

**Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Corporate Policy and Performance Board**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2024**

<b>EXB2</b>	<b>2023/24 SPENDING AS AT 31 MARCH 2024</b>
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The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which reported the Council’s overall revenue net spending position for the 2023/24 financial year.

A summary of spending against the Council’s revenue and capital net spending position for 2023/24 was presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and these provided detailed figures for each individual Department. In overall terms net spending as at 31 March 2024 was £5.633m over budget. This was an improvement from the forecast outturn position of £7.144m reported at the end of December 2023, which showed that the actions being taken by Directorates were having a positive effect. Whilst an improved position, it was still a detrimental impact upon the Council’s finances and further reduced the Council’s limited reserves.

The report also detailed a review of the Council General Reserve as at 31 March 2024. The current balance of reserve totalled £5.149m which was considered to be a minimum level which the Council should hold.

In addition, it was noted that Capital Spending at 31 March 2024 totalled £43.939m, which was 71.4% of the planned spending £61.528m (which assumed a 20% slippage between years). Appendix 2 presented details of spending against all capital schemes. Appendix 3 presented the Capital Programme as at 31 March 2024.

It was noted that the 2024/25 budget had been increased to reflect the increased spending against all the high-pressure areas. It did not provide a budget for the excess cost of agency staff (the assumption being that departments provided for this by reducing spending elsewhere) and the budget also included Transformation Programme savings target of £4m.

A report on the 2024/25 budget monitoring position as at 31 May 2024 along with an initial outturn forecast, would be presented at the earliest opportunity to allow for any urgent corrective action to be taken.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Council’s 2023/24 outturn position as presented in the report be noted;
- 2) Directorates take all possible steps to manage spending in line with budget during 2024/25; and

- 3) Priority is given to the acceleration of the Council's Transformation Programme, to ensure it is sufficiently developed to deliver the savings required to meet the medium-term financial gap and help the Council replenish its reserves.

<b>EXB3</b>	<b>DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 2023 - 24</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director – Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, on progress against key objectives/milestones and performance targets for the fourth quarter period to 31 March 2024, for the People Directorate (Social Care 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.

<b>EXB4</b>	<b>DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF</b>
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The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Finance, which presented five 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 five applications, 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 15% discretionary top up relief from Change, Grow, Live for premises at 75 High Street, Runcorn, be rejected on the basis that they are a Charity who operate nationally;

- 2) the application for 15% discretionary top up relief from Care UK Charity for premises at 3-5 Runcorn Shopping Centre, Runcorn, be rejected on the basis that they are a Charity who operate nationally;
- 3) the application for 15% discretionary top up relief from Staffordshire Winter Sports Club Ltd for premises at Silver Blades Ice Rink, Earle Road, Widnes, be rejected on the basis that they are a Charity who operate nationally;
- 4) the application for discretionary relief from Gateway Community Ltd for premises at Hallmark House, Constance Industrial Estate, Waterloo Road, Widnes, be approved at 90% with effect from 1 April 2023; and
- 5) the application for discretionary rate relief from English Table Tennis Association Ltd for premises at Units 17-18, Greenoaks Way, Widnes, Cheshire, be rejected on the basis that they are an organisation who operate nationally.

<b>EXB5</b>	<b>CORPORATE SECURITY CONTRACT</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, which notified members of the intention to go out to tender with regard to procuring a new corporate security contract in line with the Council's procurement strategy. The new contract would commence on 1 April 2025 and would be for a three year period, with the option for a 12 month extension subject to satisfactory performance.

**RESOLVED:** That Members note the intention to go out to tender via the Chest in respect of procuring a new corporate security contract.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2024**

<b>EXB14</b>	<b>DELIVERED OF MANAGED DETECTION RESPONSE – KEY DECISION</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Director ICT and Support Services, which sought approval of a key project that would adopt/deliver innovative security technologies to address the evolving cyber threat landscape, reducing cyber risk and detection time, the primary aim of which would be to improve the security footprint of the Authority.

Following approval of the Halton Digital Strategy by Executive Board in April 2024, the IT Security Team had evaluated eight security offers and three had been chosen for final evaluation. Detailed evaluation had taken place and it was agreed that MDR offered the price point, level of service and had the in house resource to manage and maintain an essential key technology solution.

### Reason(s) for Decision

The security of the authority, compliance with the DHLUC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF)

### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Following approval of the Halton Digital Strategy by Management Team and Executive Board in March and April 2024, the IT Security Team have evaluated eight security offerings within the marketplace this was narrowed down to three Tier 1 solutions, the offerings in question are cloud based remote management services primarily for threat detection, response and remediation.

### Implementation Date

It is intended to initiate a 20 day proof of concept installation 24 June 2024 prior to any go live, this will also comply with additional cyber security requirement prior to the general election.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the procurement of a MDR (Managed Detection Response) System for a single payment of £638,001, delivering over five-year contracted term be approved; and
- 2) the investment strategy be approved.

<b>EXB15</b>	<b>TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME BOARD</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director – Chief Executive’s Delivery Unit, which outlined a proposed model for a Transformation Programme Board, using Working Party principles. The Council’s Transformation Programme started on 1 April 2023, and it had grown in both scope and complexity. The Programme would be in place until 31 March 2026.

It was proposed that given the operation of the Transformation Programme would require more intensive governance between now and March 2026, a dedicated Transformation Programme Board would need to be established. The Board would:

- consist of the ten Executive Members of the Council, appointed as a Working Party;
- make recommendations to Executive Board as and when necessary; and
- receive recommendations from Policy and Performance Board Topic Groups as part of the Council's scrutiny arrangements pertaining to Re-imagine Halton Transformation projects.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report is noted;
- 2) the establishment of a Transformation Programme Board be approved;
- 3) a Working Party consisting of the ten Executive Members be appointed to form the Transformation Programme Board, and make recommendations to the Executive Board, as required; and
- 4) the Board agrees to request and evaluate progress update reports from other Council Boards and Committees, on current and planned policy development work related to transformation project activity.

<b>EXB16</b>	<b>PRODUCTIVITY PLAN</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director – Chief Executive’s Delivery Unit which outlined the requirement for a Productivity Plan to be submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. A copy of a letter from the Minister for Local Government and the Productivity Plan were attached as appendices to the report.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorses the Productivity Plan for submission to DLUHC

<b>EXB17</b>	<b>2024/25 TO 2026/27 CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>
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The Board considered a report of the Director of Finance, on the Council’s total planned capital programme expenditure and associated funding over the next three years.

The 2024/27 Capital Strategy Statement was approved by Council on 6 March 2024. Subsequently, new capital grant allocations had been received and slippage to capital projects for 2023/24 had been rolled forward to 2024/25. The report brought all the separate elements together and outlined the planned capital programme expenditure and funding for the next three years.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve the updated capital programme for 2024-27, including forecast spend and funding, as set out in Table 1 and Table 2.