

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Thursday 9th March 2023

PRESENT

COUNCILLOR:

Councillor Phil Riley
Councillor Mustafa Desai
Councillor Julie Gunn
Councillor Jim Smith
Councillor Mahfooz Hussain
Councillor Damian Talbot
Councillor Quesir Mahmood

PORTFOLIO:

Leader of the Council
Adults, Social Care and Health
Children, Young People and Education
Environment and Operations
Digital and Customer Services
Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing
Growth & Development

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Kazim Shah

Deputy Youth MP

	Item	Action
1	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u> The Leader of the Council, Councillor Phil Riley, welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Vicky McGurk and John Slater, and Muhammed Bapu, Youth MP.	
2	<u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u> The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 th February 2023 were agreed as a correct record.	Agreed
3	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> Councillor Mahfooz Hussain submitted a Pecuniary Declaration of Interest in relation to Agenda Item 8.2 (Provider Uplift).	
4	<u>Equality Implications</u> The Chair asked Members to confirm that they had considered and understood any Equality Impact Assessments associated with reports on the agenda ahead of making any decisions.	Confirmed
5	<u>Public Forum</u> No questions had been submitted by members of the public.	
6	<u>Questions by Non-Executive Members</u> No questions had been submitted by Non-Executive Members.	

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7	<p><u>Youth MPs Update</u></p> <p>Kazim Shah, Deputy Youth MP, verbally reported on recent events and activities including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing involvement in the Young Inspectors Programme. • Participation in the recent DCS interviews. • Arrangement of a Climate Change Summit on 5th June at King George's Hall • A residential visit at the weekend to Coldwell Inn. <p>Members discussed the presentation and update and commended the ongoing work of the Youth Forum.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
8.1	<p><u>Lifting Contracts</u></p> <p>The Executive Board was provided with a report that advised of the need for the Council to retender the Equipment Lifting Contracts currently in place, seeking agreement to proceed with a procurement process that would cover both Adults and Childrens provision.</p> <p>The contracts had been in place since June 2021 and would cease on the 31st March 2023.</p> <p>A plan had been formed to retender, which to arrange three separate contracts, for Stairlifts, Through Floor Lifts & External Lifts, and Ceiling Track Hoists.</p> <p>The reason for three contracts, as opposed to one, was that experience showed that a one size fits all solution did not work.</p> <p>The preferred vehicle for retendering was to use an organisation called ESPO who ran a lifting equipment framework. All the main players within the lifting equipment industry were signed up to the framework. The charge for this was 2% of the contract value.</p> <p>RESOLVED -</p> <p>That the Executive Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree that the Council procures a provider using the ESPO framework as described. • Agree for the winning contracts to be used by both Adult Social Care and Children's Services. <p><i>(Having declared an interest in the following item, Councillor Mahfooz Hussain left the room).</i></p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>

8.2	Item	Action
	<p data-bbox="336 136 563 170"><u>Provider Uplift</u></p> <p data-bbox="336 210 1283 501">A report was submitted which set out the rationale, financial context and analysis underpinning the award of rate uplifts to external providers for the 2023/2024 financial year, in order to meet rising costs associated with increases in inflation and workforce costs including National Living Wage and Real Living wage, and fees which addressed the lack of parity of provider rates across the Lancashire and South Cumbria Health and Social Care system.</p> <p data-bbox="336 539 1283 685">The Council's low starting base compared to near neighbours was a significant risk with the potential for some providers to exit the market impacting on the local authority's ability to meet its statutory duties.</p> <p data-bbox="336 759 544 792">RESOLVED –</p> <p data-bbox="336 831 708 864">That the Executive Board:</p> <p data-bbox="336 902 1171 976">1) Approve a percentage increase in fees for the following services:</p> <ul data-bbox="435 1014 1289 1760" style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and nursing care including Intermediate Care beds, fee increase of 10.70% effective from 1 April 2023. • Older People and Physical Disability Domiciliary Care, framework fee increase of 13.55% from £17.14 to £19.46 per hour effective from 1 April 2023. • Shared Lives, day support fee increase of 11.1% in line with current Consumer price index (CPI) and to keep pace with the National Living Wage increase effective from 1 April 2023. • Shared Lives, weekly banding fee increase of 11.1% in line with current Consumer price index (CPI) effective from 1st April 2023. • LD Supported Living Providers, fee increase of up to 12.5% capped at the hourly rate of domiciliary homecare providers. This represents an increase to £19.46 per hour effective from 1st April 2023. • Direct Payments, Personal Assistant, fee increase of 9.3% to £10.90 per hour in line with the Real Living Wage increases. <p data-bbox="336 1798 703 1832">2) Further approves that:</p> <ul data-bbox="435 1870 1254 2016" style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Payments - it is proposed to revise the existing direct payment agency rates (standard, enhanced and exception), in line with Domiciliary rates proposed above. <p data-bbox="336 2054 703 2087">3) Further approves that:</p>	<p data-bbox="1334 902 1485 936">Approved</p> <p data-bbox="1345 1783 1497 1816">Approved</p> <p data-bbox="1334 2040 1485 2074">Approved</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Extra Care schemes that are commissioned on a block contract basis will receive an uplift of 3% in line with the standard inflationary uplift provided for within the Council's budget effective from 1 April 2023 where they have been agreed in the contract. Where 1:1 hours are contracted separately they will remain aligned to the domiciliary care rate of £19.46. <p><i>(Councillor Mahfooz Hussain re-joined the meeting).</i></p>	
8.3	<p><u>Fostering Update Quarter 3 2022/23</u></p> <p>Members received a report which provided an update on the management and performance of the Local Authority's fostering service which is revised on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The report, alongside Appendix 3, provided analysis of the period 1st October 2022 until the 31st December 2022 and reflected upon data and service development over this period and recommendations for the next three monthly period</p> <p>RESOLVED- That the Executive Board:</p> <p>That the Executive Board notes the Fostering three monthly report for Quarter 3, alongside Appendix 1 which provides a service progress overview and summary of service development recommendations.</p>	Noted
8.4	<p><u>Creation of New Secondary School Places</u></p> <p>The Executive Board received a report which advised that Blackburn with Darwen was experiencing significant school place pressures in the secondary phase of education. There was a need to increase the capacity of places available particularly in the Blackburn locality in order for the Borough to meet its statutory duty to provide a school place for every pupil that required one.</p> <p>To support permanent pupil place growth, secondary schools across Blackburn with Darwen were invited to express interest in creating new permanent school places across year groups 7 – 11. Schools were asked to provide information on the type of project that they were proposing e.g. extensions, internal reconfigurations, alongside estimated costs of the project, drawings/specifications if available) numbers of new school places that would be created and when these new places would be available.</p> <p>Summary details of the proposals for each school who had expressed an interest, number of new places to be created and associated costs were attached at Appendix 1 & 2. If each project was approved, 345 new places would be created across years groups 7 – 11 in the Blackburn locality with a request for local authority (LA) schools capital funding of £1,249,700 to support</p>	

