, Northern Powerhouse Rail and High Speed 2 had emerged. Department for Transport funding was now directed to the LCRCA and redistributed to local councils. It was therefore imperative that schemes were developed to an advanced stage of design and appraisal to ensure funding success. Appendix 1 within the report contained the list of schemes that formed Halton's 'transport pipeline' and Appendix 2 outlined current schemes.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the list of schemes in Appendix 1, attached to the report be approved, and be developed into deliverable schemes (including design, feasibility work, business case preparation, funding bids and, where appropriate, grant acceptance and entry into the Council's Capital Programme);
- 2) the Operational Director, Planning, Policy and Transport, be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to take the necessary actions to ensure value for money through the appropriate procurement processes relating to the list of schemes (Appendices 1 and 2); and

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- 3) the Operational Director, Planning, Policy and Transport, be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Environment and Urban Renewal, to take any other actions necessary to accept grant funding and enable timely delivery of the list of schemes (Appendices 1 and 2).

## **CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB19 HALTON MICRO GRID - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which outlined the procurement process in respect of the provision of a Halton Micro Grid. The Halton Micro Grid sought to increase the size of the existing Solar Farm on the former St Michael's Golf Course by installing a combination of additional rooftop and solar farm solar PV generation schemes.

It was noted that the anticipated value of the contract would be in the region of £11m, with a contract for maintenance of £1.9m over the 30 year lifetime of the project. The cost of the works would be met from prudential borrowing and a grant of £2.5m from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The project would fund a number of capital investments and deliver long term revenue benefits to the Council, details of these were set out in the report.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the procurement of a Halton Micro Grid.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

It is proposed to invite bids from Engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contractors to support the design, build and maintenance of the project, which will provide alternative options from which the preferred solution will be identified.

#### Implementation Date

1 August 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the intention to undertake a procurement exercise via The Chest with the purpose of securing a Design,

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Build, Operate and Maintenance Contract for the implementation of the Halton Micro Grid, be approved; and

- 2) Council be asked to include the £11m total estimated cost of the Halton Micro Grid scheme within the capital programme, to be funded as outlined in section 5 of the report.

EXB20 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.

**ENVIRONMENT AND URBAN RENEWAL PORTFOLIO**

EXB21 SCI-TECH DARESURY – PROJECT VIOLET PHASE 2 - KEY DECISION

The Board considered a report of the Executive

Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided an update on the proposed next phase of delivery and funding arrangements at Sci-Tech Daresbury and the Investment Zone initiative. The report sought approval in principle to utilise the Enterprise Zone Tax Incremental Financing mechanism to support the viability gap for Project Violet Phase 2 and also to provide an equity contribution to the Joint Venture to delivery Project Violet Phase 2.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

A decision is required to enable the Council to progress the necessary legal and funding agreements for Project Violet which include use of the Enterprise Zone TIF Borrowing Mechanism.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

A number of alternative funding arrangements have been explored; however there is currently no commercial market to fund a speculative development at Sci-Tech Daresbury.

Grant funding has 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 is envisaged that a TIF mechanism, based on Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing against future business rates growth, will play a critical role in addressing barriers to the delivery of the masterplan.

#### Implementation Date

Subject to further due diligence, the project will continue to be developed through to procurement and the borrowing is likely to be required during 2024.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approve in principle the funding strategy for Project Violet Phase 2 outlined in the report, subject to the completion of the necessary due diligence.

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## **CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

### **EXB22 OFFICER LAPTOP REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME - KEY DECISION**

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – ICT and Support Services, which sought approval to enter into a contract for the supply of fully warrantied and insured laptops, over a five-year period on a lease rental basis, leading to the ownership of the devices for the sum of £1 per device upon completion of the contract.

#### Reason(s) for Decision

To seek approval for the acceptance of a tender for the replacement of all officer laptop devices.

#### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not to replace the laptops is not an option, as many existing devices will not operate Windows 11 and M365. A procurement exercise had been undertaken via a Government portal, resulting in a number of tender bids being received which meet the required specification.

#### Implementation Date

1 August 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) details of the procurement process undertaken, the proposed contract award and funding as set out in the report, be noted; and
- 2) the proposal for all officer devices be replaced with new laptops which are fully warrantied and insured under contract with Phoenix Ltd for a five-year period, be approved.

Chief Executive

**MINUTES ISSUED: 18 July 2023**

**CALL-IN: 25 July 2023 at 5.00 pm.**

**Any matter decided by the Executive Board may be called in no later than 5.00pm on 25 July 2023.**

*Meeting ended at 2.18 p.m.*