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	<p>these projects.</p> <p>For one of the projects, the expansion would require significant internal reconfiguration of a Council owned asset to create additional teaching spaces. This premise was currently leased for a period of 7 years (until 31 August 2027). To offer assurance to and support the business case that the school will be required to propose to the Regional Schools Directorate for the purpose of expansion approvals, there would be a requirement to enter into an academy type lease arrangement for the former Witton City Learning Centre of a period no greater than 125 years.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves the projects and associated expenditure (Appendix 1&2) • Approves for the monies detailed against each project to be delegated to the associated School/Trust so as to enable the agreed works to be directly managed by the Schools/Trusts • Approves for the Council to enter into a legal agreement with each School/Trust by way of a Funding Agreement (Appendix 3) • Approves a variation of lease at the former Witton City Learning Centre (CLC) to one similar to an academy style lease for a period not greater than 125 years. 	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
<p>8.5</p>	<p><u>Household Support Fund Round 4</u></p> <p>Members were advised that in November 2022, via the Chancellor’s Autumn statement, the Government announced an extension to the Household Support Fund (HSF) from April 2023 to continue supporting communities who are struggling due to the cost of living crisis.</p> <p>The announcement was of a 12 month support package to the same value as spent in the previous 12 months of Household Support (£1b). The Council had successfully delivered the HSF since October 2021 in partnership with a range of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations who work together to provide a strength based approach to support our residents.</p> <p>The primary purpose of the report was to seek approval for the ongoing delivery of the HSF grant programme as described in the body of the report. The secondary purpose was to seek approval to use an element of the 2022 /2023 (Round 3) HSF to support a Schools Grant proposal ensuring children living in low income families were supported to access a hot meal.</p>	

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	<p>RESOLVED -</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <p>2.1 Agree to the distribution of the Household Support Fund Round 4 as set out in the report and subject to confirmation of the grant funding.</p> <p>2.2 Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance and the Director of Adults and Health, in consultation with the Executive Member for Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing, to amend the grant criteria should that be considered necessary given guidance from Government and local circumstances.</p> <p>2.3 Approve the proposals for utilising remaining resources within HSF 3 relating to 2022/23 and in relation to funding the school meal support provision for the period the money is available.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
8.6	<p><u>Procurement of new Back-up Solution</u></p> <p>The Executive Board received a report which sought approval to procure a new range of security and recovery facilities for corporate data that would provide greater capability of recovery from a cyber-attack or other significant data loss.</p> <p>The report advised that the IT Department's existing backup technology was not sufficient to protect the Council's data moving forwards, and recent years had seen a significant rise in cyber security related incidents affecting the public sector across the globe, as well as a marked increase in the number of attacks targeting national infrastructure including local government.</p> <p>The department required additional systems hardening and attack prevention work to introduce the capability to quickly recover from a criminal attack in the shortest possible time.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves the procurement of the new solution through the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) framework RM6068 lot 1 for a 3 year period with a 1 year extension. • Approves the increase to the department's annual revenue budget from the 2023/24 financial year of up to £130k. Approves a supplementary capital estimate of £150k to be funded from grant received from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Cyber Support Team to fund the initial capital costs of the project. • Notes that the existing £80k of capital funding for backup held with the transition to the cloud programme is transferred back into ICT earmarked capital reserves. 	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>

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8.7	<p><u>Local Transport Plan 2023/24</u></p> <p>The Executive Board received a report which sought approval for the detailed Local Transport Plan programme for the financial year 2023/24.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <p>1) Approves the Local Transport Plan detailed programme for 2023/24</p> <p>2) Delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Environment and Operations, in consultation with the Executive Member for Growth and Development, to amend, seek and accept tenders subject to adequate budget provision.</p> <p>Reasons for recommendations:</p> <p>The proposed schemes and projects that form the 2023/24 programme are aimed at achieving our overall corporate priorities along with maintaining the highway network in the most cost efficient way based upon the Council’s overall asset management strategy.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
9.	<p><u>Strategic Asset Management Plan</u></p> <p>The Executive Board received which set out what the Council intended to do to ensure its property assets supported corporate priorities, increased the Council’s financial resources and delivered value for money. Effective asset management was essential to meeting the Council’s priorities and improvement aims, with asset rationalisation presenting opportunities to reduce costs and improving service efficiencies.</p> <p>Strategic use of our land and property assets was a prerequisite for the achievement of corporate priorities in relation to a growing Borough, supporting neighbourhoods and promoting inward investment and job creation. The challenge facing the Council, and all local authorities, was that it had to continue to deliver effective services to residents and businesses, with ever decreasing resources. These were difficult times and the financial constraints and uncertainty in the wider economy brought additional challenges for the Council.</p> <p>In this context, it was essential to take a strategic view of the asset portfolio in order to deliver our corporate priorities, grow the Borough, achieve best value and return from all assets. The objectives of reducing expenditure, increasing income and realising value in our strategic land assets was key to the delivery of Place investment and achieving the Medium Term Financial Plan. An updated Disposal Policy was included within the</p>	

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	<p>Strategic Asset Management Plan as an appendix, setting out the process and considerations to be made when disposing the Council's land / property assets.</p> <p>Councillor Julie Gunn pointed out a typo in the Plan, in relation to the number of voluntary aided schools, which she confirmed to be 24.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the progress made by Growth & Development team to restructure and reprioritise our property functions to align and support emerging service needs in addressing the Council's financial challenges; 2. Approves the Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2023/24 to 2025/26 attached as Annex A, and approves officers to progress with the key actions as detailed in the plan; 3. Approves the Disposal Policy which is included as an appendix to the Strategic Asset Management Plan and attached as Annex B; 4. Approves a revenue fund of £300,000, funded from the Invest to Save Reserve to cover the 3 year period of the Strategic Asset Management Plan to support officers in undertaking property condition surveys and feasibility studies to support the asset review process; 5. Delegates authority to amend the key actions included in the Strategic Asset Management Plan (by adding, removing or prioritising projects) to the Growth Programme Director or Strategic Director of Growth & Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Growth & Development; and Notes that future progress updates on key actions and KPI's will be submitted on an annual basis to Executive Board for information. 	<p></p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
<p>9.1</p>	<p><u>Award of contract for long term agreement for Council Insurance policies and cover</u></p> <p>The Executive Board received a report which advised that the Council's current long term agreement for insurance ended on 31 March 2023. The Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules required the Director of Finance to arrange and administer all insurance cover subject to Executive Board approval. To ensure that there was continuity of cover an appropriate re-procurement exercise had been carried out for the Council's insurance requirements, in accordance with the UK Public Procurement Regulations. The results have been evaluated, with support from the Head of Corporate Contracting & Procurement and the Council's insurance broker Aon UK Limited, in order to have new insurance policies in place from 1 April 2023.</p>	

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	<p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board approves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The award of the insurance contracts to the successful bidders for an initial period of three years, with option to extend for a further two year period; ii) The amendment levels of cover relating to elements of the Council’s property and casualty cover to provide improved cover to the Council in the event of claims for these areas. 	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
9.2	<p><u>Treasury Management Strategy</u></p> <p>Members received a report which advised that treasury risk management was conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the Treasury Management Code) which required the Council to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year. The report fulfilled the Authority’s legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.</p> <p>RESOLVED -</p> <p>It is recommended that the Executive Board:</p> <p>2.1 Approves the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24, detailed in Appendix 1, including the proposed Treasury Management Indicators.</p> <p>AT THIS STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS THE PRESS AND PUBLIC WERE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</p>	<p>Approved</p>
11.1	<p><u>Creation of New Secondary School Places</u></p> <p>Further to the report submitted at Agenda Item 8,4, additional information was submitted for consideration by the Executive Board which was considered commercially sensitive and therefore From publication. The resolutions at 8.4 were unchanged.</p> <p>Signed at a meeting of the Board</p> <p>on 13th April 2023</p> <p>(being the ensuing meeting on the Board)</p> <p>Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed</p>	<p>Approved</p>

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